



Oregon

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Public Utility Commission

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December 28, 2023



BY EMAIL

Portland General Electric Company

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RE: Advice No. 23-23

At the public meeting on December 28, 2023, the Commission adopted Staff's recommendation in this matter docketed as ADV 1552. The Staff Report and a receipted copy of the sheets in your advice filing are attached.

Nolan Moser

Chief Administrative Law Judge

Public Utility Commission of Oregon

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

REGULAR _____ **CONSENT** X **EFFECTIVE DATE** January 1, 2024

DATE: December 18, 2023

TO: Public Utility Commission

FROM: Kaitlin Lynch

THROUGH: Caroline Moore **SIGNED**

SUBJECT: PORTLAND GENERAL ELECTRIC:
(Docket No. ADV 1552/Advice No. 23-23)
Updates Schedule 115 – Oregon Low-Income Assistance

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Approve Portland General Electric’s (PGE) Advice Filing No. 23-23 to update Schedule 115, Low-Income Assistance, with an effective date of January 1, 2024.

DISCUSSION:

Issue

Whether the Commission should approve PGE’s proposed revision to Schedule 115 that reflects the sunseting of a temporary increase in collections directed by House Bill (HB) 2739 (2021 regular session), and compliance with Order No. 23-386, which changes the average residential usage to 795 kWh, with an effective date of January 1, 2024.¹

Applicable Law

Under ORS 757.205(1):

Every public utility shall file with the Public Utility Commission, within a time to be fixed by the commission, schedules, which shall be open to public inspection, showing all rates, tolls and charges which it has established and which are in force at the time for any service performed

¹ See ORS 757.698 Sec. 4. Available at https://www.oregonlegislature.gov/bills_laws/ors/ors757.html.

by it within the state, or for any service in connection therewith or performed by any public utility controlled or operated by it.

The Commission may approve tariff changes if they are deemed fair, just, and reasonable. ORS 757.210.

ORS 757.698(1)(c) states that no customer shall pay more than \$500 per month per customer site for low-income electric bill payment and crisis assistance. ORS 757.698 Sec. 4. Section 3 of this 2021 Act is repealed on January 2, 2024.

Tariff revisions may be made by filing revised sheets with the information required under the Commission's administrative rules, including OAR 860-022-0025.

OAR 860-022-0025(2) specifically requires that each energy utility changing existing tariffs or schedules must include in its filing a statement plainly indicating the increase, decrease, or other changes made with the filing, the number of customers affected by the proposed change and the resulting change in annual revenue; and the reasons or grounds relied upon in support of the proposed change.

Filings that propose 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 change. ORS 757.220; OAR 860-022-0015.

Analysis

Background

On November 2, 2023, PGE filed a revision to Schedule 115, Low-Income Assistance, to reflect the sunset of a temporary increase in collections as directed by HB 2739. HB 2739 temporarily increased the amount of funds collected for low-income electric bill payment and crisis assistance by \$10 million each year for two years, beginning January 1, 2022. This brought the total amount collected for low-income assistance to \$30 million per year. Historically, PGE and Pacific Power (PacifiCorp) have worked together to establish each company's share of the total requirement. Based on the size of each company's customer base, PGE collects sixty percent, while PacifiCorp collects 40 percent. The increase in collections resulted in PGE collecting approximately \$18 million and PacifiCorp collecting approximately \$12 million. As of January 2, 2024, the statewide annual collection requirement will revert to a minimum of \$20 million,² and PGE's 60 percent share will revert to at least \$12 million. The revised Schedule 115 details the updated rates that will be reflected on customers' bills.

² ORS 757.698 (Notes Sec. 4).

In accordance with ORS 757.698(1)(c), customers may not be charged more than \$500 per month per site for low-income bill payment assistance.³ This effectively limits collections from non-residential customers and necessitates separate rates be applied to residential and non-residential schedules for low-income bill payment assistance. As a result, Schedule 115 is structured with a per kWh price for non-residential customers and a flat fee for residential customers.

Staff Analysis

All non-residential customers will pay 0.076¢ per kWh for the first 657,895 kWh of usage. Multiplying the rate of 0.076¢ by 657,895 kWh yields the \$500 per month per site limit. The residential flat fee is based on average residential monthly usage, which was revised from 1000 kWh to 795 kWh, following Docket No. UE 416, Order No. 23-386. Multiplying the average residential usage of 795 kWh by 0.076¢ results in the residential flat fee of \$0.60. PGE estimates that approximately 940,000 Retail Customers will be impacted by this 0.2 percent decrease in 2024. A typical Residential Customer will see a monthly bill decrease of \$0.44 or 0.3 percent.

Staff reviewed PGE's workpapers and was able to confirm that the updated rates will result in collections of at least \$12 million. Staff also reviewed PacifiCorp's filing, ADV 1555/Advice No. 23-020, and can confirm that PacifiCorp will collect the remaining \$8 million, bringing the total amount collected past the \$20 million minimum required by ORS 727.698. All funds collected under this schedule will be remitted to Oregon Housing and Community Services.

Conclusion

After reviewing ORS 757.698 and PGE's proposed revisions to Schedule 115, Staff concludes that the proposed tariff complies with the sunseting of the temporary increase in collections as outlined in ORS 757.698. Staff therefore recommends that the Commission allow the proposed rates to take effect.

PROPOSED COMMISSION MOTION:

Approve PGE's proposed revisions to Schedule 115, Low-Income Assistance, effective for service rendered on or after January 1, 2024.

PGE ADV 1552

³ Sites are defined in Rule B of PGE's tariff. Available at: https://assets.ctfassets.net/416ywc1laqmd/3o9FdGskloIraCHhLxPzwA/48cd45b5373a8b2a2109bfa413e81831/Rule_B.pdf.

**SCHEDULE 115
LOW-INCOME ASSISTANCE**

PURPOSE

The purpose of this rate schedule is to implement the low-income bill payment assistance provisions in accordance with ORS 757.612(7)(b). (C)
(C)

APPLICABLE

To all Retail Electricity Customers, including Customers receiving electricity from other sources and Customers who do not purchase distribution services from PGE per ORS 757.612(8), except those Customers explicitly exempted.

ADJUSTMENT RATES

The applicable Adjustment Rates are listed below. As specified in ORS 757.698(1)(c), Customers will not be required to pay more than \$500 per month per Site for low-income bill payment assistance. Sites are defined in Rule B of this tariff. (C)
|
(C)

<u>Schedules</u>	<u>Adjustment Rate</u>	
7	\$0.60 per month	(R)
All other Schedules, including DSIs	0.076¢ per kWh for the first 657,895 kWh	(R) (C)

SPECIAL CONDITION

1. On a monthly basis, on or before the last day of the month, the Company will forward an amount to the Oregon Housing and Community Services Department (OHCS) based on billings to Customers for the previous month less a reserve for uncollectable amounts.