

**BEFORE THE  
PENNSYLVANIA PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION**

Karen Feitt and Higinio Mendoza Jr.	:	
	:	
v.	:	C-2024-3051871
	:	
Duquesne Light Company	:	

**INITIAL DECISION**

Before  
Jeffrey A. Watson  
Administrative Law Judge

**INTRODUCTION**

The Complaint is dismissed as Complainants failed to sustain their burden of proving that the utility billed them fraudulently, improperly, or otherwise violated the Public Utility Code.

**HISTORY OF THE PROCEEDINGS**

On October 29, 2024, Higinio Mendoza and Karen Feitt (Complainants) filed a formal complaint against Duquesne Light Company (DLC, Company or Respondent). Complainants checked the boxes indicating that the utility is threatening to terminate their service and “Other.” Complaint ¶ 4. Complainants further averred they have a right to correct their bill and that the bill sent by Respondent constituted fraud and was a violation of “15 USC 1692 (e7).” Complainants also attached a two-page letter to the complaint entitled “: [A]MICUS-CURIAE-LETTER BY THE GLOBAL-POSTAL-

UNION-TREATY: STOPPING AND CORRECTING-WRONGS” (Letter). Complaint ¶ 5. Issues raised in the Complaint relate to claims that Duquesne Light is in violation of certain portions of the United States Code, specifically 39 U.S.C. § 101(A)(b) (related to the United States Postal Service’s service to rural areas) and 15 U.S.C. § 1692(e) (related to debt collection practices). Complaint ¶ 5. As relief, Complainants request that their electric service bills be corrected and for the Commission to stop the threats until this matter is corrected. Complaint ¶ 5.

DLC filed an Answer and New Matter on November 18, 2024. DLC admits to issuing a termination notice to Complainants but denies that there are any incorrect charges on Complainants’ bill. Answer ¶ 4. Respondent further denied that the Company’s billing practices constitute fraud or have violated the Public Utility Code, Commission regulations, a Commission order, or the Company’s Commission-approved tariff. Answer ¶¶ 4-5. Respondent further avers the Complaint is barred by the doctrines of res judicata and collateral estoppel. New Matter ¶¶ 2, 18.

DLC also filed Preliminary Objections on November 18, 2024. DLC alleged that the Complaints’ allegations that DLC violated provisions of the United States Code are outside of the Commission’s express jurisdiction of Pennsylvania Code, Commission regulations, or Commission orders, and should be dismissed. Issues raised in the Complaint also relate to claims that Duquesne Light is in violation of certain portions of the United States Code, specifically 39 U.S.C. § 101(A)(b) (related to the United States Postal Service’s service to rural areas) and 15 U.S.C. § 1692(e) (related to debt collection practices). DLC argues that the portions of the Complaint alleging violations of the United States Code be dismissed pursuant to Section 5.101(a)(1) of the Commission’s regulations because the Commission lacks subject matter jurisdiction over those federal claims.

Complainants did not file a response to DLC’s Preliminary Objections.

This matter was assigned to me on December 31, 2024.

On January 27, 2025, an Interim Order was entered sustaining the Preliminary Objections of Duquesne Light Company. The Order provides that Complainants are permitted to proceed with their claim to the extent that Complainants allege fraud in the billing practices of Respondent or that Respondent is threatening to terminate their service in violation of the Pennsylvania Public Utility Code, Commission regulations, or Commission orders.

On April 3, 2025, DLC filed a Motion for Judgment on the Pleadings of Duquesne Light Company requesting that the Complaint be dismissed. Respondent averred that the Complaint should be dismissed because the billing allegations are barred by Section 316 of the Public Utility Code; that the Complaint should be dismissed because the billing allegations are barred by the doctrines of res judicata and collateral estoppel; and because the filing of the Complaint constitutes an abuse of the administrative process.

On April 24, 2025, an Interim Order was entered denying the Motion for Judgment on the Pleadings of Duquesne Light Company. The Interim Order provided that Complainants could proceed with their claims specifically pled in their Complaint, including the claims alleging fraud in the billing practices of Respondent or that Respondent is threatening to terminate their service in violation of the Pennsylvania Public Utility Code, Commission regulations, or Commission orders, subject to proper objections raised by Respondent.

On October 21, 2025, the Office of Administrative Law Judge scheduled a hearing by telephone on December 24, 2025. On October 22, 2025, a Prehearing Order was entered which explained the procedures that would apply to the evidentiary hearing.

A hearing cancel/reschedule notice was issued rescheduling the initial telephone hearing for January 6, 2026. A Prehearing Order was entered on November 3, 2025.

I convened the hearing as re-scheduled on January 6, 2026. Higinio Mendoza, Jr. and Karen Feitt appeared self-represented, and Mr. Mendoza testified on his own behalf. Duquesne Light Company was represented by Megan Rulli, Esquire. Duquesne Light presented the testimony of one witness, Roxanne Morris. Duquesne Light moved for the admission of seven exhibits. Duquesne Light Exhibits 1, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10 and 11 were admitted into the record. The hearing generated a transcript of 107 pages which was received on January 16, 2026.

The record closed on January 16, 2026.

#### FINDINGS OF FACT

1. Complainants are Higinio Mendoza, Jr. and Karen A. Feitt who receive residential electric utility service from Respondent, Duquesne Light Company, at 1036 Jackman Avenue, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania (Service Address or Service Location). Tr. 65.

2. Respondent, Duquesne Light Company, is a jurisdictional public utility regulated by the Commission.

3. The account for the Service Address was established in the name of Karen Feitt. Tr. 65.

4. The account for the Service Location has an unpaid account balance of \$5,388.85. Tr. 65.

5. The outstanding balance on the account accrued because of the lack of payments and not paying the account balance in full. Tr. 65.

6. Complainant, Higinio Mendoza Jr., testified that the Company's billing practices are fraudulent and there was a billing error on the account but did not specify when or how the billing error was made or on what billing statements the alleged error appears. Tr. 27-29.

7. Complainants have not identified any specific deficiency with Complainants' bills issued by Respondent. Tr. 81.

8. Complainants have been making regular monthly payments of their regular current bill charges by postal service money order since approximately January of 2025. Tr. 27-28, 55.

9. Roxanne Morris is a supervisor of regulatory consumer relations for Duquesne Light Company and manages and attempts to resolve complaints filed by customers. Tr. 54.

10. Respondent provides monthly bills to Complainants based upon actual meter readings of consumption at the Service Address. Tr. 66.

11. Respondent's statement of account for the period for January 24, 2023 through December 22, 2025, does not identify any abnormal billing practices on the part of Respondent. Tr. 66-68; Respondent Exhibit 1.

12. Complainant was never current on the account during the period identified in the statement of account. Tr. 71; Respondent Exhibit 1.

13. Customers are required to pay their monthly bill amounts. Tr. 69.

14. The Company is authorized to terminate service to customers that have past due balances. Tr. 69.

15. Respondent provided Complainants with a service termination notice dated October 21, 2024, scheduling termination for November 5, 2024, for an outstanding balance of \$5,216.09 and an amount due to avoid termination of \$3,357.02. Tr. 78-79.

16. The following Complaints were filed by Karen Feitt at the account for the Service Location since 2012:

March of 2017	Dismissed
November 3, 2017	Dismissed
December 4, 2017	Dismissed
August 8, 2018	Dismissed
September 26, 2018	Complaint opened
April 5, 2019	Dismissed
September 6, 2019	Dismissed
March 28, 2022	Payment Arrangement
August 2, 2022	Dismissed
December 5, 2022	Dismissed
August 13, 2024	Dismissed
October 30, 2024	Instant case

Tr. 73-75; Respondent Exhibit 8.

17. From March of 2017 through February of 2020, Complainants had an active formal or informal complaint with the Commission during nearly every active billing period in that time frame. Tr. 74.

18. Complainants filed a Formal Complaint in 2017 at Docket Number F-2017-2636316 and in 2022 at Docket Number C-2022-3037095, both of which raised

the same issues in this proceeding and both of which were dismissed. Tr. 76-77; Respondent Exhibits 10-11.

### DISCUSSION

Section 701 of the Public Utility Code provides that any person may complain, in writing, about anything done or not done by a public utility which violates any laws which the Commission has the authority to administer. 66 Pa.C.S. § 701. A person can also complain that a utility has violated Commission regulations and orders. *Id.*

A person who wants the Commission to do something to resolve their complaint has the burden of proof. 66 Pa.C.S. § 332. In this matter, Complainants are the party asking for relief from the Commission; therefore, they have the burden of proof. This means that Complainants must present facts which support their claim that Duquesne Light made an error on their bill or that the bills were otherwise fraudulent. As a matter of law, to establish a legally sufficient claim, a complainant must show that the utility is responsible or accountable for the problem described in the complaint. The offense must be a violation of the Public Utility Code, a Commission regulation or Order or a violation of a Commission-approved tariff. 66 Pa.C.S. § 701.

This Complaint is the latest in a line of Complaints filed by Complainants in which Complainants claim that the bills provided by Respondent are incorrect or fraudulent.

Complainant, Higinio Mendoza Jr., testified that the Company's billing practices are fraudulent and there was a billing error on the account but did not specify when or how the billing error was made or on what billing statements the alleged error

appears. Tr. 27-29. Complainants did not identify any specific deficiency with Complainants' bills issued by Respondent. Tr. 81.

It is well settled that customers have an obligation to pay for utility service. *Scaccia v. West Penn Power Company*, 55 Pa.P.U.C. 637 (1982).

Complainants have the burden of proving that Duquesne Light violated a rule or regulation of the Public Utility Commission. Complainants offered no evidence to support their claim that their bill from Duquesne Light was inaccurate.

In contrast, Duquesne Light offered the credible testimony of Roxanne Morris, who reviewed Complainants' statement of account and the payments made by Complainants. Respondent provides monthly bills to Complainants based upon actual meter readings of consumption at the Service Address. Tr. 66. Respondent's statement of account for the period for January 24, 2023 through December 22, 2025 does not identify any abnormal billing practices on the part of Respondent. Tr. 66-68; Respondent Exhibit 1.

This Complaint is the latest in a series of Complaints where Complainants present convoluted arguments to avoid paying their utility bills. Although every effort was made to provide Complainants with ample opportunity to identify Commission rules or regulations that Duquesne Light violated in rendering utility service to Complainants, Complainants have failed to present any facts or cite any law which would support their position.

To the extent that I could discern an argument, Complainants' claims fail to state a legally sufficient claim at all and are not supported by any credible evidence. Therefore, the Complaint will be dismissed, with prejudice.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

1. The Commission has jurisdiction over the parties and subject matter of the formal complaint. 66 Pa.C.S. § 701.
2. Complainants bear the burden of proof. 66 Pa.C.S. § 332.
3. A public utility is entitled to receive payment for the service it provides. *See Scaccia v. West Penn Power Company*, 55 Pa.P.U.C. 637 (1982).
4. Complainants failed to sustain their burden of proving that Duquesne Light Company violated the Public Utility Code, a regulation or an order of the Commission. 66 Pa.C.S. § 332.

ORDER

THEREFORE,

IT IS ORDERED:

1. That the formal complaint of Higinio Mendoza, Jr. and Karen Feitt v. Duquesne Light Company at Docket No. C-2024-3051871 is dismissed, with prejudice.
2. That the Secretary shall mark the docket closed.

Date: April 8, 2026

\_\_\_\_\_  
/s/  
Jeffrey A. Watson  
Administrative Law Judge