



Public Utility Commission of Texas

1701 N. Congress, P.O. Box 13326, Austin, TX 78711-3326 Fax 512-936-7003

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Contact: Andrew Barlow
[512-936-7135]

Public Utility Commission Orders Adaptations in View of COVID-19

Emphasizes measures that limit person-to-person contact

Austin, TX – The Public Utility Commission of Texas today met in an emergency open meeting to address measures the agency is taking to encourage social distancing in accord with health care best practices and direction from the governor. The overriding priority is to limit person-to-person contact while fulfilling the agency’s commitment to Texas utility customers and the entities that serve them.

“Each and every Texan has an obligation to help ‘flatten the curve’ of COVID-19 infections through the adoption of social distancing and this agency is no exception,” said DeAnn Walker, chairman of the Commission. “There will certainly be challenges as we transition to a remote approach, but diligent utilization of communications technology can keep us connected as we do what is best for Texans.”

The Commissioners voted unanimously to suspend commission rules that require physical interactions at the agency, including those related to filing hard copies of documents in person. As individuals and entities filing pleadings, comments, and cases with the commission adapt to the exclusively online method, certain deadlines related to the traditional filing approach may be loosened. Any filings for the PUC’s Central Records division must be done online using the agency’s [E-File utility](#). Instructions for use can be found [here](#).

Commissioners will continue conducting commission business in keeping with the law. To the maximum extent possible, attendees are encouraged to view the PUC’s open meetings [online](#). In addition, the Commission has responded to Gov. Abbott’s request for guidance on the suspension of laws with recommendations that are currently under consideration. Industry participants can keep track of that conversation and other initiatives related to COVID-19 in [PUC Project 50664](#).

As a precautionary measure, the PUC has implemented an agency-wide teleworking policy. With the exception of certain “onsite essential” personnel, PUC employees will be working remotely, connecting via the agency’s virtual private network and carrying out their regular responsibilities. These include checking voicemail at least hourly, monitoring email, and using teleconferencing for scheduled meetings with both coworkers and outside parties.

The PUC’s Customer Protection Division will continue fielding [complaints](#) via email, online forms (with unique versions for [electric](#), [water](#) and [telephone](#)) and phone (using a virtual call center platform that will route incoming calls to customer protection representatives at home). Response times for complaints submitted by postal mail or faxes will likely be significantly longer, so use of online submittal is strongly encouraged.

The PUC will continue to follow the Governor’s Office guidance on the COVID-19 response as it works to fulfill its commitment to the people of Texas and the industry participants who serve them.

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About the Public Utility Commission

Our mission is to serve Texans by regulating the state's electric, telecommunication, and water and sewer utilities, implementing respective legislation, and offering customer assistance in resolving consumer complaints. Since its founding in 1975, the Commission has a long and proud history of service to Texas, protecting customers, fostering competition, and promoting high quality infrastructure. To learn more, please visit <http://www.puc.texas.gov>.