

Decision No. C20-0182

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF COLORADO

PROCEEDING NO. 20V-0051G

IN THE MATTER OF THE PETITION OF PUBLIC SERVICE COMPANY OF COLORADO FOR APPROVAL OF A VARIANCE FROM GAS RULE 4407(E)(IV)(A) TO ALIGN ITS GAS TARIFF PROVISIONS CONCERNING DISCONTINUANCE OF RESIDENTIAL GAS SERVICE IN CASES OF MEDICAL EMERGENCY WITH ITS CONCURRENT ELECTRIC TARIFF UPDATE AND ELECTRIC RULE 3407(e)(IV)(A).

**COMMISSION DECISION GRANTING THE PETITION OF
PUBLIC SERVICE COMPANY OF COLORADO FOR
APPROVAL OF A VARIANCE TO ALIGN MEDICAL
EMERGENCY DISCONTINUATION OF GAS TARIFF
PROVISIONS WITH ITS CONCURRENT ELECTRIC
TARIFF UPDATE AND ELECTRIC RULE 3407(e)(IV)(A)**

Mailed Date: March 19, 2020

Adopted Date: March 18, 2020

I. BY THE COMMISSION

A. Statement

1. This matter comes before the Commission for consideration of a variance from the requirement in 4 *Code of Colorado Regulations* (CCR) 723-4 Rule 4407(e)(IV)(A), of the Rules Regulating Gas Utilities and Pipeline Operators, filed by Public Service Company of Colorado (Public Service, PSCo, or the Company) on February 6, 2020, that a utility shall postpone discontinuance of gas service to a residential customer presenting a medical certificate establishing that discontinuance of service would aggravate an existing medical emergency, or create a medical emergency for the customer or a permanent resident of the customer's household for 60 days, subject to a single 30-day extension if a second medical certificate is provided prior to the expiration of the original 60-day period.

2. The Company requests that it be permitted to postpone discontinuance of gas service to a residential customer for a total of 90 days without requiring customers to present a second medical certificate for an extension after the first 60 days.

3. Public Service requested this variance to align its gas tariff provisions concerning discontinuance of residential gas service in cases of medical emergency with its concurrently filed electric tariff update pursuant to 4 CCR 723-3 Rule 3407 (e)(IV)(A) of the Commission's Rules Regulating Electric Utilities, Advice Letter No. 1817-Electric.

4. The duration of the requested variance is permanent indefinitely or until the Gas Rules have been updated to mirror 4 CCR 723-3 Rule 3407(e)(IV)(A).

5. Public Service filed this petition on February 6, 2020.

B. Findings and Conclusions

6. PSCo is a public utility as defined in § 40-1-103, C.R.S., and is subject to the jurisdiction of the Commission.

7. Public Service has slightly less than one million residential customers receiving both Electric and Gas service. Under the currently effective Commission rules, these residential customers experiencing or at risk of medical emergencies need to provide two medical certificates at two separate times to prevent their gas services from being disconnected, and one medical certificate to prevent their electric services from being disconnected over a 90-day period.

8. Postponing disconnection from the date of a medical certificate issued by a Colorado-licensed physician for the same time period of 90 days, as provided in 4 CCR 723-3 Rule 3407(e)(IV)(A) for both gas and electric residential customers, without requiring a second medical certificate to extend the postponement period for gas service, would eliminate potential

confusion for residential customers receiving both gas and electric services. If this petition for variance is not granted, both the customer and the Company would need to keep track of gas service that may be disconnected 30 days earlier than electric service unless the customer submits a second medical certificate to extend service for 30 days, as currently provided in 4 CCR 723-4 Rule 4407(e)(IV)(A).

9. Aligning the Electric and Gas disconnection timeframes for medical exemption will remove excess paperwork and medical cost for the 30-day extension for gas customers. Providing a set 90-day postponement from disconnection for gas service without the need to present a second medical certificate will make it easier for the Company to process such requests in a timely manner and track the disconnection postponement period for both services more efficiently. Allowing the customer to submit supporting paperwork for postponing disconnection from both services at the same time, rather than separately, will also save time and resources that customers must incur to process two forms.

10. No harm will result from the granting of the requested variance from the requirement in 4 CCR 723-4 Rule 4407(e)(IV)(A), nor will there be any prejudice to PSCo's customers. For these reasons, the waiver should be granted.

II. ORDER

A. The Commission Orders That:

1. The Petition for Variance from Rule Requirement 4 *Code of Colorado Regulations* (CCR) 723-4 Rule 4407(e)(IV)(A) filed on February 6, 2020 is deemed complete.

2. The Variance from Rule Requirement 4 CCR 723-4 Rule 4407(e)(IV)(A) is granted and is permanent indefinitely or until the Gas Rules have been updated to mirror 4 CCR 723-3 Rule 3407(e)(IV)(A).

3. The 20-day period provided for in § 40-6-114, C.R.S., within which to file applications for rehearing, reargument, or reconsideration begins on the first day following the effective date of this Decision.

4. This Decision is effective on its Mailed Date.

**B. ADOPTED IN COMMISSIONERS' WEEKLY MEETING
March 18, 2020.**

(S E A L)



ATTEST: A TRUE COPY

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Doug Dean".

Doug Dean,
Director

THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF COLORADO

JEFFREY P. ACKERMANN

JOHN GAVAN

MEGAN M. GILMAN

Commissioners