

**BEFORE THE WASHINGTON STATE
UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

In the Matter of Determining the State 911
Excise Tax

DOCKET UT-230713

ORDER 01

DETERMINING THE STATE 911
EXCISE TAX

BACKGROUND

- 1 On September 1, 2023, the Emergency Management Division (EMD) of the Washington Military Department (WMD), Petitioner, filed with the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (Commission) a petition recommending the Commission maintain the rate of 911 excise tax at 25 cents per month for switched access lines, radio access lines, and interconnected Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) service lines for calendar year 2024 (Petition).
- 2 Revised Code of Washington (RCW) sections 82.14B.030(5), (6), and (7) impose a state 911 excise tax on all switched access lines, radio access lines, and interconnected VoIP service lines in the state. The amount of the tax may not exceed 25 cents per month for each such line. Local exchange telecommunications companies providing or reselling these services, companies providing radio access lines, and interconnected VoIP providers are required to remit the tax to the Washington Department of Revenue (DOR), and the treasurer must deposit the tax in a 911 account.
- 3 RCW 82.14B.030(9) requires that EMD, the state 911 coordinator, recommend to the Commission the appropriate level of tax based on a systematic cost and revenue analysis for switched access lines, radio access lines, and interconnected VoIP service lines. EMD makes its recommendation annually and the Commission must determine the level of the state 911 excise tax for the following year.
- 4 The legislature has appropriated funds to support the 911 program at the WMD. State and county 911 excise tax revenues are remitted by vendors directly to DOR, which distributes the appropriate funds to the respective government entities in accordance with Chapter 82.14B RCW.

5 Commission Staff (Staff) has reviewed the filing and agrees with EMD's request that 25
cents per month per switched access line, radio access line, and interconnected VoIP
service line is necessary to recover 911 costs and should be approved.

DISCUSSION

6 RCW 82.14B.030(5) and (8) require that telecommunications companies remit the state
911 excise tax to DOR.

7 The state 911 coordinator is required to recommend to the Commission the level for the
next year of the state 911 excise tax imposed by RCW 82.14B.030(5) and (8). RCW
82.14B.030(9). Petitioner has done so in this case, recommending a 911 excise tax of 25
cents per month per switched access line, radio access lines, and interconnected VoIP
service line.

8 Pursuant to RCW 82.14B.030(9), the Commission is authorized to determine the level of
the state 911 excise taxes imposed by RCW 82.14B.030(5) and (8) for the next year.

9 We agree with Staff's recommendation and find that a state 911 excise tax rate of 25
cents per month per switched access line and interconnected VoIP service line is fair,
just, reasonable, and in the public interest.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

10 (1) The Commission is an agency of the State of Washington vested by statute with
the authority to regulate the rates, rules, regulations, practices, accounts,
securities, transfers of property and affiliated interests of public service
companies, including telecommunications companies.

11 (2) The Commission is authorized to determine the level of the state 911 excise taxes
imposed by RCW 82.14B.030(5) and (8) for the next year, which are required to
be remitted by telecommunications companies to DOR.

12 (3) On September 1, 2023, the Washington Military Department, Emergency
Management Division, filed with the Commission its annual report of revenues,
expenditures, and budgets relating to the statewide provision of 911 services. The
Petitioner recommended an assessment of the excise tax at the monthly rate of 25

cents per switched access line, radio access line, and interconnected VoIP line in accordance with RCW 82.14B.030 for the year beginning January 1, 2024.

- 13 (4) This matter came before the Commission at its regularly scheduled open meeting on October 26, 2023.
- 14 (5) The Commission agrees with Staff's recommendation and finds that a state 911 excise tax rate of 25 cents per month per switched access line and interconnected VoIP service line is fair, just, reasonable, and in the public interest.

ORDER

THE COMMISSION ORDERS:

- 15 (1) Each local exchange company shall collect a state 911 excise tax in the amount of 25 cents per month per switched access line and remit the amount collected directly to the Department of Revenue on a tax return provided by the Department of Revenue, pursuant to RCW 82.14B.030.
- 16 (2) Each interconnected Voice over Internet Protocol service company shall collect a state 911 excise tax in the amount of 25 cents per month per interconnected Voice over Internet Protocol service line and remit the amount collected directly to the Department of Revenue on a tax return provided by the Department of Revenue, pursuant to RCW 82.14B.030.
- 17 The Commissioners, having determined this Order to be consistent with the provision of RCW 82.14B.030 and in the public interest, directed the Secretary to enter this Order.

DATED at Lacey, Washington, and effective October 26, 2023.

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

KATHY HUNTER
Acting Executive Director and Secretary