

**BEFORE THE WASHINGTON
UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

In the Matter of Amending Washington
Utilities and Transportation Commission
Tariff 15-C, Relating to Intrastate
Transportation of Household Goods

DOCKET TV-180245

ORDER 02

AMENDING ORDER 01 TO
EXTEND EFFECTIVE PERIOD
FOR CREDIT CARD PROCESSING
FEES

BACKGROUND

- 1 RCW 81.80.150 assigns certain duties and responsibilities to the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (Commission) for tariffs that apply to intrastate transportation of household goods. These duties include amending, altering, and reissuing tariffs when changes are approved by the Commission.
- 2 The Commission published Tariff 15-C, which applies to the intrastate transportation of household goods. On June 12, 2018, the Commission entered Order 01 in this Docket (Order 01), which approved changes to Tariff 15-C that allowed household goods moving companies to directly charge customers up to 2.5 percent of the total transaction amount to recover the fees associated with processing credit card payments. The Tariff specifies that the amount of the fee must not exceed the actual fee charged to the moving company by the credit card company for processing the transaction, and requires the anticipated fee be disclosed on the estimate provided to customers.
- 3 Under the terms of Order 01, the Commission allowed the credit card processing fee to remain in place until December 31, 2019. The Commission also directed Commission staff (Staff) to perform a cost-based rate analysis of the current rates and charges listed in Tariff 15-C and propose revised rates with an effective date no later than January 1, 2020. Based on the results of Staff's analysis, the credit card processing fees would either be embedded in the rate bands or would remain as a separate line-item charge.
- 4 The Commission subsequently opened Docket TV-190664 and issued a notice informing all interested persons that it is considering changes to the minimum and maximum rate bands in Tariff 15-C. The Commission held a workshop, received feedback from stakeholders, and is presently working with regulated carriers to complete its rate analysis. Staff's review of the current tariff rates remains ongoing, but Staff anticipates

that its review will be completed and it will be prepared to make a recommendation to the Commission within approximately 60 days.

5 Stakeholders have expressed that the ability to charge credit card processing fees has been a valuable addition to the tariff because most customers choose to pay via credit card. Prior to the tariff change, those fees were captured as a cost of doing business and were only recoverable through the existing rate bands.

6 In light of these factors, Staff requests that the Commission modify Order 01 to extend the effective period for the credit card processing fees until February 29, 2020, or until Staff completes its rate analysis and the Commission approves revised minimum and maximum rates in Docket TV-190664, whichever occurs first.

DISCUSSION

7 We agree with Staff's recommendation. Extending the effective period for credit card processing fees will allow Staff the time it needs to complete a thorough and comprehensive rate analysis, which ultimately serves the public interest by ensuring that the revised rates are fair, just, reasonable, and sufficient. Accordingly, we amend Order 01 to extend the effective period for assessing credit card processing fees until February 29, 2020, or until such time as the Commission approves revised minimum and maximum rates in Docket TV-190664, whichever occurs first.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

8 (1) The Commission is an agency of the State of Washington required by statute to compile, publish and distribute tariffs containing rates, charges, classifications, rules, and regulations to be used by all common carriers.

9 (2) This matter was brought before the Commission at its regularly scheduled meeting on December 19, 2019.

10 (3) After review and giving due consideration, the Commission finds that Order 01 in Docket TV-180245 should be amended to extend the effective period for the credit card processing fees in Tariff 15-C until February 29, 2020, or until such time as Staff completes its rate review and the Commission approves revised minimum and maximum rates in Docket TV-190664, whichever occurs first.

ORDER

11 **THE COMMISSION ORDERS THAT** Order 01 in Docket TG-180245 is amended to extend the effective period for the credit card processing fees in Household Goods Tariff 15-C until February 29, 2020 or until such time as the Commission approves revised minimum and maximum rates in Docket TV-190664, whichever occurs first.

The Commissioners, having determined this Order to be consistent with the public interest, directed the Secretary to enter this Order.

DATED at Lacey, Washington, and effective December 19, 2019.

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

MARK L. JOHNSON
Executive Director and Secretary