

**BEFORE THE
PENNSYLVANIA PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION**

Orlu Regional Assembly Inc.	:	
	:	
v.	:	F-2025-3055519
	:	
Aqua Pennsylvania, Inc.	:	

INTERIM ORDER #1

This Order directs Orlu Regional Assembly Inc. to have an attorney enter his or her appearance on its behalf **on or before January 21, 2026.**

Procedural History

On May 27, 2025, Orlu Regional Assembly Inc. (“Orlu”) filed a Formal Complaint (“Complaint”) with the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (“Commission”) against Aqua Pennsylvania, Inc. (“Aqua”), alleging that there were incorrect charges on its bill. On page 10 of the Complaint form, titled “legal representation,” no attorney is listed as representing Orlu in this matter. The Complaint was filed by Dr. Eugene Asonye, the president of Orlu. The Complaint was served on Aqua on June 3, 2025.

On June 23, 2025, Aqua filed an Answer with New Matter to the Complaint, wherein it denied that there were incorrect charges on the Orlu account. In its New Matter, Aqua requested that this matter be referred to the Office of Administrative Law Judge’s (“OALJ”) Mediation Unit.

On July 18, 2025, the Commission issued an Interim Order Setting Resolution Conference, referring this matter to the OALJ’s mediation unit. Mediation was unsuccessful.

On December 3, 2025, a Hearing Notice was issued to the parties, scheduling this matter for an evidentiary hearing on February 4, 2026. Of relevance, the Hearing Notice states the following:

REPRESENTATION. If you are an individual, you may represent yourself or you may have an attorney represent you. All others, including a partnership, corporation, trust, association, or governmental agency or subdivision, must be represented by an attorney licensed to practice law in Pennsylvania, or admitted *pro hac vice*. Only an attorney may represent someone else.

December 3, 2025, Hearing Notice.

Also on December 3, 2025, a Prehearing Order was issued to the parties, providing the parties with the procedural rules that would govern the hearing. Of relevance, the Prehearing Order states the following:

7. **REPRESENTATION.** If you are an individual, you may represent yourself or you may have an attorney represent you. All others, including a partnership, corporation, trust, association, or governmental agency or subdivision, must be represented by an attorney licensed to practice law in Pennsylvania, or admitted *pro hac vice*. And, unless you are an attorney, you may not represent someone else.

December 5, 2025, Prehearing Order.

Attorney Representation

The Complaint in this matter was filed by Dr. Asonye on behalf of Orлу. Dr. Asonye did not indicate that he was an attorney licensed to practice law in Pennsylvania, further, no attorney is listed on paragraph 10 of the Complaint titled “legal representation.” Once Aqua filed an Answer to the Complaint, this proceeding became adversarial in nature. *See* 52 Pa. Code § 1.8. The Commission’s regulations require that persons in adversarial proceedings be

represented by an attorney or legal intern. *See* 52 Pa. Code § 1.21(b). The Commission’s regulations define “persons” as including individuals, corporations, partnerships, associations, joint ventures, other business organizations, trusts, trustees, legal representatives, receivers, agencies, governmental entities, municipalities, municipal corporations or other political subdivisions. *See* 52 Pa. Code § 1.8.

It is well-settled in Commission practice that participation in a formal adversarial proceeding before the Commission constitutes the practice of law. *See, e.g.,* *Lesley A. Scheaffer for Leslie W. Scheaffer v. Pa. Pub. Util. Comm’n*, Docket No. F-2016-2577647 (Opinion and Order entered Apr. 3, 2018). As such, that participation is limited to those who either file as individuals and represent themselves or to attorneys who are representing others. *Id.*

Accordingly, upon the filing of the Answer in this matter, Orlu, a corporation, was required to be represented by an attorney. The absence of an attorney where one is required deprives the Commission of jurisdiction to adjudicate the matter. *Adventure Alley CLC, LLC v. PECO Energy Co. and Great Am. Power*, Docket No. C-2014-2430850 (Final Order entered Nov. 25, 2014) (citing *McCain v. Curione, Pa. Bd. of Prob. and Parole*, 527 A.2d 591 (Pa. Cmwlth. 1987)). An issue of subject matter jurisdiction may be raised at any stage of a proceeding by a party or *sua sponte* by the presiding officer or by the Commission. *Blackwell v. State Ethics Comm’n*, 567 A.2d 630 (Pa. 1989).

Accordingly, this Order directs Orlu to have an attorney enter his or her appearance on its behalf **on or before January 21, 2026**. Non-compliance with this Order will result in cancellation of the hearing and dismissal of the Complaint. *See, e.g.,* *New Fizon Catering, Inc. v. PECO Energy Co.*, Docket No. C-2008-2065498 (Opinion and Order entered June 24, 2009); *Snyderville Cmty. Dev. Corp. v. Phila. Gas Works*, Docket No. C-20055032 (Opinion and Order entered July 31, 2006) (citing *Treffinger v. PPL Elec. Util. Corp.*, Docket No. C-20027978 (Opinion and Order entered Mar. 3, 2003); *Franconia Mennonite Conf. v. Verizon Pa. Inc.*, Docket No. C-2010-2193709 (Order entered June 6, 2003).

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