



Puget Sound Energy  
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May 29, 2020

*Filed Via Web Portal*

Mr. Mark L. Johnson, Executive Director and Secretary  
Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission  
621 Woodland Square Loop SE  
Lacey, WA 98503

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State Of WASH.  
UTIL. AND TRANSP.  
COMMISSION

**Re: Low Income Program Outcome Compliance Filing  
Dockets UE-011570 & UG-011571 (consolidated) – Filed Electronically**

Dear Mr. Johnson:

Puget Sound Energy (“PSE”) hereby provides the electronic version of the report that describes the outcome of PSE’s Home Energy Lifeline Program (“HELP”), for the 2018 program year per the Commission’s Twelfth Supplemental Order in consolidated Dockets UE-011570 and UG-011571 (“Twelfth Supplemental Order”). The terms and conditions of the HELP are set forth in PSE’s electric and natural gas tariff Schedules 129 Low Income Program.

Attached as Attachment A to this filing, this HELP annual report for the 12-month period of October 2018 through September 2019, meets the reporting requirements prescribed in Twelfth Supplemental Order, by providing the following HELP information: the number of participants, the total amount of assistance paid, and the average level of assistance per household.

PSE first implemented the HELP in accordance with the terms outlined in Exhibit G to the Settlement Stipulation Agreement approved in the Twelfth Supplemental Order dated June 20, 2002. The program details and funding level have since been modified since 2002.<sup>1</sup> For the 2018 program year of October 1, 2018, through September 30, 2019, additional HELP funding was made available and the associated allocation between electric and natural gas services became 80% and 20%, respectively. These funding changes were approved by the Commission in Order 08 of the consolidated Dockets UE-170033 and UG-170034 (“Order 08”). Order 08 also adopted new HELP eligibility criteria that were based upon federal poverty level and approved a two-year eligibility certification process for certain income-qualified customers. Both eligibility changes became effective on October 1, 2018. The initial effect of all the funding and eligibility changes is presented in this 2018 HELP report.

<sup>1</sup> Revised HELP terms were updated in Dockets UE-060266 and UG-060267 (consolidated), UE-072300 and UG-072301 (consolidated), UE 090704 and UG-090705 (consolidated), UE-111048 and UG-111049 (consolidated), and the dockets for PSE’s Expedited Rate Filing and Decoupling mechanisms, which include consolidated Dockets UE-121697 and UG-121705 (Decoupling) and consolidated Dockets UE-130137 and UG-130138 (Expedited Rate Filing).

The most recent change to PSE's electric and natural gas Schedules 129 Low Income Program is the addition of the Crisis Affected Customer Assistance Program ("CACAP"). The CACAP is available to residential customers in parallel with the HELP but with different eligibility and application requirements. Following Governor Jay Inslee's March 24, 2020 Proclamation 20-23.1, PSE filed with the Commission on April 6, 2020, the new Schedule 129 CACAP. The Commission approved PSE's CACAP on April 10, 2020, using the emergency authority granted by the Proclamation 20-23.1, which allowed the Commission to use surplus balances in electric and natural gas low-income accounts to assist utility customers impacted by the economic consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic. Starting April 13, 2020, PSE's CACAP has been distributing timely bill assistance to residential customers who are impacted by the on-going COVID-19 pandemic. PSE will include in its Low Income Program Outcome Compliance Filing, due in May 2021, reporting regarding CACAP per Order 01<sup>2</sup> of UE-200331 and UG-200332. Attached as Attachment B, for informational purposes only, was the first update that PSE provided to its HELP Advisory Committee regarding the results of the CACAP as of May 12, 2020.

Please contact Mei Cass at (425) 462-3800 for additional information about this filing. If you have any other questions, please contact me at (425) 456-2142.

Sincerely,

*/s/ Jon Piliaris*

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Attachment:  
Attachment A – HELP Annual Report  
Attachment B – CACAP 5-12-20

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<sup>2</sup> Order 01 of Dockets UE-200331 and Order 01 of UG-200332, page 2:

PSE additionally commits in its filing to including reporting CACAP customer participation in its 2019-2020 Low Income Program Outcome Report compliance filing, which will be submitted in May 2021. This report will contain a summary of PSE's CACAP outreach strategy, including but not limited to PSE customer service agent communications when a customer indicates an inability to pay their bill due to the COVID-19 pandemic. PSE also stated it will continue to collaborate with the PSE Home Energy Lifeline Program (HELP) Low-income Advisory Group on further potential improvements to PSE HELP in the near-term.