

**PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION OF OREGON  
STAFF REPORT  
PUBLIC MEETING DATE: February 11, 2021**

REGULAR  CONSENT  EFFECTIVE DATE February 12, 2021

**DATE:** February 1, 2021

**TO:** Public Utility Commission

**FROM:** Sabrinna Soldavini

**THROUGH:** Bryan Conway and John Crider **SIGNED**

**SUBJECT:** IDAHO POWER COMPANY:  
(Docket No. ADV 1224/Advice No. 20-16)  
Requests Updates to Rule F, Service Connection and Discontinuance.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends that the Public Utility Commission of Oregon (Commission) approve Idaho Power Company's (Idaho Power, IPC, or Company) request to update Rule F, Service Connection and Discontinuance, effective with service rendered on and after February 12, 2021.

**DISCUSSION:**

Issue

Whether the Commission should approve Idaho Power's Advice No. 20-16, which modifies its Rule F, Service Connection and Discontinuance, by changing language related to reconnection and field service visit charges, in accordance with Order No. 20-401, effective with service rendered on and after February 12, 2021.

Applicable Law

ORS 757.205 requires public utilities to file schedules showing all rates, tolls, and charges for service that have been established and are in force at the time. Pursuant to ORS 757.210, the Commission may approve tariff changes if they are deemed to be fair, just, and reasonable.

Filings that make any change in rates, tolls, charges, rules or regulations must be filed with the Commission at least 30 days before the effective date of the changes. ORS 757.220; OAR 860-022-0015. Tariff filings to be effective on less than 30 days following notice of the change may be authorized with a waiver of less than statutory notice pursuant to ORS 757.220 and OAR 860-022-0020.

## Analysis

### *Background*

On March 8, 2020, Oregon Governor Kate Brown declared a state of emergency due to the public health threat posed by COVID-19, and directed Oregonians to stay at home to the greatest extent possible in Executive Order No. 20-12 (March 23, 2020). The state of emergency has been extended, most recently, in Executive Order 20-67 (December 17, 2020) to last through March 3, 2021, unless extended or terminated earlier by the Governor.

On June 9, 2020, the Commission conducted a Special Public meeting on the “Impact to Utility Customers during the COVID-19 Pandemic and Future Economic Recovery.” As a result of this meeting, Docket No. UM 2114 was opened to address the challenges caused by the COVID-19 Pandemic. A stipulated Agreement in Docket No. UM 2114 was approved by the Commission in Order No. 20-401 on November 5, 2020.

On December 31, 2020, the Company filed Tariff Advice No. 20-16, requesting that the Rule F language be modified to state that a Service Connection Charge or Field Visit Charge *may* be assessed at the time service is connected or when a Company representative visits a service address intending to disconnect or connect service, but due to Customer action, the Company representative is unable to complete the action at the time of the visit. Currently, the tariff language states that customers *will* be charged. Changing the language from ‘will’ to ‘may’ is done in to better align the tariff with Order No. 20-401, which waives reconnection and disconnection charges for residential customers through October 1, 2022.

### *Review*

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has created added financial burden on many ratepayers. In Order No. 20-401, the Commission adopted a stipulation addressing the effects of the pandemic on energy utility customers. The terms of this Order include a provision, paragraph 11, under which utilities agree not to apply service disconnection and reconnection fees to residential customers through October 1, 2022.<sup>1</sup> This requirement extends through October 1, 2022, though the parties to the stipulation have

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<sup>1</sup> UM 2114, Order No. 20-401, Appendix A at 15.

agreed to confer on or about October 1, 2021, to determine whether to request that the Commission modify the October 1, 2022, end date.

Staff has reviewed the Company's filing, and finds that the requested modification to Rule F, Service Connection and Discontinuance, which allows the Company to waive reconnection and field service visit charges for residential customers, conforms to Commission Order No. 20-401.

Staff further finds that the proposed modifications to Rule F will benefit those customers who have experienced increased financial hardship due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

### Conclusion

Based on the circumstances outlined above, and Staff's review of the Company's filing, Staff concludes that Idaho Power's request to modify Rule F, Service Connection and Discontinuance, is in compliance with Order No. 20-401.

Staff further concludes that the requested changes will result in rates that are fair, just, and reasonable, and recommends that the Commission approve the Company's tariff as proposed in Advice No. 20-16.

### **PROPOSED COMMISSION MOTION:**

Approve Idaho Power's request to modify Rule F, Service Connection and Discontinuance, in accordance with Commission Order No. 20-401, effective with service rendered on and after February 12, 2021.