

**PENNSYLVANIA PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION
HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA 17120**

Tamika Anderson

Public Meeting of August 28, 2025

3048214-OSA

v.

Docket No. C-2024-3048214

Philadelphia Gas Works

MOTION OF CHAIRMAN STEPHEN M. DeFRANK

Before the Commission for consideration today are the Exceptions of Tamika Anderson in response to the Initial Decision issued by Administrative Law Judge F. Joseph Brady. Ms. Anderson filed a complaint against Philadelphia Gas Works (PGW) alleging that there were incorrect charges on her bill, she was experiencing a reliability, safety or quality problem with her utility service and that she would like a payment arrangement. In his Initial Decision, the ALJ denied Ms. Anderson's complaint in its entirety. Ms. Anderson then filed Exceptions.

On June 13, 2025, the Commission issued an Order dismissing Ms. Anderson's Exceptions related to allegations of incorrect charges on the bill and any reliability, safety or quality problem. The June 13, 2025 Order, however, did not address Ms. Anderson's request for a Commission-issued payment arrangement. Instead, the June 13, 2025 Order directed PGW to submit information regarding the amount of Ms. Anderson's updated outstanding account balance, including what amount of her outstanding balance was accrued while she was enrolled in PGW's customer assistance program (CAP).

On June 23, 2025, PGW filed an additional exhibit showing Ms. Anderson's current arrearage of \$13,793 and stating that \$4,868 of that amount accrued while she was enrolled in CAP. Ms. Anderson's complaint with regard to her request for a Commission-issued payment arrangement is now ready for disposition.

In light of the record established in this case, I find that Ms. Anderson has failed to satisfy her burden that she is entitled to a Commission-issued payment arrangement.

The decision on whether to direct a utility to provide a payment arrangement for a customer often has many variables. On the one hand, utilities are entitled to be compensated for the service they provide. On the other hand, utility customers have a right to safe and reliable utility service at just and reasonable rates. A payment arrangement helps balance these two sometimes competing interests.

However, the Commission must reconcile two competing goals: providing an individual customer with an opportunity to retain service versus insulating the overall utility customer base from the harm of undue costs. There is no brightline test when balancing these two competing interests. The Commission must be guided by the ultimate public interest.

The record in this case is complicated. Ms. Anderson has never received a Commission-issued payment arrangement. Therefore, the Commission can direct PGW to provide her with one. Often times, a payment arrangement is the best way for a customer to repay arrears. However, PGW has provided Ms. Anderson with several payment arrangements which she has not kept. Furthermore, record evidence demonstrates that, as of the time of the hearing, Ms. Anderson had not made a payment on her account for more than five years. Ms. Anderson did attempt to make four payments during those five years by check, but each check was subsequently returned. Following her hearing with ALJ Brady, Ms. Anderson made two cash payments totaling over \$700. In addition, Ms. Anderson has been in and out of PGW's CAP during this time.

As a result, whether or not to give Ms. Anderson a Commission issued payment arrangement is a difficult decision. On balance, in this case, I find that Ms. Anderson's history of failure to make payments leads me to the determination that she should not be afforded a Commission-ordered payment arrangement. While Ms. Anderson has recently made two cash payments to PGW, she did not make any payments during the previous five years and has accrued an arrearage of over \$13,000. I believe it is in the public interest to deny her request and uphold the underlying Initial Decision in order to protect PGW's overall customer base from the risk and harm of undue costs.

THEREFORE, I MOVE:

1. That the Initial Decision of Administrative Law Judge F. Joseph Brady issued at this docket and dated October 28, 2024 is affirmed, consistent with this motion.
2. That the Exceptions filed by Tamika Anderson dated October 30, 2024 are denied.
3. That the Office of Special Assistants prepare an Order consistent with this motion.

August 28, 2025
Date



Stephen M. DeFrank
Chairman