

**STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE  
PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION**

**DE 21-133**

**STATEWIDE LOW-INCOME ELECTRIC ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

**2021-2022 Program Administrative Budgets**

**COMMENCEMENT OF ADJUDICATIVE PROCEEDING AND NOTICE OF HEARING**

On September 29, 2021, Public Service Company of New Hampshire d/b/a Eversource Energy, Unitil Energy Systems, Inc., Liberty Utilities (Granite State Electric) Corp. d/b/a Liberty, and the New Hampshire Electric Cooperative, Inc. (collectively, the NH Electric Utilities) filed a joint petition for approval of their budgets for administering the statewide low-income Electric Assistance Program (EAP) for the 2021-2022 program year. The petition and other docket filings, other than any information for which confidential treatment is requested of or granted by the Commission, are available on the Commission's website at <https://www.puc.nh.gov/Regulatory/Docketbk/2021/21-133.html>.

**I. BACKGROUND AND PROCEDURAL HISTORY**

The New Hampshire Department of Energy (Energy) filed the EAP Advisory Board's recommendation regarding approval of the 2021-2022 EAP program year budgets on September 29, 2021. On September 30, 2021, the Commission issued Order No. 26,530, which approved the EAP budgets submitted by the NH Electric Utilities on an interim basis for the months of October and November 2021.

In Order No. 26,530, the Commission determined it was necessary to develop a more complete record in this matter before it approved the EAP Advisory Board's recommendation. The Commission stated that it would commence an adjudicatory

proceeding, and that the interim budgets would be subject to adjustment, if necessary, following a final hearing in this matter.

The Commission requested Energy to conduct its usual review and analysis of the proposed budgets, along with any necessary discovery, and to file a recommendation within 40 days. The other parties were required to file their responses to Energy's recommendation within 10 days. On October 4, 2021, Energy filed its recommendation. The NH Electric Utilities filed a statement in support of Energy's recommendation on October 5, 2021. The Office of Consumer Advocate filed a letter of participation in this docket on October 1, 2021 and a response to Order No. 26,530 on October 6, 2021.

## **II. ISSUES PRESENTED**

The filing presents the following issue: whether the proposed EAP budgets for the 2022-2021 program year are consistent with RSA 374-F:4, VIII (a) and (c) and are reasonable. Accordingly, an adjudicative proceeding will be convened to address this issue.

The Commission will be conducting any hearings scheduled in this matter in person. Parties may, however, file a written request for the Commission to also use video conferencing to conduct the proceedings. Parties should support the request with reasoning as to why the hearing should use video conferencing, such as a health condition, or to reduce the cost of witness travel. Any party requesting a hybrid hearing format to accommodate those who will be participating remotely should file a written request with the Commission's Clerk's Office no later than fifteen (15) days prior to the hearing date. If the Commission determines that a hybrid approach will be used, then individuals in the Commission's hearing room, including the

Commissioners, will be broadcast on a web-enabled platform, and a remote hearing link will be posted on the Commission's website.

**Based upon the foregoing, it is hereby**

**ORDERED**, that an adjudicative proceeding be commenced for the purpose of reviewing and resolving the foregoing issue pursuant to RSA chapter 541-A, RSA 374-F:4, VIII (a) and (c), and the Commission's procedural rules; and it is

**FURTHER ORDERED**, that the interim budget approval granted in Order No. 26,530 is extended until a final order is issued in this matter; and it is

**FURTHER ORDERED**, that the Commission will hold a hearing in this matter at its offices located at 21 S. Fruit St., Suite 10, Concord, New Hampshire, on March 9, 2022, at 9:00 a.m. Three hours shall be allotted for this hearing; and it is

**FURTHER ORDERED**, that any entity or individual may petition to intervene and seek to be admitted as a party in this proceeding. Each party has the right to have an attorney represent the party at the party's own expense; and it is,

**FURTHER ORDERED**, that, consistent with N.H. Admin. R., Puc 203.17 and Puc 203.02, any entity or individual seeking to intervene in the proceeding shall file with the Commission a petition to intervene with copies sent to the NH Electric Utilities and any other parties on the service list, on or before December 22, 2021. The petition shall state the facts demonstrating how the petitioner's rights, duties, privileges, immunities, or other substantial interests may be affected by the proceeding, consistent with N.H. Admin. R., Puc 203.17; and it is

**FURTHER ORDERED**, that any party objecting to a petition to intervene make said objection on or before January 6, 2022; and it is

**FURTHER ORDERED**, that parties shall file any proposed exhibits, written testimony, motions, or other documents intended to become part of the record in this

proceeding with the Commission. Pursuant to the secretarial letter issued on March 17, 2020, which is posted on the Commission's website at <https://www.puc.nh.gov/Regulatory/Secretarial%20Letters/20200317-SecLtr-Temp-Changes-in-Filing-Requirements.pdf>, all Commission rules requiring the filing of paper copies are suspended until further notice. Parties may elect to submit any filing in electronic form unless otherwise ordered by the Commission. Filings will be considered filed as of the time the electronic copy is received by the Commission; and it is

**FURTHER ORDERED**, that routine procedural inquiries may be made by contacting the Commission's Clerk's Office at (603) 271-2431 or [ClerksOffice@puc.nh.gov](mailto:ClerksOffice@puc.nh.gov). All requests to the Commission should be made in a written pleading filed with the Commission. Unless otherwise authorized by law, *ex parte* communications are prohibited; and it is

**FURTHER ORDERED**, that pursuant to N.H. Admin. R., Puc 203.12, the NH Electric Utilities shall notify all entities and individuals desiring to be heard at this hearing by publishing a copy of this order of notice on their websites no later than two business days after the date of issue, such publication to be documented by affidavit filed with the Commission on or before December 14, 2021. In addition, the Clerk shall publish this order of notice on the Commission's website no later than two business days after the date of issue; and it is

**FURTHER ORDERED**, that any hearings in this matter shall be conducted in accordance with the attached hearing guidelines.

So ordered, this thirtieth day of November, 2021.

  
Daniel C. Goldner  
Presiding Officer  
Chairman

Individuals needing assistance or auxiliary communication aids due to sensory impairment or other disability should contact the Americans with Disabilities Act Coordinator, NHPUC, 21 S. Fruit St., Suite 10, Concord, New Hampshire 03301-2429; 603-271-2431; TDD Access: Relay N.H. 1-800-735-2964. Notification of the need for assistance should be made one week prior to the scheduled event.

# Service List - Docket Related

Docket# : 21-133

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