

**THE STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
BEFORE THE
PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION**

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMPANY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE'S
REQUEST FOR WAIVER OF PUC 1203.11(s)**

Docket No. DE 13-XXX

NOW COMES, Public Service Company of New Hampshire ("PSNH") and, pursuant to New Hampshire Code of Administrative Rules Puc 201.05, requests that the Commission waive certain requirements of Puc 1203.11(s) relative to the use of third parties for conducting collection activities. In support of this filing, PSNH says the following:

1. As part of its last distribution rate case, Docket No. DE 09-035, PSNH was required to undertake a study of its uncollectible accounts and investigate available options to control the level of uncollectible accounts. To address the rise in uncollectible amounts related to accounts coded as "medical emergency" ("ME"), PSNH is seeking to employ the services of a third party for collections activities relating to those accounts. PSNH would use an outside firm with substantial experience in such matters and which will implement reasonable and respectful processes for collection activities on behalf of PSNH for these ME accounts.

2. Pursuant to Puc 1203.11(s):

A utility may use a third party to conduct collection activities provided:

- (1) The third party complies with Puc 1200; and
- (2) For all accounts other than terminated accounts, the use of a third party is transparent to the customer.

PSNH represents that any third party acting on its behalf will comply with Puc 1200 in its collection activities. However, the Staff of the Commission has indicated that since PSNH intends to employ third parties for collection activities, the use of a third party may not be

“transparent” to customers. On information and belief, PSNH understands the use of “transparent” in the regulation to be a requirement that, from the perspective of the customer, the customer is dealing directly with the utility rather than through a third party. Because, however, PSNH believes that the special circumstances relating to ME customers may require different treatment than other customers, PSNH requests, pursuant to Puc 201.05, that the Commission waive the requirement that the use of a third party be “transparent” as that term is used in Puc 1203.11(s)(2).

3. Under Puc 201.05, the Commission shall waive the provisions of any of its rules when the waiver serves the public interest and will not disrupt the orderly and efficient resolution of matters before the Commission. In determining whether the waiver will serve the public interest, the Commission must determine whether compliance with the applicable rule would be onerous or inapplicable given the circumstances, or the purpose of the rule would be satisfied by another method.

4. In that this request for waiver does not pertain to any matters currently pending before the Commission, PSNH avers that granting the waiver will not disrupt the orderly and efficient resolution of matters before the Commission. As to the public interest, PSNH believes that compliance with the rule would be onerous or inapplicable in these circumstances and, therefore, that waiving the rule would serve the public interest. Conducting collection activities on ME customers may require specialized skills, knowledge or processes that are outside the normal scope of PSNH’s collection activities. As such, it is appropriate for a third party to be separately identified in such circumstances, rather than be “transparent” as contemplated by the rule.

WHEREFORE, PSNH respectfully requests that the Commission grant a waiver of Puc 1203.11(s), and order such further relief as may be just and equitable.

Respectfully submitted,

Public Service Company of New Hampshire

3/7/13

Date

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