

**BEFORE THE WASHINGTON
UTILITIES & TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION,

Complainant,

v.

AVISTA CORPORATION D/B/A/ AVISTA UTILITIES

Respondent.

DOCKETS UE-220053, UG-220054, and UE-210854 (Consolidated)

**CROSS EXAMINATION EXHIBIT OF KELLY E. MAGALSKY
ON BEHALF OF THE
WASHINGTON STATE OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
PUBLIC COUNSEL UNIT**

EXHIBIT KEM-__X

Avista's Response to Public Counsel's Data Request No. 353
on Customer Service Expense with Attachment A

September 14, 2022

**AVISTA CORP.
RESPONSE TO REQUEST FOR INFORMATION**

JURISDICTION:	WASHINGTON	DATE PREPARED:	09/07/2022
CASE NO.:	220053/54/210854	WITNESS:	Kelly Magalsky
REQUESTER:	Public Counsel	RESPONDER:	Andrea Pike
TYPE:	Data Request	DEPT:	Customer Service
REQUEST NO.:	PC – 353	TELEPHONE:	(509) 495-2843
		EMAIL:	andrea.pike@avistacorp.com

SUBJECT: Customer Service expense

REQUEST:

Refer to Rebuttal Testimony of Kelly E. Magalsky, Exh. KEM-3T at 4:7–21.

Please:

- a. Provide the calculation in Excel that results in a full time CSR being added for each 5 second increase in AHT.
- b. Identify the steps that the Company is taking to reduce the trend of increases in AHT and what results those steps are having on the average AHT to date.
- c. Provide the calculation showing how the increase in AHT hours in 2019, 2020, and 2021 more than offset the number of CSR hours saved from the decline in the number of customer contacts. Provide the average time per customer contact experienced each year in 2019, 2020 and 2021.

RESPONSE:

- a. Please see PC-DR-353 Attachment A for the Company’s staffing calculation, which is as follow:

(Avg Calls per Hour) * (AHT Seconds) / Occupancy Rate / 1 hour in Seconds

Occupancy rate is the percentage of actual customer related work time out of the total staffed customer work time. The table below from reflects the additional CSRs needed for increasing AHTs.

Occupancy	Avg Calls / HR	AHT (Seconds)	Est FTEs Required	Difference
0.65	275	420	49.36	
0.65	275	425	49.95	0.59
0.65	275	430	50.53	0.59
0.65	275	435	51.12	0.59
0.65	275	440	51.71	0.59
0.65	275	445	52.30	0.59
0.65	275	450	52.88	0.59

- a. In February 2021 we initiated an effort to help reduce AHT. The following outlines 5 key areas of focus:
 1. CSR Accuracy regarding use of correct call status codes - we are taking a more proactive approach in validating the accuracy of the CSR call status.

2. CSR's have access to personal stats, which are part of their performance metrics - Managers review stats and expectations with CSRs for understanding and alignment and provide training and support as needed to help employees meet metrics, including AHT.
 3. Technology impacts that contribute to increased AHT - some required technology has increased the AHT, such as when we transitioned to a virtual work environment due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The technology that allowed us to work remotely did not include the caller display prompt that displays customer details when the call is first answered. This has added to our AHT. As we make enhancements to technology, we will gain back this call prompt. We will continue to evaluate the impact that technology has to our AHT.
 4. New Employee's experience level - It takes significant time for a new CSR to become proficient. Our attrition rate has increased to 28% so we are onboarding a higher number of new employees.
 5. Navigating a mixed model work environment - The change from the in-office work environment to a virtual work environment brought challenges and benefits. We are working to maintain the benefits for customers and employees while reducing the challenges.
- b. The Company has not completed an analysis of AHT, customer contacts, and CSR hours as there are other variables to consider that affect required staffing levels. Other relevant factors impacting CSR labor hours include the natural tendency of less complicated call types to be handled more frequently in our self-service channels, leaving a higher percentage of complex call types to be handled by CSRs. Conversations with customers who haven't made a payment in months can be extra challenging as CSRs remain sensitive to the needs of the customer and help them understand all available options to assist them. Also, the Company is experiencing higher CSR attrition rates which is lowering the relative years of experience of a CSR and additional hours are necessary to cover back-office and other team support duties, due to changes in necessary processes (i.e., energy assistance, collections, Payment Card Industries (PCI) compliance, and re-opening lobbies). Our CSRs are staffed using a flex model where they can average 20-40 hours weekly, depending on overall staffing needs. Since 2020 our average hours for flex CSRs have increased from 31.5 average hours to 34.5 average hours.

ATTACHMENT A TO AVISTA'S RESPONSE TO PUBLIC COUNSEL

DATA REQUEST NO. 353

Example

If 100 calls arrive in 30 minutes
 Call AHT = 3 minutes
 then each agent can take 10 calls / hour

$$100(\text{calls}) * 180(\text{AHT}) / 1800(\text{hour})$$

10

the Required FTE is 10

45 using 3k / day - we have to staff to our worst day of the month
 Using 12 hours per day

Occupancy	Avg Calls / HR	AHT	Est FTEs Required	Difference
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0.65	275	425	49.95	0.59
0.65	275	430	50.53	0.59
0.65	275	435	51.12	0.59
0.65	275	440	51.71	0.59
0.65	275	445	52.30	0.59
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(Avg Calls per Hour) * (AHT Seconds) / Occupancy Rate / 1 hour in Seconds