

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

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PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
21 S. Fruit St., Suite 10
Concord, N.H. 03301-2429

February 20, 2025

Re: DE 24-070, Public Service Company of New Hampshire d/b/a Eversource Energy
Request for Change in Distribution Rates
Updated Hearing Guidelines

To the Parties:

The following procedures have been established by the Commission and its administrative rules to facilitate the hearing(s) scheduled in this matter. Some of these procedures may not apply to non-evidentiary matters, such as prehearing conferences.

All participants are expected to appear in person at any hearing, unless previously excused by the Commission. To request remote participation, a motion should be filed with the Commission's Clerk's Office, pursuant to New Hampshire Code of Administrative Rules, Puc 203.07(b)(9), no later than fifteen (15) days prior to the hearing date.

1. Hearing Preparation

a. Hearing Exhibits to be Bates Stamped, Premarked, and Prefiled

The parties shall confer for the purposes of identifying and numbering exhibits. The parties shall nominate one party to submit a complete list of exhibits reflecting the proposed numbering. No later than 4:30 p.m., at least 10 business days prior to the date the hearing is scheduled, the nominated party shall submit the exhibit list electronically to ClerksOffice@puc.nh.gov with an email subject heading that lists the docket number and hearing date. *See* N.H. Admin. R., Puc 204.13.

No later than 4:30 p.m., at least 10 business days prior to the date the hearing is scheduled, all listed exhibits shall be submitted electronically to ClerksOffice@puc.nh.gov with an email subject heading that lists the docket number and hearing date. *See id.*, Puc 204.12(a). Exhibits larger than 33 MB should be submitted using the State of New Hampshire file transfer protocol (FTP). *Id.*, Puc 203.03(c).

Parties must prefile all exhibits, either in paper or electronic format, with the required markings. *See id.*, Puc 204.12(b). Parties may not use previously submitted documents as their exhibits because those previously submitted documents will not have the required markings. Large files that cannot be

submitted using the FTP must be broken down into files that do not exceed 25 MB in size, and individual emails may not exceed 25 MB in size. *See id.*, Puc 203.03(d). Parties must premark each exhibit in the upper right-hand corner of each page with the docket number and the exhibit number. *Id.*, Puc 204.12(b)(3).

Parties must sequentially paginate each exhibit, which should be Bates-stamped with Arabic numerals only. *Id.*, Puc 204.12(b)(1)-(2). The sequential pagination must carry through multi-document exhibits. Bates numbering must appear in the lower right corner of each page of the exhibit, in approximately the same location, unless such placement would cause confusion or block the view of necessary information in the exhibit. *See id.*, Puc 204.12(b)(2).

Parties must name each electronic version of an exhibit using the following naming convention: Docket No. without prefix-Hearing-Date-exh-# [Example: 20-040-2020-04-27-exh-3]. Parties may not include more than one exhibit per electronic file. If a large file exceeds 25 MB in size and has been broken into several smaller parts, this should be reflected in the exhibit number, such as “exh-1 (Part 1 of 5).” Confidential files should be named using the following naming convention: con-Docket No. without prefix-Hearing-Date-exh-#.

Failure of the parties to follow the above requirements and comply with Puc 204.12 may result in postponement of the hearing. *See id.*, Puc 204.12(h).

b. Witness Lists

No later than 4:30 p.m., at least 10 business days prior to the date the hearing is scheduled, each party shall submit its witness list electronically to ClerksOffice@puc.nh.gov with an email subject heading that lists the docket number, hearing date, and name of party filing. *See id.*, Puc 204.13(b). The parties may submit a joint witness list. The Commission may limit the number of witnesses or time for each witness’s testimony pursuant to Puc 204.11.

c. Filing and Service

All parties must observe the Commission’s administrative rules for filing and service. *See id.*, Puc 201.02.

If parties file copies of exhibits and exhibit lists electronically, then no paper filings will be required. *See id.*, Puc 203.04.

d. Confidential Information

No later than 4:30 p.m., at least 10 business days prior to the date the hearing is scheduled, parties must advise the Commission by email sent to ClerksOffice@puc.nh.gov and the service list if they will be discussing or introducing confidential information during the hearing. If so, parties should identify the confidential information in question.

2. Conduct of Hybrid Hearing

a. Use of Webex Videoconferencing Platform

If a hybrid hearing format will be used, the Commission will use the Webex videoconferencing software to hold the hearing. Parties who have obtained prior Commission approval to participate remotely during the hearing will be sent a link to the Webex videoconference in advance that will enable them to join the hearing remotely.

b. Technology Requirements for Remote Participation & Best Practices

Parties and individuals participating remotely must have the ability to be seen and heard by the commissioners during the hearing. Accordingly, some form of camera device and microphone must be available to remote participants. All individuals participating remotely are encouraged to use a hard-wired, not wireless, internet connection and a good quality wired microphone. Remote participants should download and test the Webex software in advance of the hearing.

c. Preregistration of Remote Participants

No later than 4:30 p.m., at least 5 business days prior to the date the hearing is scheduled, each person who has obtained prior Commission approval to appear remotely and who wishes to speak for, or on behalf of, a party, or to provide public comment during the hearing must register with the moderator¹ at PUCWebModerator@puc.nh.gov by sending an email with a subject heading that lists the docket number, hearing date, and name of party filing. A party should submit one email for all of its remote participants (witnesses, attorneys, etc.) listing the name, email address, and telephone number of each remote participant.

d. Presentation of Exhibits by Remote Participants

Each remote participant must clearly identify each exhibit by its premarked number before referencing it or introducing it by video during the hearing. If it will be necessary for a remote party to display an exhibit (or exhibits) on the screen during the hearing, then that party must do a run-through with the moderator at least one business day prior to the scheduled hearing to ensure that the party knows how to do so and how to close the presentation when it is complete.

e. Technology Trouble Shooting on the Hearing Day

Hearing participants joining remotely via Webex must join the Webex conference at least 15 minutes before the scheduled commencement of the hearing to verify their names and affiliations, resolve any technical issues, and discuss any necessary preparations prior to the commencement of the hearing.

¹ The moderator is a staff member assigned to aid the Commission with the technological aspects of the remote hearing.

Any remote participant experiencing difficulties obtaining access to, or participating in, the hearing should call the Commission at (603) 271-2431.

f. Hybrid Hearing Protocol for Remote Participants

A record will be made of all Commission hearings. Therefore, during the hybrid hearing, all participants who have obtained prior Commission approval to participate remotely during the hearing must choose the “mute” option when they are not speaking to ensure the best sound quality. The moderator will mute any remote participant causing noise interference.

Although remote participants must mute their microphones when not speaking, remote participants wishing to make an objection may unmute for that purpose. For any other issue, any remote participant wishing to speak should physically raise their hand first and should only speak after being recognized by the Presiding Officer.

All non-active participants who are not attorneys of record, and who have obtained prior Commission approval to participate remotely during the hearing, will be placed in “attende” mode, which will deactivate their microphone and video feed, to make it easier for other participants and the Commissioners to focus on the speakers during the hearing and to reduce network saturation. Non-active participants who have obtained prior Commission approval to participate remotely during the hearing will still be able to view and hear the hearing.

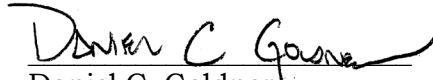
Each remote participant must clearly identify him- or herself before speaking and identify any other persons present at the remote participant’s location. Speakers are advised to face their camera and speak slowly, with frequent pauses, to ensure accurate transcription.

The Commission does not recommend the use of the Webex “private chat” function to facilitate attorney/client consultations. The Commission does not use or monitor the chat function during hybrid hearings.

- g. Although the Commission will, if necessary, address any confidential matters separately at a single time during the hybrid hearing, the Commission may also need to do so at other times during the hearing, at which time public access to the hearing will be suspended. The public and parties who do not have a right to confidential information will not be able to participate in the hearing when this occurs for so long as confidential information is being addressed during the hearing.

The Presiding Officer may issue further procedures as necessary.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Daniel C. Goldner". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Daniel C. Goldner
Presiding Officer
Chairman

cc: Service List (Electronically)
Docket File