

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

NOTICE OF PENALTIES INCURRED AND DUE FOR VIOLATIONS OF LAWS AND RULES

PENALTY ASSESSMENT: UT-160588
PENALTY AMOUNT: \$1000

Southwest Communications, Inc.
4150 N. Mulberry Dr., Suite 160
Kansas City, MO 64116

According to Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (Commission) records, you have violated Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 480-120-382, which requires telecommunications companies to file their annual report and pay regulatory fees each year by May 1. May 1 was a Sunday, therefore you were required to file your annual report or pay regulatory fees by May 2, 2016. You did not file an annual report by May 2, 2016.

Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 80.04.405 authorizes the Commission to assess a penalty of \$100 for each violation of a Commission rule. In the case of a continuing violation, every day's continuance is a separate and distinct violation. The Commission interprets noncompliance with WAC 480-120-382 beyond May 2 as a continuing violation, and assesses penalties of \$100 for each day a company fails to file its report or pay its regulatory fees after that date.

As a result, the Commission has assessed penalties against you in the amount of \$1000 on the following basis:

On February 29, 2016, the Commission mailed the 2015 annual report forms and the 2016 regulatory fee packets to all telecommunications companies registered in Washington. The instructions page for the annual report form instructed these companies to file annual reports and pay regulatory fees by May 2, 2016. The instructions page also stated that failure to file the annual report by May 2 would result in penalties. The deadline for requesting an extension to file your annual report was April 15. You did not request an extension.

On Thursday, April 28, 2016, Southwest Communications, Inc. filed an incomplete 2015 annual report and did not pay its 2016 regulatory fee. As of May 16, the report remained incomplete and the 2016 regulatory fee remains unpaid. May 16 is ten business days from May 2, resulting in a total penalty of \$1,000. The Commission has yet to receive a complete and accurate annual report and additional penalties may accrue until you submit one.

Your penalty is due and payable now. If you believe the violation did not occur, you may request a hearing to contest the penalty assessment. The Commission will grant that request only if material issues of law or fact require consideration of evidence and resolution in a hearing. A request for a hearing must include a written statement of the

reasons supporting that request. Failure to provide such a statement will result in denial of the request.

If there is a reason for the violation that you think should excuse or reduce the penalty, you may ask for mitigation (reduction) of this penalty through evidence presented at a hearing or in writing. The Commission will grant a request for a hearing only if material issues of law or fact require consideration of evidence and resolution in a hearing. Any request for mitigation must include a written statement of the reasons supporting that request. Failure to provide such a statement will result in denial of the request. See RCW 80.04.405.

If you properly present your request for a hearing and the Commission grants that request, the Commission will review the evidence supporting your dispute of the violation or application for mitigation in a Brief Adjudicative Proceeding, before an administrative law judge. The administrative law judge will consider the evidence and will notify you of his or her decision.

You must act within 15 days after receiving this notice to do one of the following:

- Pay the amount due.
- Request a hearing to contest the occurrence of the violations.
- Request mitigation to contest the amount of the penalty.

Please indicate your selection on the enclosed form and send it to the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission, Post Office Box 47250, Olympia, Washington 98504-7250, **within FIFTEEN (15) days** after you receive this notice.

If you do not act within 15 days, the Commission may refer this matter to the Office of the Attorney General for collection, which may file suit in state court to collect the penalty. The Commission may also initiate proceedings under WAC 480-121-060 to revoke your authority to provide telecommunications services in Washington.

DATED at Olympia, Washington, and effective June 15, 2016.

GREGORY J. KOPTA
Administrative Law Judge

WASHINGTON UTILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

PENALTY ASSESSMENT UT-160588

PLEASE NOTE: You must complete and sign this document, and send it to the Commission within 15 days after you receive the penalty assessment. Use additional paper if needed.

I have read and understand RCW 9A.72.020 (printed below), which states that making false statements under oath is a class B felony. I am over the age of 18, am competent to testify to the matters set forth below and I have personal knowledge of those matters. I hereby make, under oath, the following statements.

1. **Payment of penalty.** I admit that the violations occurred. I have:

Enclosed \$ _____ in payment of the penalty

Submitted my payment of \$ _____ online at www.utc.wa.gov. My confirmation number is _____.

2. **Request for a hearing.** I believe that one or more of the alleged violations did not occur, for the reasons I describe below, and I request a hearing based on those reasons for a decision by an administrative law judge:

3. **Application for mitigation.** I admit the violations, but I believe that the penalty should be reduced for the reasons set out below:

a) I ask for a hearing to present evidence on the information I provide above to an administrative law judge for a decision

OR

b) I ask for a Commission decision based solely on the information I provide above.

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of Washington that the foregoing, including information I have presented on any attachments, is true and correct.

Dated: June 20, 2016 [month/day/year], at Kansas City, MO [city, state]

Paul Kirby
Name of Respondent (company) – please print

Paul Kirby
Signature of Applicant

RCW 9A.72.020:

“Perjury in the first degree. (1) A person is guilty of perjury in the first degree if in any official proceeding he makes a materially false statement which he knows to be false under an oath required or authorized by law. (2) Knowledge of the materiality of the statement is not an element of this crime, and the actor’s mistaken belief that his statement was not material is not a defense to a prosecution under this section. (3) Perjury in the first degree is a class B felony.”

June 20, 2016

Shawn Bennett
Washington UTC
PO Box 47250
Olympia, WA 98504-0234

RE: Penalty Assessment UT-160588

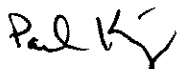
Washington UTC:

I am responding to the Penalty Assessment Letter (UT-160588) we received regarding filing our Annual Report due on May 2, 2016. I am requesting mitigation and a reduced penalty for the following reasons:

1. The Annual Report was filed by Southwest Communications ("SCI") on April 28th, prior to the May 2nd due date.
2. I mistakenly forgot to include the required supporting documentation of a Balance Sheet and Income Statement.
3. The WA UTC now assesses a minimum Regulatory Fee of \$150 that did not exist in the past. This fee was not highly visible on the Annual Report.
4. SCI was not aware of the Annual Report's incompleteness or missing Filing Fee until we received the Courtesy email on 6/15/16 regarding the Penalty Assessment. Once we received the email, we responded by paying the new minimum fee and submitting the required supporting documentation within 48 hrs.
5. In my experience dealing with 15 other public utility commissions, others states notify companies within a week if electronically filed Annual Reports are incomplete. SCI did not receive notification from the WA UTC until 6/15/16 which was almost 7 weeks after we submitted the Annual Report. SCI would have been able to submit any missing information or fee in a more timely manner incurring a much smaller penalty had we been notified sooner of our oversites.

Southwest Communications did not intentionally file an incomplete Annual Report. Please consider a reduced penalty.

Sincerely,



Paul Kirby
Operations Manager
Southwest Communications, Inc.