

State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations

Budget



Fiscal Year 2017

Volume I – General Government and Quasi-Public Agencies

Gina M. Raimondo, Governor

Agency

Public Utilities Commission

Agency Mission

To provide fair regulation of public utilities, CATV, common carriers, and major energy facilities; ensure just and reasonable rates; ensure sufficient utility infrastructure to promote economic development; implement legislative mandates that facilitate renewable electric generation, improve water availability, deliver rapid communications and assure that Rhode Island is on the cutting edge of reliability and environmental quality regulation; and cooperate with other state and federal government agencies to coordinate efforts to meet the above objectives.

Agency Description

The Public Utilities Commission (PUC) comprises two distinct regulatory bodies: a three member Commission (Commission) and the Division of Public Utilities and Carriers (Division). The Public Utilities Commission serves as a quasi-judicial tribunal with jurisdiction, powers, and duties to implement and enforce the standards of conduct under §39-1-27.6 and to hold investigations and hearings involving the rates, tariffs, tolls, and charges, and the sufficiency and reasonableness of facilities and accommodations of railroad, ferry boats, gas, electric distribution, water, telephone, telegraph, and pipeline public utilities, the location of railroad depots and stations, and the control of grade crossings, the revocation, suspension or alteration of certificates issued pursuant to §39-19-4, appeals under §39-1-30, petitions under §39-1-31, and proceedings under §39-1-32. Through participation in the Energy Facility Siting Board, the Commission's chair also exercises jurisdiction over the siting of major energy facilities, pursuant to Chapter 42-98.

The Division, which is headed by an Administrator, who is not a Commissioner, exercises the jurisdiction, supervision, powers and duties not specifically assigned to the Commission, including the execution of all laws relating to public utilities and carriers and all regulations and orders of the Commission governing the conduct and charges of public utilities. The Division has exclusive jurisdiction over the rates, tariffs, tolls and charges, and the sufficiency, and reasonableness of facilities and accommodations of common carriers of property and passengers over the State's public roadways, pursuant to Chapters 39-12, 39-13, and 39-14. Additionally, the Division supervises and regulates Community Antenna Television Systems (CATV) in Rhode Island; certifies all public utilities; and has independent regulatory authority over the transactions between public utilities and affiliates, and all public utility equity and debt issuances. The Division's consumer and engineering sections handle approximately 23,000 telephone inquires annually. In addition, the consumer section conducts a high volume of informal reviews and formal evidentiary hearings under the Rules Governing the Termination of Residential Electric, Gas and Water Utility Services. The hearings provide a forum for consumers to develop payment plans, under the guidelines established in the rules.

Statutory History

The PUC and its predecessor agency, the Rhode Island Railroad Commission, have been regulating utilities in this state since 1839. The Railroad Commission was later abolished by an act of the legislature, leading to the creation of the more comprehensive Public Utility Commission in 1912. From 1981 to 1996, the duties of the Administrator of the Division and Chairperson of the Commission were combined in a single position. The Utility Restructuring Act of 1996 later divided these duties into two separate positions: Chairman of the Commission and Administrator, Division of Public Utilities and Carriers.

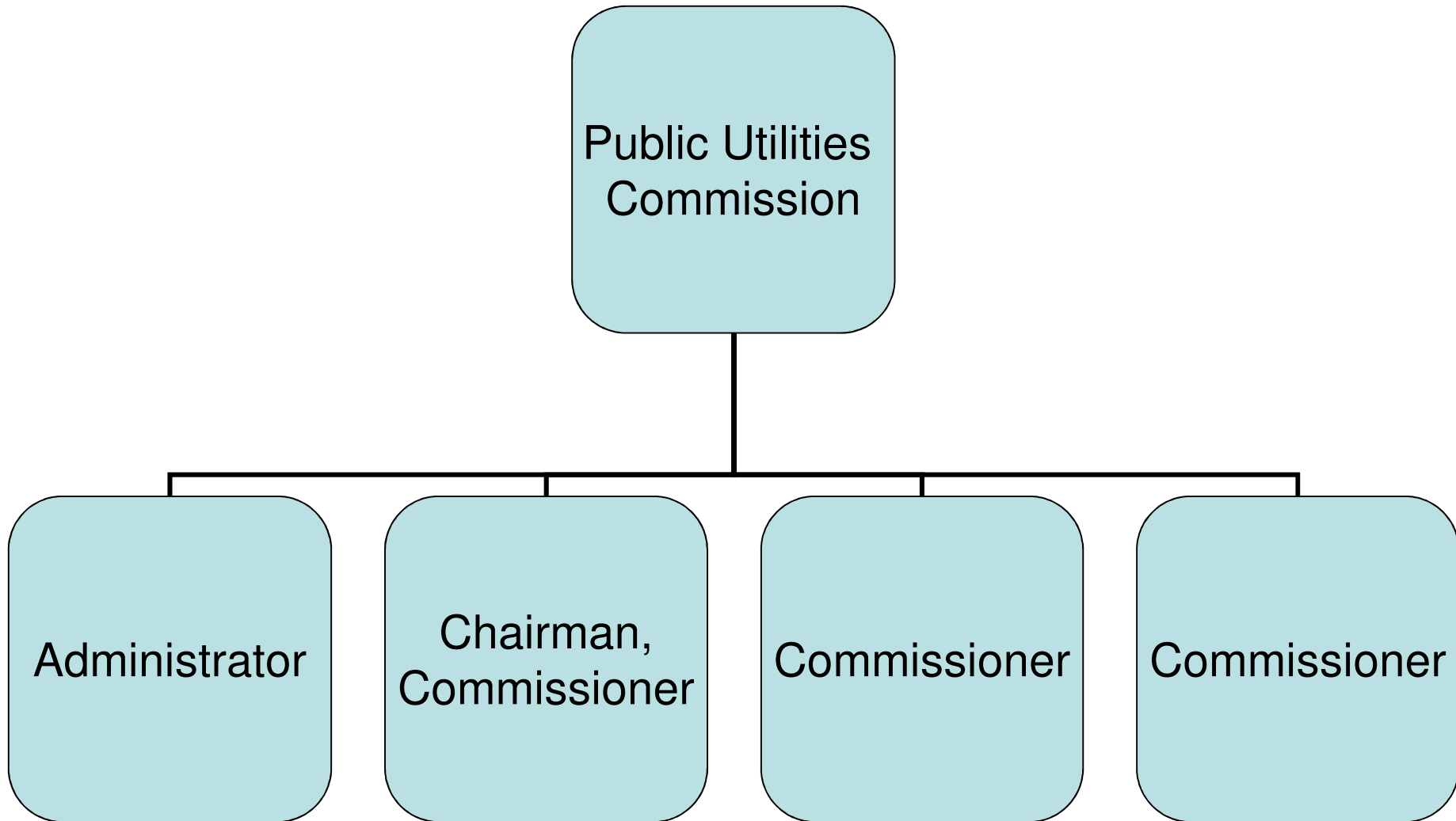
Budget

Public Utilities Commission

	FY 2014 Audited	FY 2015 Audited	FY 2016 Enacted	FY 2016 Revised	FY 2017 Recommend
Expenditures By Program					
Central Management	6,823,882	6,762,365	8,684,685	8,672,349	8,926,973
Total Expenditures	\$6,823,882	\$6,762,365	\$8,684,685	\$8,672,349	\$8,926,973
Expenditures By Object					
Personnel	6,205,483	6,135,296	7,688,818	7,661,482	7,925,105
Operating Supplies and Expenses	584,205	570,316	936,530	951,530	951,531
Assistance and Grants	-	-	337	337	337
Subtotal: Operating Expenditures	6,789,688	6,705,612	8,625,685	8,613,349	8,876,973
Capital Purchases and Equipment	34,194	56,753	59,000	59,000	50,000
Total Expenditures	\$6,823,882	\$6,762,365	\$8,684,685	\$8,672,349	\$8,926,973
Expenditures By Funds					
Federal Funds	207,575	81,792	90,000	90,000	104,669
Restricted Receipts	6,616,307	6,680,573	8,594,685	8,582,349	8,822,304
Total Expenditures	\$6,823,882	\$6,762,365	\$8,684,685	\$8,672,349	\$8,926,973
FTE Authorization	49.0	50.0	50.0	50.0	51.0

The Agency

Public Utilities Commission



Personnel

Public Utilities Commission Central Management

	Grade	FY 2016		FY 2017	
		FTE	Cost	FTE	Cost
Classified					
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR FOR LEGAL SERVICES (DOT)	00141A	1.0	124,853	1.0	125,504
CHIEF PUBLIC UTILITIES ACCOUNTANT	00140A	1.0	118,829	1.0	119,450
CHIEF OF LEGAL SERVICES	00139A	1.0	114,623	1.0	115,214
PUBLIC UTILITIES DEPUTY ADMINISTRATOR	00141A	1.0	104,442	1.0	104,410
ASSOCIATE PUBLIC UTILITIES ADMIN FOR OPER & CHIEF FINANCIAL ANALYST	00136A	1.0	101,621	1.0	102,155
DEPUTY CHIEF OF LEGAL SERVICES	00138A	1.0	100,522	1.0	101,046
ASSISTANT TO CHIEF PUBLIC UTILITIES	00137A	2.0	185,478	2.0	186,445
ASSOCIATE PUBLIC UTILITIES ADMINISTRATOR	0AB34A	1.0	91,973	1.0	92,450
INVESTIGATIVE AUDITOR	00136A	1.0	90,886	1.0	91,353
ASSOCIATE ADM CABLE TV & LEGIS LIAIS FOR ADMINISTRATOR, FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT	00133A	1.0	90,438	1.0	90,896
PUBLIC UTILITIES ANALYST V	00136A	1.0	87,973	1.0	88,440
SENIOR LEGAL COUNSEL	00137A	1.0	85,183	1.0	89,755
PUBLIC UTILITIES ANALYST IV	0AB33A	5.0	406,946	5.0	415,213
PRINCIPAL AUDITOR	00134A ¹	2.0	151,714	3.0	225,113
PUBLIC UTILITIES ANALYST III	0AB27A	1.0	69,624	1.0	69,987
PROGRAMMING SERVICES OFFICER	0AB28A	1.0	67,504	1.0	65,248
CHIEF CONSUMER AGENT (DPUC)	0AB28A	4.0	261,427	4.0	265,394
CHIEF FIELD INVESTIGATOR (MOTOR VEHICLES)	00131A	1.0	62,396	1.0	65,003
MOTOR CARRIER COMPLIANCE INSPECTOR	0AB24A	1.0	61,483	1.0	61,804
INFORMATION SERVICES TECHNICIAN II	0AB24A	1.0	57,996	1.0	58,303
PUBLIC UTILITIES ANALYST II	0AB20A	2.0	95,562	2.0	96,068
CONSUMER AGENT (DPUC)	0AB20A	1.0	46,888	1.0	48,246
INFORMATION SERVICES TECHNICIAN I	0AB22A	1.0	44,972	1.0	46,411
CUSTOMER SERVICE SPECIALIST I	0AB18A	5.0	223,283	5.0	224,453
	0AB16A	2.0	87,815	2.0	88,276
	0AB15A	1.0	39,469	1.0	39,678
Subtotal		41.0	\$2,973,900	42.0	\$3,076,315
Unclassified					
ADMINISTRATOR, DIVISION OF PUBLIC UTILITIES & CHAIRPERSON, PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION	00847A	1.0	157,986	1.0	158,806
MEMBER, PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION	00842A	1.0	116,792	1.0	117,412
PRINCIPAL POLICY ASSOCIATE	00839A	2.0	223,078	2.0	224,262
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT	00837A	1.0	87,482	1.0	92,289
STAFF ATTORNEY II	00129A	1.0	83,365	1.0	83,799
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT	00830A	1.0	83,323	1.0	83,745
	00822A	2.0	108,986	2.0	111,165
Subtotal		9.0	\$861,012	9.0	\$871,478

Personnel

Public Utilities Commission Central Management

	Grade	FY 2016		FY 2017	
		FTE	Cost	FTE	Cost
Overtime		-	51,505	-	52,500
Turnover		-	(103,368)	-	(119,402)
Subtotal		-	(\$51,863)	-	(\$66,902)
Total Salaries		50.0	\$3,783,049	51.0	\$3,880,891
Benefits					
Payroll Accrual			21,520		22,644
FICA			286,933		294,738
Retiree Health			225,774		231,559
Health Benefits			594,655		647,575
Retirement			919,373		1,007,322
Subtotal			\$2,048,255		\$2,203,838
Total Salaries and Benefits		50.0	\$5,831,304	51.0	\$6,084,729
Cost Per FTE Position (Excluding Temporary and Seasonal)			\$116,626		\$119,308
Statewide Benefit Assessment			\$171,653		\$181,851
Payroll Costs		50.0	\$6,002,957	51.0	\$6,266,580
Purchased Services					
Information Technology			115,000		115,000
Clerical and Temporary Services			87,784		87,784
Management & Consultant Services			965,737		965,737
Legal Services			443,000		443,000
Other Contracts			15,504		15,504
Buildings and Ground Maintenance			31,500		31,500
Subtotal			\$1,658,525		\$1,658,525
Total Personnel		50.0	\$7,661,482	51.0	\$7,925,105
Distribution By Source Of Funds					
Federal Funds		0.7	\$83,426	0.8	\$98,094
Restricted Receipts		49.3	\$7,578,056	50.2	\$7,827,011
Total All Funds		50.0	\$7,661,482	51.0	\$7,925,105

1 additional workload due to termination of residential utility service cases

Performance Measures

Public Utilities Commission

Timeliness of Motor Carrier Applications and Reports

When the Division of Public Utilities and Carriers (DPUC) receives an application for authority to operate as a motor carrier (e.g., taxi, limousine, water taxi, etc.), it is docketed and a public hearing is scheduled and advertised. Following the hearing, DPUC issues a formal written report approving or denying the application. The figures below represent the percentage of motor carrier applications completed within 60 business days.

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Target	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%
Actual	87.5%	90.7%	91.7%	--	--

Performance for this measure is reported by state fiscal year.

Timeliness of Cable Service and Telecom Inquiry Resolution

DPUC receives cable and telecom customer inquiries involving billing disputes, tariff issues, rate increases, interconnect issues, product installation, repairs, and service quality. The figures below represent the percentage of inquiries resolved within 60 business days.

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Target	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Actual	98.9%	99.8%	100%	--	--

Performance for this measure is reported by state fiscal year.

Timeliness of Informal Consumer Payment Plan Process

Customers enroll in a payment plan in accordance with the Commission's rules and regulations to avoid utility service termination or to have their service restored. The figures below represent the percentage of informal consumer payment agreements processed within 60 days of an inquiry.

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Target	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%
Actual	98.9%	96.4%	95.2%	--	--

Performance for this measure is reported by state fiscal year.

Timeliness of Consumer Billing Complaint Investigations

DPUC investigates complaints involving motor carriers and public utilities including electric, gas, and water providers. Non-payment related billing complaints are often attributable to clerical error, customer misunderstanding, and faulty utility meters. The figures below represent the percentage of non-payment related billing complaint investigations completed within 60 business days.

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Target	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%
Actual	97.3%	99.2%	97.9%	--	--

Performance for this measure is reported by state fiscal year.

