

1       Sec. 1. DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SERVICE; CERTIFICATE OF  
2                   PUBLIC GOOD; COMPLAINT PROTOCOL

3           (a) Not later than September 1, 2016, the Commissioner of Public Service  
4           shall establish and implement a protocol for handling complaints concerning  
5           **the alleged failure failures** of a company to comply in a reasonable manner  
6           with the terms and conditions of a certificate of public good issued by the  
7           Public Service Board under 30 V.S.A. §§ 248 or 248a. The Commissioner  
8           may revise the protocol at any time to achieve more effective and satisfactory  
9           resolution of complaints.

10          (b) **The purpose of this section is to create a single location within State**  
11          **government for receipt and tracking of all complaints described in**  
12          **subsection (a) of this section.** The protocol shall include a process for filing,  
13          investigating, and resolving complaints in a timely manner, as well as a  
14          procedure for tracking the number and nature of complaints received and a  
15          summary of actions taken by the Department of Public Service to resolve each  
16          complaint, which information shall be aggregated and reported annually to the  
17          General Assembly beginning January 1, 2017, notwithstanding 2 V.S.A.  
18          § 20(d). In addition, the Department shall keep a record and summary of  
19          complaints filed under the protocol on a website maintained by the Department  
20          to increase public awareness and transparency and reduce the occurrence of  
21          redundant complaint filings. The Commissioner's protocol shall include

1 standards and procedures for consolidating complaints of a similar nature  
2 involving the same company **and procedures under which a company**  
3 **receiving a complaint informs the Department of the complaint and its**  
4 **nature and such information as the Commissioner determines is necessary**  
5 **to track its progress and resolution.**

6 (c) A complainant shall not be required to direct a complaint to a company  
7 prior to submitting a complaint with the Department of Public **service Service**  
8 pursuant to the complaint protocol established under this section.

9 (d) The Commissioner may retain experts and other personnel as identified  
10 in 30 V.S.A. § 20 to investigate complaints, and may allocate the expenses  
11 incurred in retaining such personnel to the company as provided under 30  
12 V.S.A. § 21.

13 (e) The complaint protocol established under this section shall be in  
14 addition to any procedure established under 30 V.S.A. § 208. Unresolved  
15 complaints may be considered by the Public Service Board pursuant to **its**  
16 **authority under Title 30, including 30 V.S.A. § 8(f), and the Public Service**  
17 **Board Rules ~~2.300.~~ et seq.**

18 (f) With its report filed under this section on or before January 1, 2017, the  
19 Commissioner shall make recommendations regarding the establishment of  
20 and payment for an ongoing process for monitoring a company's compliance

1 with a certificate of public good for the purpose of reducing the filing of  
2 individual complaints under this section.

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