

**BEFORE THE
PENNSYLVANIA PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION**

Kristen Flaherty	:	
	:	
v.	:	C-2025-3057707
	:	
Columbia Gas of PA, Inc.	:	

**FIRST POST-HEARING ORDER
Granting Respondent’s Motion
for Admission of Exhibits**

On September 29, 2025, Kristen Flaherty (Complainant or Ms. Flaherty) filed a Formal Complaint against Columbia Gas of PA, Inc. (Respondent or Columbia) alleging Respondent was threatening to shut off natural gas service or had shut off natural gas service, and she requested a new payment arrangement.

On November 3, 2025, the Office of Administrative Law Judge (OALJ) issued a Call-In Telephone Hearing Notice, which scheduled an initial hearing to be conducted on January 8, 2026, with Administrative Law Judge Katrina L. Dunderdale (presiding officer). On November 3, 2025, the presiding officer issued a Prehearing Order which outlined various procedural matters.

On December 3, 2025, Respondent filed an Answer in which Respondent admitted it provides natural gas distribution service to Complainant and admitted sending Complainant a notice of pending termination of service in October 2025 due to Complainant’s repeated and persistent failure to pay monthly bills in full and on time. Respondent noted it provided Complainant with multiple payment arrangements. In addition, Respondent averred Complainant filed three separate informal complaints, six formal complaints and received three Commission payment arrangements from the Commission’s Bureau of Consumer Services (BCS) since 2019.

Respondent alleged Complainant had a substantial arrearage on her account in an amount exceeding \$3,300. Respondent requested the Commission order Complainant to pay \$909 to bring current the most recent company payment arrangement or, in the alternative, authorize Respondent to proceed with termination of service. Respondent asserted in its Answer that Complainant filed for and received payment arrangements from the Commission in three formal complaint proceedings, however, the docket numbers Columbia referenced did not correspond with the Commission's docketing system.

Also, on December 3, 2025, Respondent filed a Motion for Leave to File *Answer Nunc Pro Tunc* (Motion *Nunc Pro Tunc*) in which counsel requested the Commission accept the Answer of Columbia as if timely filed. Counsel indicated an Answer to the Complaint herein was filed by Columbia on October 22, 2025, but was filed erroneously in another proceeding after Columbia referenced an incorrect docket number. The Motion noted a hearing was scheduled for January 8, 2026, and granting the Motion would not delay the adjudication. Ms. Flaherty did not respond to the Motion *Nunc Pro Tunc*.

On December 22, 2025, the presiding officer issued the First Interim Order which granted Columbia's Motion *Nunc Pro Tunc*. The Order also specified that the initial hearing scheduled to be conducted telephonically on January 8, 2026, would proceed as indicated in the Hearing Notice dated November 3, 2025, and the Prehearing Order dated November 3, 2025.

On January 8, 2026, the presiding officer convened the hearing as scheduled. Larry R. Crayne, Esquire, appeared on behalf of Respondent along with one witness and was ready to proceed. The court reporter was also present. Complainant was not present at the start of the hearing and the hearing proceeded to provide Respondent with an opportunity to put on testimony in support of its averments in the Answer. Accordingly, Respondent presented the testimony of Iola Lee, Lead Regulatory Compliance Specialist, and presented, marked and identified four exhibits – Columbia Exhibits 1 through 4.

In lieu of making an oral motion to dismiss the Complaint for Complainant's failure to appear and prosecute her Complaint, Respondent noted it would file an appropriate

motion after the hearing that incorporates its final statement and moves to preclude Complainant from filing any complaint, due to abuse of the administrative process, until after Complainant pays the entire unpaid balance. The presiding officer adjourned the hearing at 10:39 a.m.

On January 13, 2026, Respondent filed its Motion for Admission of Exhibits (Motion to Admit). Respondent served a copy of the Motion on Complainant and attached a copy of the four exhibits. Respondent acknowledged the four exhibits were previously identified and sponsored during the initial hearing but inadvertently were not moved for admission into the hearing record prior to the end of the initial hearing. Respondent asserted the four exhibits are relevant and material to the issues presented. Attached to the Motion to Admit was a Notice to Plead which advised Ms. Flaherty to file a written response to Respondent's request within twenty (20) days.

To date, no response has been received from Ms. Flaherty to Columbia's request to admit the four exhibits identified and discussed at the hearing on January 8, 2026.

At the initial hearing, Respondent sponsored four exhibits. Respondent's witness identified all four exhibits and explained the information contained within each exhibit. In addition, the witness answered questions from the presiding officer. Further, the witness would have been subject to cross-examination questions, if Complainant had been present. Lastly, it is noted Complainant was notified she had twenty days in which to object to the admission of the exhibits, but she has chosen not to file an objection or comment on the Motion to Admit.

Respondent's request is reasonable and will be granted, pursuant to the authority of the presiding officer as provided in 52 Pa.Code § 5.483, and as pertains to the control of receipt of evidence in 52 Pa.Code §§ 5.403 and 5.404.

THEREFORE,

IT IS ORDERED:

1. That the four exhibits sponsored by Columbia Gas of Pennsylvania, Inc. at the initial hearing on January 8, 2026, are hereby admitted into evidence, pursuant to 52 Pa.Code § 5.403(a)(1) and § 5.404:

a. Columbia Exhibit 1

Account Statement 2022-2025

b. Columbia Exhibit 2

Summary of Payment Arrangements

c. Columbia Exhibit 3

Listing of Prior Complaints

d. Columbia Exhibit 4

PUC Payment Plan from October 2024

2. That Columbia Gas of Pennsylvania, Inc., shall submit one copy of each exhibit listed above to the Secretary's Bureau for filing, along with a copy of this Order, on or before Friday, February 13, 2026.

3. That Columbia Gas of Pennsylvania, Inc. will provide verifications with the exhibits when Columbia Gas of Pennsylvania, Inc. files the exhibits with the Commission.

Date: February 4, 2026

Katrina L. Dunderdale
Administrative Law Judge

C-2025-3057707 - KRISTEN FLAHERTY v. COLUMBIA GAS OF PA INC

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