PENNSYLVANIA AMERICAN WATER

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VIA eFiling

January 21, 2025

Rosemary Chiavetta, Secretary
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission
Commonwealth Keystone Building
400 North Street
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Re: *Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission v. Pennsylvania-American Water Company*; Docket Numbers: R-2023-3043189 (Water) and R-2023-3043190 (Wastewater)

Dear Secretary Chiavetta:

In the Opinion and Order (the "Order") of the above-referenced proceeding entered on July 22, 2024, the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission ("PUC") directed Pennsylvania-American Water Company (the "Company") to submit plans "demonstrating how it intends to continue to improve its percentage of calls answered in sixty (60) seconds or less and its call abandonment rate" within six months.[1] As further described in the Order, the Company's call handling performance has improved since the COVID-19 pandemic, but the Company continues to strive to improve its metrics.[2] Specifically, the Company is striving to answer 80% of calls within sixty seconds or less and improve its call abandonment rate. In 2024, the Company achieved a service level of 77.18% answered within sixty seconds or less and a call abandonment rate of 5.29%. These metrics demonstrate improvement from 2023 when the Company achieved a service level of 66.72% answered within sixty seconds or less and a call abandonment rate of 8.8%.

The Company's plan to continue to drive improvements to its service level and abandonment rate focuses on agent availability, skill acquisition, and call volume reduction initiatives, which are described in more detail below. Calls handled reduced from 451,789 in 2023 to 416,880 in 2024, which represents a reduction of 7.7%, and the Company's retention rate for Customer Care Agents ("CCA") increased from 64.36% in 2023 to 72.59% in 2024.

Technology Upgrades to Improve Customer Service Performance

The Company continues to inform and encourage customers to utilize self-service opportunities for more efficient and rapid resource use. Through enhancements to its Intelligent Virtual Agent ("IVA"), the Company introduced several new self-service

[1] Order at 371.
[2] *Id.* at 370.

activities, including retrieval of account number and account status, assistance for online access, and appointment status. Use of self-service options increases IVA customer solution containment and reduces abandoned call levels while improving the Company's average speed to answer.

The Company is leveraging technology to simplify CCA tasks. In 2024, the Company created a single, searchable online information database where CCAs can access the Company's processes and procedures. In addition, the Company introduced Artificial Intelligence technology that assists CCAs in summarizing the conversation with customers. This complete and accurate summary allows CCAs to focus better on the customer and completing their tasks, which likewise creates efficiencies.

In November 2024, the Company also updated its workforce management system. This technology provides automated workforce planning and forecasting. It offers the ability to schedule resources based on the call entry pattern. Previously, this work was primarily performed manually, and the new system offers more precision and accuracy, and streamlines the Company's processes to better determine workforce needs.

Hiring and Training Additional Customer Care Agents

The Company continues to work to hire and maintain CCAs to maintain an educated, proficient workforce focused on providing an optimized customer experience. The Company recently adjusted its onboarding approach for CCAs to include both self-paced online and live training. During the final week of training, CCAs field calls and receive live coaching and support from supervision and training teams. Once they graduate, the class continues to have access to live chats that offer immediate support. In the first month following training, CCAs are debriefed daily on their call performance and provided coaching and feedback on performance.

First Call Resolution

The Company continues to focus on improving First Call Resolution, which is a metric used to measure the resolution of customer issues on the first call to the Company. The Company plans to continue to expand its Quality Assurance program to identify trends in knowledge gaps and will be addressing these trends with both formalized training and supervisor coaching sessions to improve First Call Resolution and the other metrics described herein.

If you have any questions regarding the foregoing information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Teresa K. Harrold

cc: Certificate of Service
Kenneth M. Kulak, Esq. w/Enc. **VIA** Email
Mark A. Lazaroff, Esq. w/Enc. **VIA** Email
Catherine G. Vasudevan, Esq. w/Enc. **VIA** Email
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BEFORE THE
PENNSYLVANIA PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION

PENNSYLVANIA PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION	:	**DOCKET NOS.: R-2023-3043189 (Water)**
	:	**R-2023-3043190 (Wastewater)**
v.	:	
PENNSYLVANIA-AMERICAN WATER COMPANY	:	
	:	

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify and affirm that I have this day served a true and correct copy of **Pennsylvania-American Water Company's Compliance Filing,** on the following persons, in the manner specified below, in accordance with the requirements of 52 Pa. Code Section 1.54:

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Dated: January 21, 2025