

State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations

Fiscal Year 2019 Budget



Volume I – General Government and Quasi-Public Agencies

Gina M. Raimondo, Governor

Agency Summary

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.

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.

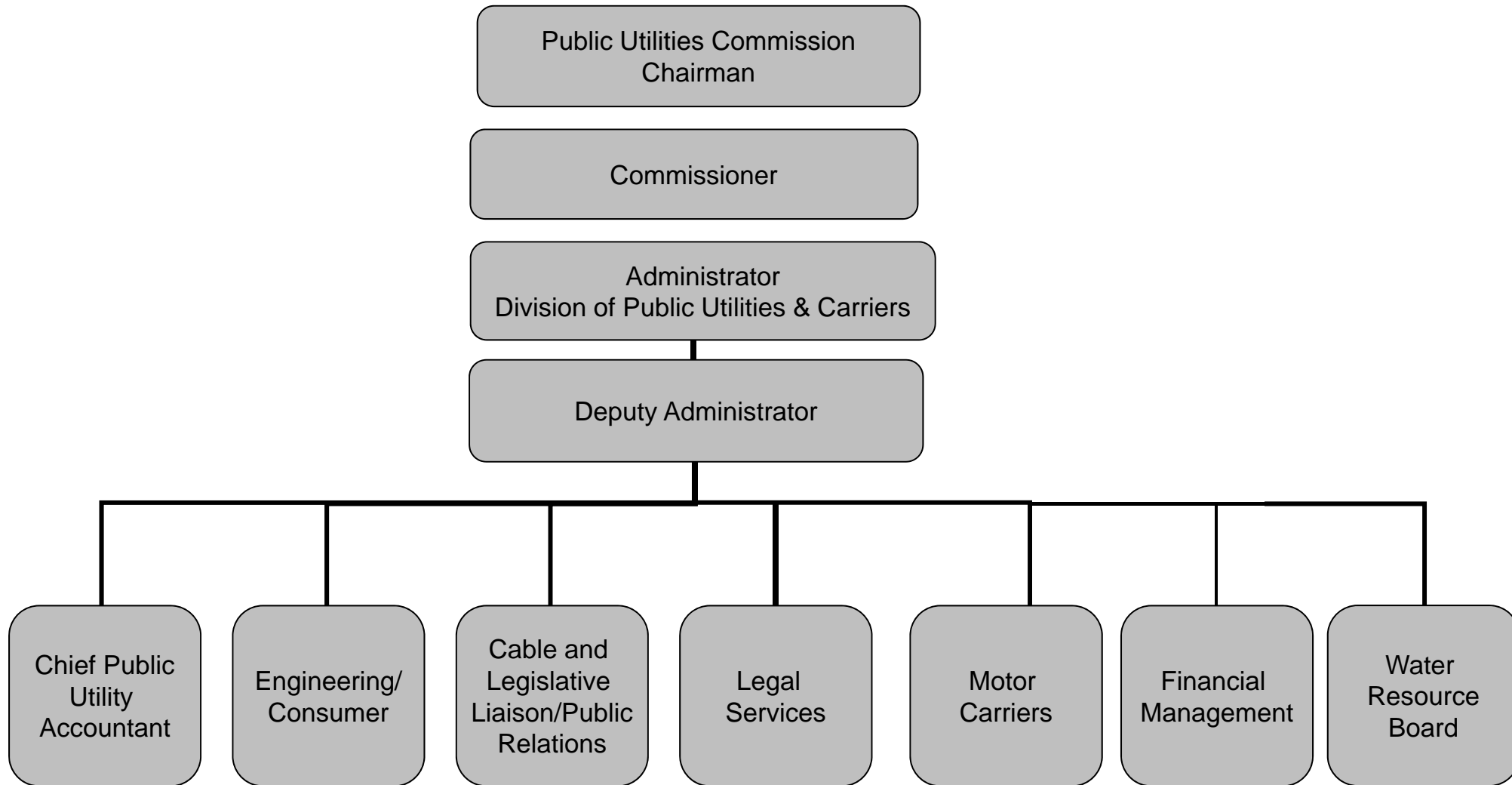
Budget

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

	2016 Actuals	2017 Actuals	2018 Enacted Budget	2018 Revised Budget	2019 Recommended
Expenditures by Program					
Central Management	7,277,989	8,014,894	9,136,343	9,974,412	10,661,405
Total Expenditures	7,277,989	8,014,894	9,136,343	9,974,412	10,661,405
Expenditures by Object					
Salary And Benefits	5,755,075	5,960,755	6,288,381	6,597,529	7,248,598
Contract Professional Services	872,753	1,295,925	1,651,075	2,045,525	2,045,525
Operating Supplies And Expenses	580,032	703,635	1,126,887	1,257,158	1,263,082
Assistance And Grants	0	0	0	4,200	4,200
Subtotal: Operating	7,207,860	7,960,316	9,066,343	9,904,412	10,561,405
Capital Purchases And Equipment	70,129	54,578	70,000	70,000	100,000
Subtotal: Other	70,129	54,578	70,000	70,000	100,000
Total Expenditures	7,277,989	8,014,894	9,136,343	9,974,412	10,661,405
Expenditures by Source of Funds					
Federal Funds	107,180	118,808	129,225	165,593	168,378
Restricted Receipts	7,170,809	7,896,086	9,007,118	9,808,819	10,493,027
Total Expenditures	7,277,989	8,014,894	9,136,343	9,974,412	10,661,405

The Agency

Public Utilities Commission



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. [Note: Missing values appear as zeros in the measure.]

<i>Frequency: Monthly</i>	<i>Reporting Period: State Fiscal Year</i>				
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Target	91.70%	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%
Actual	91.70%	97.50%	94.80%	0.00%	

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. [Note: Missing values appear as zeros in the measure.]

<i>Frequency: Monthly</i>	<i>Reporting Period: State Fiscal Year</i>				
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Target	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	95.00%
Actual	100.00%	98.80%	96.20%	0.00%	

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. [Note: Missing values appear as zeros in the measure.]

<i>Frequency: Monthly</i>	<i>Reporting Period: State Fiscal Year</i>				
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Target	95.20%	90.00%	90.00%	90.00%	95.00%
Actual	95.20%	95.50%	96.70%	0.00%	

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. [Note: Missing values appear as zeros in the measure.]

<i>Frequency: Monthly</i>	<i>Reporting Period: State Fiscal Year</i>				
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Target	97.90%	90.00%	90.00%	90.00%	95.00%
Actual	97.90%	98.60%	99.40%	0.00%	

Budget

Agency: PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

Central Management

Expenditures by Sub Program	2016 Actuals	2017 Actuals	2018 Enacted Budget	2018 Revised Budget	2019 Recommended
Operations	7,277,989	8,014,894	9,136,343	9,974,412	10,661,405
Total Expenditures	7,277,989	8,014,894	9,136,343	9,974,412	10,661,405
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