

**PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION OF OREGON  
STAFF REPORT  
PUBLIC MEETING DATE: November 28, 2023**

**REGULAR**  **CONSENT**  **EFFECTIVE DATE** \_\_\_\_\_ **N/A**

**DATE:** November 1, 2023

**TO:** Public Utility Commission

**FROM:** Kathy Zarate

**THROUGH:** Bryan Conway, Marc Hellman, and Matt Muldoon **SIGNED**

**SUBJECT:** AVISTA:  
(Docket No. UM 2260)  
Approval for Deferred Certain Costs Associated with Declared  
Emergencies.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends the Public Utility Commission of Oregon (Commission) approve Avista's (Company) request for authorization to establish an emergency deferral account.

**DISCUSSION:**

Issue

Whether the Commission should approve the Company's request for authorization to establish an emergency deferral account.

Applicable Law

ORS 757.259 and OAR 860-027-0300, address the Oregon Public Utility Commission's ("Commission") authority to allow deferred accounting. Order No. 21-529 allows utilities to request to establish an emergency deferred account for the immediate deferral of costs associated with events the Oregon Governor or Federal Government has declared are emergencies.

## Analysis

### *Background*

In Order No. 21-259, the Commission approved the recommendation of the Administrative Hearings Division in Docket No. UM 2181, inviting utilities to file applications to establish emergency deferral accounts to streamline recovery efforts after emergency events, natural disasters, and extreme weather that may create significant impacts to utility systems. The Company Emergency Deferral Account will only track expenses proximately caused by an emergency that is the subject of a state or federal declaration.

If a deferral is triggered, Avista would be required to file a Notice of Deferral with the Commission within 30 days of the declaration of the emergency that states the utility is recording amounts in the pre-filed emergency deferral account; identifies the pertinent state of emergency declaration; and that describes the emergency, the impact on facilities, anticipated expenses, and other relevant details.

Once the Emergency Deferral Account is established it does not have to be re-authorized. However, once Avista files a notice indicating it is recording amounts in the pre-filed emergency deferral account, the authority to record (i.e., defer) amounts related to the emergency at issue expires 12 months from the date of the emergency declaration. The utility must follow the procedures of [OAR 860-027-0300\(4\)](#) to re-authorize the deferral.

### Conclusion

Staff concludes the Commission should approve Avista's request to establish an Emergency Deferral Account as allowed under Order No. 21-259.

The Company has reviewed this memo and has no objection.

### **PROPOSED COMMISSION MOTION:**

Approve Avista's application request to establish an Emergency Deferral Account.