

January 9, 2001

NOTICE OF OPPORTUNITY TO FILE WRITTEN COMMENTS

(January 30, 2001)

RE: Docket No. UT-003074
Rules relating to Washington Telephone Assistance Program: Chapter 480-122 WAC

TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS:

This letter is to inform you that the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (“Commission”) is considering changes to Chapter 480-122 relating to Washington Telephone Assistance Program, and to provide notice of an opportunity to file written comments on the proposed rules. (See attached). The draft rules also are available for inspection on the Commission’s web site at www.wutc.wa.gov. The Commission will send the proposal via electronic mail, if you ask. Please see the information at the end of this letter describing how to reach the Commission.

Background: Legislation was passed in 1987 to create the Washington Telephone Assistance Program (“WTAP”) to maintain affordability of basic telecommunications for low income persons. RCW 80.36.410-75. The authority for implementation and operation of the WTAP program was given to the Department of Social and Health Services (“DSHS”) and the Commission. Both DSHS and the Commission have rules in place; the Commission’s rules have not been substantially altered since their adoption in 1990, and DSHS is in the process of revising its WTAP rules.

Prior Actions: The Commission authorized this rulemaking at an Open Meeting held on July 31, 2000. On August 23, 2000, a Preproposal Statement of Inquiry (CR-101) was filed with the Code Reviser, and on August 25, 2000, the Commission issued a Notice of Opportunity to File Written Comments concerning issues raised by staff. Those comments and other matters were discussed in a rulemaking workshop held at the Commission on October 10, 2000.

NOTICE is hereby given of the opportunity to submit written comments on the proposed rules not later than 5:00 PM, Tuesday, January 30, 2001. Commenters are asked, but not required, to file an original plus ten copies of their comments. Comments submitted by mail or courier should be addressed to: Secretary, Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission, P.O. Box 47250, 1300 S. Evergreen Park Drive S.W., Olympia, WA 98504-7250.

Electronic copies. The Commission also requests, but does not require, that comments be provided in electronic format to facilitate quotations from the comments, to enhance public access, and to reduce the need for additional paper copies. Please help us by sending an electronic copy with your paper filing on a 3-1/2 inch, IBM-formatted, high density disk, in .pdf Adobe Acrobat format, reflecting the pagination of your original. Please also send us the text in your choice of .doc (Word 97 or later) or .wpd (WordPerfect 6.0 or later). Please include all of the following information on the label of the diskette:

- * The docket number of this proceeding (UT-003074);
- * The commenting party's name;
- * The title and date of the comment or comments; and
- * The type of software used.

Please use the three-letter extension noted above for all electronic files. You may also send your comments by electronic mail to the Commission's Records Center at records@wutc.wa.gov; if you choose this means of submitting comments, please include all of the information requested above for the diskette label. The Commission will post on the Commission's web site all comments that are provided in electronic format. The web site is located at <http://www.wutc.wa.gov>.

The Commission welcomes your participation via written comments. The Commission anticipates that there will be additional opportunities for you to participate as this process goes forward.

The Commission will post and regularly update its web site to include information that pertains to this rulemaking. If you wish to personally receive further information on this rulemaking you may either: (1) submit a written request; (2) call the Commission's records center at (360) 664-1234; or (3) e-mail the commission at records@wutc.wa.gov. When contacting the Commission, please refer to Docket No. UT-003074.

Questions: If you have questions about this Notice, the rulemaking process, or this rulemaking in particular, you may contact Bob Shirley at the address on this Notice, by calling (360) 664-1292, or by email at bshirley@wutc.wa.gov.

Sincerely,

CAROLE J. WASHBURN
Secretary

Enc.