

## **PSC Hearing Guidelines and Tips**

March 2022

The Office of People's Counsel is an independent state agency responsible for representing the interests of all residential customers of regulated utilities in Maryland. We have prepared the following general guidelines for individuals or organizations who are interested in making comments at a Public Service Commission (PSC or Commission) public hearing. You may access all official documents in a particular case at [www.psc.state.md.us](http://www.psc.state.md.us).

1. The Commission holds public hearings to allow utility customers and other interested persons an opportunity to provide comments on a pending case. The PSC must hold public hearings for rate cases and [Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity \(CPCN\)](#) cases.
  
- 2. Public Comment hearings will remain virtual for the time being.**
  
3. Many Commission hearings are available online. The public is always invited to livestream Commission hearings on the [Commission's YouTube](#) channel and on the [Public Utility Law Judge \(PULJ\) YouTube](#) channel, or watch them later at your convenience. This is a great option for those who do not wish to actively participate but do want to stay informed.
  
4. The utility must publish notice of the date, time and place of the public hearing in the service area. Generally, the notice will be in a local newspaper of general circulation. You may also find notices on the utility and PSC, and utility and PSC social media.
  - For the Commission's CPCN cases:  
<https://www.psc.state.md.us/make-a-public-comment/cpcn-cases/>
  - For the Commission's rate cases:  
<https://www.psc.state.md.us/make-a-public-comment/utility-rate->

[cases/](#)

5. A PSC Public Utility Law Judge (PULJ) or Commissioner(s) will conduct the public hearing. The PULJ or Commissioner is seated at the front of the room when the hearings are held in person and will introduce the case and parties present. A court reporter also will be there to make a written record of the public comments. Utility representatives and other parties will often be available to either explain the case or answer questions.

### **Tips for participation in a public hearing:**

- Arrive early and, if in-person, sign the sign-up sheet (if you wish to testify).
- Prepare your comments ahead of time – you may read a written statement or submit them into the record to the Commission.
- Focus your comments on the issues raised by the case. Do not use the public hearings to discuss individual billing or other problems which are not the subject of the hearing.
- If you have a specific example related to the case, briefly describe the situation (for example, water quality).
- Speak slowly and clearly and spell your name for the record.
- If you cannot attend the public hearing, you can submit Public Comments in writing to the PSC, with the case name and number, in advance of the hearing by the deadline in the public notice. For more information, including a link to the Public Comments dropbox, visit: <https://www.psc.state.md.us/make-a-public-comment/>
- While public comments are not “evidence” in the case, they will be considered by the PSC in coming to a decision.

**Filing of written documents with the PSC**

You may submit comments through the PSC's website [www.psc.state.md.us](http://www.psc.state.md.us). Use "Make a Public Comment" on the home page. You may also submit any

Petition or written comments to:

Andrew Johnston, Executive Secretary  
Maryland Public Service Commission  
6 St. Paul Street, 16th Floor  
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

Executive Secretary's Office: 410-767-8067  
Commission's main line: 410-767-8000; 1-800-492-0474; 1-800-201-7165  
(TTY/voice)

*Please be sure to include the related case number with all comments.*