

Public Utility Commission

FY2025 Budget Request



Chair Ed McNamara

Update on Public Utility Commission Activities

February 13, 2024

What is the Commission?

- The Public Utility Commission (“Commission” or “PUC”) is an independent, quasi-judicial agency that supervises the rates, quality of service, and overall financial management of Vermont’s public utilities:
 - These utilities include electric, gas, energy efficiency, telecommunications, cable television (terms of service only, not rates), water, and large wastewater companies.
 - The PUC also reviews requests for certificates of public good, or CPGs, authorizing the construction of electric transmission, natural gas transmission and electric generation facilities of all sizes (including net-metered electric generation facilities), and wireless telecommunications towers.
 - Finally, we are also in the process of creating a regulatory structure – the Clean Heat Standard – to partially regulate heating fuel providers to require them to reduce their sales of fossil fuels used for heating
 - Under Vermont law, the PUC hears most cases under “contested case,” or court-like, procedures. We also use more informal processes, particularly when implementing policy directives from the Legislature, and we adopt rules pursuant to the Administrative Procedures Act.
- The Commission has seven administrative staff and 15 hearing officers, who hear smaller cases directly and assist the three Commissioners in larger cases.

FY25 funding sources

- Gross receipts tax on Vermont utilities. 94.59% of funds
- Fees paid by applicants for certificates of public good who do not pay the gross receipts tax; this was created in the 2018 legislative session and reflects the fact that siting constitutes a substantial portion of the Commission’s work. (3.76% of funds)
- “billbacks” for certain out-of-pocket costs. (1.66%)

New Work Required by Act 18 of 2023 (Affordable Heat Act)

- In Act 18 of 2023, the Legislature directed the Commission to undertake the design of the proposed Clean Heat Standard and to bring it back to the Legislature in 2025 in the form of a proposed rule. The Legislature will then vote on whether to adopt the Clean Heat Standard as designed by the Commission. Act 18 instructs the Commission to work with stakeholders, affected entities, and the public to craft this potential program.

- Act 18 appropriated \$825,000 from the general fund to support the Commission’s FY24 work required by the Act, including hiring three hearing officers and multiple contractors, but did not include any funds to support the Commission’s FY25 work required by the Act.
- Act 18 required the Commission to submit a report to the Legislature on suggested revenue streams that may be used or created to fund the Commission’s administration of the Clean Heat Standard program. The Commission conducted a public process to explore this issue and submitted its report to the Legislature yesterday; the report is available on the Commission’s website at: <https://puc.vermont.gov/document/clean-heat-standard-funding-report>. The Commission’s recommendation is to fund the administration of the program with the General Fund at least until the General Assembly approves the Commission’s final proposed rules to implement the potential Clean Heat Standard.
- The Commission is seeking \$878,346 in general fund monies in FY25 to support the Commission’s FY25 work required by the Act. At the Administration’s direction, those costs are currently included in our proposed FY25 special-funded budget, even though our special-fund revenues are insufficient to support the Commission’s Act 18 work.
- Historically, the Commission has not received general fund monies – this largely reflects the principle that ratepayer funds should pay for regulation of rates. Given that the Commission’s roots are very strongly in economic regulation, this is a core principle – for example, we have strongly advocated that Energy Efficiency Utility funds should remain committed for efficiency purposes rather than being used for general fund purposes.
- For the Act 18 work we are asking for general fund monies for two reasons: (1) there is no other current mechanism, such as a gross receipts tax or program-directed funding; and (2) until some affirmative action by the legislature next year the design of the Clean Heat Standard, and therefore the regulatory obligations of the Commission, are not clear.
- In addition, the Clean Heat Standard’s Equity Advisory Group, which Act 18 required the Commission to establish, advised the Commission to recommend to the Legislature that any money needed for the Clean Heat Standard through FY25 be funded from the general fund. Commenters in the Clean Heat Standard proceeding agreed that the general fund is a progressive source of funding and distributes the program administration costs more equitably than other funding options.

Budget Challenges

- Upward pressures
 - Because the Commission does not receive any general funds for work other than that related to Act 18, we must self-fund our salary and benefit increases. This is particularly significant because salaries and benefits are more than 86% of the Commission’s non-Act 18 budget.
 - Increases in internal service costs, which are an additional 6.00% of the Commission’s non-Act 18 budget.

FY23 Actual Spending compared to FY24 Budget and FY25 Proposed Budget

- FY23 actual spending was \$4,530,026
- FY24 budget is \$4,463,875 in special funds and \$825,000 in general fund monies for the Commission's work required by Act 18 of 2023
 - The Commission is not affected by the FY24 budget adjustment act
- FY25 proposed budget is \$5,669,553, an increase of \$1,205,677 or 27.01% over the FY24 special-funded budget
 - \$878,346 of this increase relates to the Commission's work required by Act 18
 - Act 18 included a general fund appropriation for the Commission's FY24 work but no funds for the Commission's required FY25 work
 - \$327,332 of the increase is due to increases in the remainder of the Commission's budget
 - \$199,328 of this increase (61%) is due to increases in benefit costs and internal service fund costs
 - Benefit costs increased \$175,838 (retirement - \$68,435; health care - \$78,467; other fringe benefits including two new benefits FMLI and Child Care Contribution - \$28,936)
 - Internal service fund costs increased \$23,212
 - No new initiatives are included in the FY25 proposed budget
 - FY24 proposed budget includes \$40,000 in vacancy and turnover savings

Fund Balance

- As of January 31, 2024, the Commission's cash balance is \$1,487,607.48.
- As of January 31, 2024, the Commission has expended \$2,428,479. We have \$2,035,396 remaining of our approved spending authority, although we expect that amount to be zero by the end of the fiscal year as the majority of that remaining amount represents unpaid salary/benefits.
- Act 18 - The Commission has expended \$165,496 for costs related to the implementation of Act 18. We have \$659,504 remaining, with the majority of those dollars committed to the three Clean Heat staff salary/benefits and to technical and facilitation contracts.

Reserve

- The Commission has accumulated its reserve as a result of prudent financial management over the years and other contributing factors:
 - Mandatory salary freezes starting in 2008 and pay cuts starting in 2009
 - Mandatory position reductions in 2009
 - Federal stimulus grant (ARRA) that funded three staff for four years
- The purpose of the reserve is to enable the Commission to absorb changes in gross receipts tax collections over time
 - Electricity sales are dependent in part on the weather and this variability will continue to grow as the
 - and to provide funds for special one-time projects, like creating ePUC and updating the hearing room to increase ease of public participation, as anticipated by Act 174 and recommended in the Act 174 Working Group on "Increasing Ease of Citizen Participation in PUC Proceedings"

- Since FY17, the Commission has used the reserve to make up funding shortfalls (approximately \$25,000 in FY17, \$100,000 in FY18; \$3,395 in FY19; \$105,500 in FY22, and \$33,800 in FY23)
- The Commission anticipates continuing to use its reserve to make up any funding shortfalls (including using approximately \$266,000 in FY25) until gross receipts tax revenues increase as a result of, for example, strategic electrification (electric vehicles, heat pumps, etc.)
- Commission’s reserve balance as of June 30, 2023, was \$4,418,935.17.

Commission’s Workload and Performance

- How much did we do in FY23?
 - More than 4,300 new cases were filed with the Commission
 - More than 16,500 filings were made in ePUC (the Commission’s online filing and case management system)
 - More than 95 hearings and workshops were held
 - More than 1,950 orders and certificates of public good were issued and more than 2,800 net-metering registration certificates of public good were issued
- How well did we do it?
 - Percent of cases disposed of or otherwise resolved within established timeframes – 96%
 - Percent of public inquiries and information requests satisfied within established timeframes – 96%
 - Percent of net-metering registration cases resolved within established timeframes – 97%

Responses to Other Questions from the Committee

- The Commission does not have any American Rescue Plan Act funds.
- The July flooding had only a small effect on the Commission’s operations. Our offices are in the M&T Bank Building on State Street, so the building was inaccessible for a short period of time. However, this building does not have a basement so it was reopened fairly quickly. In addition, our offices are on the 3rd and 4th floors, so there was no damage to our actual space.
- Based on Commission experience and feedback from stakeholders, remote hearings work well for some types of events, such as scheduling conferences, status conferences, and oral arguments, and the Commission expects to continue to hold those events via videoconference. But many people prefer holding workshops and complex evidentiary hearings in person, with people able to participate via videoconference if they choose to do so.
- The Commission is in the process of updating our hearing room to enable “hybrid” meetings. Our A/V vendor is addressing some issues we found when testing the equipment setup.
- The Commission is not proposing any new initiatives for FY25.
- The Commission submitted a budget that uses approximately \$266,000 of our reserve funds (not including the Act 18 work).

- Our FY25 budget includes \$40,000 in vacancy and turnover savings associated with two full-time positions. A significant reason the Commission expects to keep these positions vacant during FY25 is that the Commission is assisted by a full-time Clean Energy Innovation Fellow who is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Energy. The Clean Energy Innovation Fellow is not a Commission employee and is funded by the U.S. DOE for two years.
- The number of the Commission’s employees has remained essentially unchanged over the last 20 years, except for the addition of the three employees to assist the Commission with the work required by Act 18.

Major cases in 2023

- Proposed Green Mountain Power Corporation rate increase
- Proposed Vermont Gas Systems, Inc. rate increase
- Proposed new alternative regulation plan for Vermont Gas Systems, Inc.
- Investigation into electric vehicle charging rates
- Requests for rate increases by many municipal and cooperative electric utilities
- Encore Renewable Energy’s request for a declaratory ruling regarding the applicability of the definition of Tier II resources under Vermont’s renewable energy standards to certain potential solar facilities
- Several investigations into whether a certificate of public good holder complied with the conditions of its CPG or conducted activities without a CPG
- Updates to Section 248, net-metering, interconnection, and dam safety rules

Ongoing and expected cases

- Two cases related to the development of a potential Clean Heat Standard
- Budgets, goals, and demand resources plans for the 3 energy efficiency utilities
- Reviews of the 3 energy efficiency utilities’ orders of appointment
- Requests for rate increases by municipal and cooperative electric utilities
- Reviews of many proposed new electric vehicle charging rates
- Proposed integrated resource plan for Vermont Gas Systems, Inc.
- New rule regarding the installation and operation of energy storage facilities
- Proposed renewal of Vermont Telephone Company’s certificate of public good to own and operate a cable television system
- Review of VT Real Estate Holdings 1 LLC’s proposed 20 MW solar project in Shaftsbury
- Review of Green Mountain Power Corporation’s “Zero Outages Initiative”

- Proposed indirect acquisition of Consolidated Communications by Condor Holdings LLC
- Ongoing review of utility integrated resource plans
- Ongoing implementation of the Renewable Energy Standard
- Reviews of alternative regulation, standard-offer program, regulation of energy efficiency utilities
- Continuous review of requests for approval of smaller electric generation facilities – e.g., more than 2,060 net-metering cases in FY23
- Continuous review of wireless telecommunications towers – 133 in FY23

Sec. E.234 of the Big Bill

- This section includes an amendment to 30 V.S.A. § 248c(d) to reduce and clarify certain fees to better match the application fees to the Commission's anticipated workload in reviewing these applications. The Commission suggests one minor wording change to the language that is included in the big bill and can work with appropriate legislative staff on that issue.

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State of Vermont
FY2025 Governor's Recommended Budget: Rollup Report

Organization: 02250 - Public Utility Commission

Budget Object Group: 1. PERSONAL SERVICES

Budget Object Rollup Name	FY2023 Actuals	FY2024 Original As Passed Budget	FY2024 Governor's BAA Recommended Budget	FY2025 Governor's Recommended Budget	Difference Between FY2025 Governor's Recommend and FY2024 As Passed	Percent Change FY2025 Governor's Recommend and FY2024 As Passed
Salaries and Wages	2,528,803	2,553,953	2,553,953	2,957,172	403,219	15.8%
Fringe Benefits	1,175,004	1,273,532	1,273,532	1,632,567	359,035	28.2%
Contracted and 3rd Party Service	429,597	74,357	74,357	428,357	354,000	476.1%
PerDiem and Other Personal Services	527	837,100	837,100	34,307	(802,793)	-95.9%
Budget Object Group Total: 1. PERSONAL SERVICES	4,133,932	4,738,942	4,738,942	5,052,403	313,461	6.6%

Budget Object Group: 2. OPERATING

Budget Object Rollup Name	FY2023 Actuals	FY2024 Original As Passed Budget	FY2024 Governor's BAA Recommended Budget	FY2025 Governor's Recommended Budget	Difference Between FY2025 Governor's Recommend and FY2024 As Passed	Percent Change FY2025 Governor's Recommend and FY2024 As Passed
Equipment	132	2,500	2,500	2,500	0	0.0%
IT/Telecom Services and Equipment	168,318	265,024	265,024	287,709	22,685	8.6%
IT Repair and Maintenance Services	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Other Operating Expenses	1,068	1,332	1,332	1,372	40	3.0%
Other Rental	1,812	9,200	9,200	9,200	0	0.0%
Other Purchased Services	53,756	70,564	70,564	83,627	13,063	18.5%
Property and Maintenance	642	4,800	4,800	4,800	0	0.0%
Property Rental	150,736	157,352	157,352	182,780	25,428	16.2%
Supplies	774	14,900	14,900	14,900	0	0.0%
Travel	18,855	24,261	24,261	30,261	6,000	24.7%
Budget Object Group Total: 2. OPERATING	396,094	549,933	549,933	617,149	67,216	12.2%
Total Expenditures	4,530,026	5,288,875	5,288,875	5,669,552	380,677	7.2%

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State of Vermont
FY2025 Governor's Recommended Budget: Rollup Report

Organization: 02250 - Public Utility Commission

Fund Name	FY2023 Actuals	FY2024 Original As Passed Budget	FY2024 Governor's BAA Recommended Budget	FY2025 Governor's Recommended Budget	Difference Between FY2025 Governor's Recommend and FY2024 As Passed	Percent Change FY2025 Governor's Recommend and FY2024 As Passed
General Funds	0	825,000	825,000	0	(825,000)	-100.0%
Special Fund	4,530,026	4,463,875	4,463,875	5,669,552	1,205,677	27.0%
Funds Total	4,530,026	5,288,875	5,288,875	5,669,552	380,677	7.2%

Position Count	30
FTE Total	30

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State of Vermont
FY2025 Governor's Recommended Budget: Detail Report

Organization: 02250 - Public Utility Commission

Budget Object Group: 1. PERSONAL SERVICES

		FY2023 Actuals	FY2024 Original As Passed Budget	FY2024 Governor's BAA Recommended Budget	FY2025 Governor's Recommended Budget	Difference Between FY2025 Governor's Recommend and FY2024 As Passed	Percent Change FY2025 Governor's Recommend and FY2024 As Passed
Salaries and Wages							
Description	Code						
Classified Employees	500000	2,528,748	348,699	348,699	345,488	(3,211)	-0.9%
Exempt	500010	0	2,240,254	2,240,254	2,651,684	411,430	18.4%
Overtime	500060	55	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Vacancy Turnover Savings	508000	0	(35,000)	(35,000)	(40,000)	(5,000)	14.3%
Total: Salaries and Wages		2,528,803	2,553,953	2,553,953	2,957,172	403,219	15.8%

		FY2023 Actuals	FY2024 Original As Passed Budget	FY2024 Governor's BAA Recommended Budget	FY2025 Governor's Recommended Budget	Difference Between FY2025 Governor's Recommend and FY2024 As Passed	Percent Change FY2025 Governor's Recommend and FY2024 As Passed
Fringe Benefits							
Description	Code						
FICA - Classified Employees	501000	184,131	26,675	26,675	26,430	(245)	-0.9%
FICA - Exempt	501010	0	168,913	168,913	201,030	32,117	19.0%
Health Ins - Classified Empl	501500	407,981	41,228	41,228	47,412	6,184	15.0%
Health Ins - Exempt	501510	0	431,365	431,365	585,079	153,714	35.6%
Retirement - Classified Empl	502000	537,275	93,103	93,103	92,245	(858)	-0.9%
Retirement - Exempt	502010	0	460,744	460,744	603,011	142,267	30.9%
Dental - Classified Employees	502500	21,541	4,265	4,265	4,265	0	0.0%
Dental - Exempt	502510	0	17,913	17,913	20,472	2,559	14.3%
Life Ins - Classified Empl	503000	9,646	1,748	1,748	1,731	(17)	-1.0%
Life Ins - Exempt	503010	0	8,270	8,270	10,260	1,990	24.1%
LTD - Classified Employees	503500	3,554	0	0	0	0	0.0%

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State of Vermont

FY2025 Governor's Recommended Budget: Detail Report

Organization: 02250 - Public Utility Commission

Fringe Benefits		FY2023 Actuals	FY2024 Original As Passed Budget	FY2024 Governor's BAA Recommended Budget	FY2025 Governor's Recommended Budget	Difference Between FY2025 Governor's Recommend and FY2024 As Passed	Percent Change FY2025 Governor's Recommend and FY2024 As Passed
Description	Code						
LTD - Exempt	503510	0	3,764	3,764	4,456	692	18.4%
EAP - Classified Empl	504000	822	170	170	170	0	0.0%
EAP - Exempt	504010	0	748	748	850	102	13.6%
FMLI	504040	0	0	0	9,481	9,481	100.0%
Child Care Contribution Exp	504045	0	0	0	9,890	9,890	100.0%
Employee Tuition Costs	504530	0	2,000	2,000	2,000	0	0.0%
Workers Comp - Ins Premium	505200	10,054	12,626	12,626	13,785	1,159	9.2%
Unemployment Compensation	505500	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Total: Fringe Benefits		1,175,004	1,273,532	1,273,532	1,632,567	359,035	28.2%

Contracted and 3rd Party Service		FY2023 Actuals	FY2024 Original As Passed Budget	FY2024 Governor's BAA Recommended Budget	FY2025 Governor's Recommended Budget	Difference Between FY2025 Governor's Recommend and FY2024 As Passed	Percent Change FY2025 Governor's Recommend and FY2024 As Passed
Description	Code						
Contr & 3Rd Party - Financial	507100	64,000	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Contr & 3Rd Party - Legal	507200	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Contr&3Rd Pty-Appr/Engineering	507300	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Contr&3Rd Pty-Educ & Training	507350	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Adr Mediation	507505	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Other Contr and 3Rd Pty Serv	507600	337,436	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Naruc,Nrri,Necpuc	507610	28,161	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Contractual & 3Rd Party	507999	0	74,357	74,357	428,357	354,000	476.1%
Total: Contracted and 3rd Party Service		429,597	74,357	74,357	428,357	354,000	476.1%

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State of Vermont

FY2025 Governor's Recommended Budget: Detail Report

Organization: 02250 - Public Utility Commission

PerDiem and Other Personal Services		FY2023 Actuals	FY2024 Original As Passed Budget	FY2024 Governor's BAA Recommended Budget	FY2025 Governor's Recommended Budget	Difference Between FY2025 Governor's Recommend and FY2024 As Passed	Percent Change FY2025 Governor's Recommend and FY2024 As Passed
Description	Code						
Catamount Health Assessment	505700	527	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Per Diem	506000	0	0	0	25,000	25,000	100.0%
Other Personal Services	506199	0	825,000	825,000	0	(825,000)	-100.0%
Sheriffs	506230	0	12,100	12,100	9,307	(2,793)	-23.1%
Total: PerDiem and Other Personal Services		527	837,100	837,100	34,307	(802,793)	-95.9%
Total: 1. PERSONAL SERVICES		4,133,932	4,738,942	4,738,942	5,052,403	313,461	6.6%

Budget Object Group: 2. OPERATING

Equipment		FY2023 Actuals	FY2024 Original As Passed Budget	FY2024 Governor's BAA Recommended Budget	FY2025 Governor's Recommended Budget	Difference Between FY2025 Governor's Recommend and FY2024 As Passed	Percent Change FY2025 Governor's Recommend and FY2024 As Passed
Description	Code						
Furniture & Fixtures	522700	132	2,500	2,500	2,500	0	0.0%
Total: Equipment		132	2,500	2,500	2,500	0	0.0%

IT/Telecom Services and Equipment		FY2023 Actuals	FY2024 Original As Passed Budget	FY2024 Governor's BAA Recommended Budget	FY2025 Governor's Recommended Budget	Difference Between FY2025 Governor's Recommend and FY2024 As Passed	Percent Change FY2025 Governor's Recommend and FY2024 As Passed
Description	Code						
Software-License-ApplicaSupprt	516551	0	89,000	89,000	95,000	6,000	6.7%
ADS VOIP Expense	516605	7,748	10,000	10,000	11,110	1,110	11.1%

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IT/Telecom Services and Equipment		FY2023 Actuals	FY2024 Original As Passed Budget	FY2024 Governor's BAA Recommended Budget	FY2025 Governor's Recommended Budget	Difference Between FY2025 Governor's Recommend and FY2024 As Passed	Percent Change FY2025 Governor's Recommend and FY2024 As Passed
Description	Code						
Internet	516620	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Telecom-Telephone Services	516652	0	700	700	0	(700)	-100.0%
Telecom-Conf Calling Services	516658	1,107	1,500	1,500	1,500	0	0.0%
Telecom-Wireless Phone Service	516659	5,331	7,000	7,000	7,000	0	0.0%
ADS Enterp App Supp SOV Emp Exp	516660	89,840	0	0	0	0	0.0%
ADS App Support SOV Emp Exp	516661	0	85,795	85,795	94,987	9,192	10.7%
It Intsvccost-Vision/Isdassess	516671	22,734	24,344	24,344	24,153	(191)	-0.8%
ADS Centrex Exp.	516672	2,344	5,000	5,000	5,000	0	0.0%
ADS Allocation Exp.	516685	32,558	32,685	32,685	38,409	5,724	17.5%
ADS App Support Contracts	516695	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Hw - Computer Peripherals	522201	726	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Hardware - Desktop & Laptop Pc	522216	5,491	7,000	7,000	9,050	2,050	29.3%
Hw - Printers,Copiers,Scanners	522217	440	1,000	1,000	500	(500)	-50.0%
Hw-Personal Mobile Devices	522258	0	1,000	1,000	1,000	0	0.0%
Total: IT/Telecom Services and Equipment		168,318	265,024	265,024	287,709	22,685	8.6%

IT Repair and Maintenance Services		FY2023 Actuals	FY2024 Original As Passed Budget	FY2024 Governor's BAA Recommended Budget	FY2025 Governor's Recommended Budget	Difference Between FY2025 Governor's Recommend and FY2024 As Passed	Percent Change FY2025 Governor's Recommend and FY2024 As Passed
Description	Code						
Software-Rep&Maint-ApplicaSupp	513050	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Total: IT Repair and Maintenance Services		0	0	0	0	0	0.0%

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State of Vermont
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Other Operating Expenses		FY2023 Actuals	FY2024 Original As Passed Budget	FY2024 Governor's BAA Recommended Budget	FY2025 Governor's Recommended Budget	Difference Between FY2025 Governor's Recommend and FY2024 As Passed	Percent Change FY2025 Governor's Recommend and FY2024 As Passed
Description	Code						
Single Audit Allocation	523620	1,068	1,332	1,332	1,372	40	3.0%
Total: Other Operating Expenses		1,068	1,332	1,332	1,372	40	3.0%

Other Rental		FY2023 Actuals	FY2024 Original As Passed Budget	FY2024 Governor's BAA Recommended Budget	FY2025 Governor's Recommended Budget	Difference Between FY2025 Governor's Recommend and FY2024 As Passed	Percent Change FY2025 Governor's Recommend and FY2024 As Passed
Description	Code						
Rental - Auto	514550	300	2,000	2,000	2,000	0	0.0%
Rental - Office Equipment	514650	1,500	7,200	7,200	7,200	0	0.0%
Rental - Other	515000	12	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Total: Other Rental		1,812	9,200	9,200	9,200	0	0.0%

Other Purchased Services		FY2023 Actuals	FY2024 Original As Passed Budget	FY2024 Governor's BAA Recommended Budget	FY2025 Governor's Recommended Budget	Difference Between FY2025 Governor's Recommend and FY2024 As Passed	Percent Change FY2025 Governor's Recommend and FY2024 As Passed
Description	Code						
Insurance Other Than Empl Bene	516000	1,447	1,502	1,502	1,214	(288)	-19.2%
Insurance - General Liability	516010	17,121	18,820	18,820	18,624	(196)	-1.0%
Property Insurance	516099	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Dues	516500	200	400	400	600	200	50.0%
Licenses	516550	0	2,100	2,100	2,700	600	28.6%
Advertising-Print	516813	4,876	6,000	6,000	9,600	3,600	60.0%
Advertising - Job Vacancies	516820	65	6,000	6,000	6,000	0	0.0%

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Other Purchased Services		FY2023 Actuals	FY2024 Original As Passed Budget	FY2024 Governor's BAA Recommended Budget	FY2025 Governor's Recommended Budget	Difference Between FY2025 Governor's Recommend and FY2024 As Passed	Percent Change FY2025 Governor's Recommend and FY2024 As Passed
Description	Code						
Printing and Binding	517000	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Photocopying	517020	10	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Registration For Meetings&Conf	517100	7,018	8,500	8,500	13,000	4,500	52.9%
Postage	517200	876	2,500	2,500	2,500	0	0.0%
Freight & Express Mail	517300	33	1,200	1,200	1,200	0	0.0%
Other Purchased Services	519000	0	1,000	1,000	1,000	0	0.0%
Human Resources Services	519006	21,288	21,542	21,542	26,189	4,647	21.6%
Moving State Agencies	519040	823	1,000	1,000	1,000	0	0.0%
Total: Other Purchased Services		53,756	70,564	70,564	83,627	13,063	18.5%

Property and Maintenance		FY2023 Actuals	FY2024 Original As Passed Budget	FY2024 Governor's BAA Recommended Budget	FY2025 Governor's Recommended Budget	Difference Between FY2025 Governor's Recommend and FY2024 As Passed	Percent Change FY2025 Governor's Recommend and FY2024 As Passed
Description	Code						
Disposal	510200	322	800	800	800	0	0.0%
Repair&Maint-Non-Info Tech Equ	513100	320	4,000	4,000	4,000	0	0.0%
Total: Property and Maintenance		642	4,800	4,800	4,800	0	0.0%

Property Rental		FY2023 Actuals	FY2024 Original As Passed Budget	FY2024 Governor's BAA Recommended Budget	FY2025 Governor's Recommended Budget	Difference Between FY2025 Governor's Recommend and FY2024 As Passed	Percent Change FY2025 Governor's Recommend and FY2024 As Passed
Description	Code						
Fee-For-Space Charge	515010	150,736	157,352	157,352	182,780	25,428	16.2%

State of Vermont

FY2025 Governor's Recommended Budget: Detail Report

Organization: 02250 - Public Utility Commission

		FY2023 Actuals	FY2024 Original As Passed Budget	FY2024 Governor's BAA Recommended Budget	FY2025 Governor's Recommended Budget	Difference Between FY2025 Governor's Recommend and FY2024 As Passed	Percent Change FY2025 Governor's Recommend and FY2024 As Passed
Property Rental							
Description	Code						
Total: Property Rental		150,736	157,352	157,352	182,780	25,428	16.2%

		FY2023 Actuals	FY2024 Original As Passed Budget	FY2024 Governor's BAA Recommended Budget	FY2025 Governor's Recommended Budget	Difference Between FY2025 Governor's Recommend and FY2024 As Passed	Percent Change FY2025 Governor's Recommend and FY2024 As Passed
Supplies							
Description	Code						
Office Supplies	520000	614	6,000	6,000	6,000	0	0.0%
Stationary & Envelopes	520015	74	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Gasoline	520110	0	1,000	1,000	1,000	0	0.0%
Other General Supplies	520500	37	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Food	520700	48	1,000	1,000	1,000	0	0.0%
Books&Periodicals-Library/Educ	521500	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Subscriptions	521510	0	6,500	6,500	6,500	0	0.0%
Paper Products	521820	0	400	400	400	0	0.0%
Total: Supplies		774	14,900	14,900	14,900	0	0.0%

		FY2023 Actuals	FY2024 Original As Passed Budget	FY2024 Governor's BAA Recommended Budget	FY2025 Governor's Recommended Budget	Difference Between FY2025 Governor's Recommend and FY2024 As Passed	Percent Change FY2025 Governor's Recommend and FY2024 As Passed
Travel							
Description	Code						
Travel-Inst-Auto Mileage-Emp	518000	1,133	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Travel-Inst-Other Transp-Emp	518010	83	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Travel-Inst-Meals-Emp	518020	139	0	0	0	0	0.0%

Report ID: VTPB-07_GOV REC
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State of Vermont

FY2025 Governor's Recommended Budget: Detail Report

Organization: 02250 - Public Utility Commission

Travel		FY2023 Actuals	FY2024 Original As Passed Budget	FY2024 Governor's BAA Recommended Budget	FY2025 Governor's Recommended Budget	Difference Between FY2025 Governor's Recommend and FY2024 As Passed	Percent Change FY2025 Governor's Recommend and FY2024 As Passed
Description	Code						
Travel-Inst-Lodging-Emp	518030	1,179	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Travel-Inst-Incidentals-Emp	518040	5	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Travel-Outst-Auto Mileage-Emp	518500	1,299	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Travel-Outst-Other Trans-Emp	518510	3,431	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Travel-Outst-Meals-Emp	518520	1,363	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Travel-Outst-Lodging-Emp	518530	9,407	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Travel-Outst-Incidentals-Emp	518540	816	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Travel-Outst-Lodging-Nonemp	518730	0	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Travel	518999	0	24,261	24,261	30,261	6,000	24.7%
Total: Travel		18,855	24,261	24,261	30,261	6,000	24.7%
Total: 2. OPERATING		396,094	549,933	549,933	617,149	67,216	12.2%
Total Expenditures		4,530,026	5,288,875	5,288,875	5,669,552	380,677	7.2%

Fund Name	Fund Code	FY2023 Actuals	FY2024 Original As Passed Budget	FY2024 Governor's BAA Recommended Budget	FY2025 Governor's Recommended Budget	Difference Between FY2025 Governor's Recommend and FY2024 As Passed	Percent Change FY2025 Governor's Recommend and FY2024 As Passed
General Fund	10000	0	825,000	825,000	0	(825,000)	-100.0%
PUC-Special Fds	21709	4,530,026	4,463,875	4,463,875	5,669,552	1,205,677	27.0%
Funds Total		4,530,026	5,288,875	5,288,875	5,669,552	380,677	7.2%

Position Count	30
FTE Total	30.00

Report ID: VTPB-14-POSITION_SUMMARY
 Run Date: 01/21/2024
 Run Time: 09:42 PM

State of Vermont
FY2025 Governor's Recommended Budget
Position Summary Report

02250-Public Utility Commission

Position Number	Classification	FTE	Count	Gross Salary	State Benefits	Federally Mandated	Total
370008	089190 - Administrative Srvc Tech III	1.00	1	59,155	29,245	4,526	92,926
370011	089190 - Administrative Srvc Tech III	1.00	1	44,117	25,050	3,375	72,542
370012	089190 - Administrative Srvc Tech III	1.00	1	50,003	26,693	3,825	80,521
370013	553000 - Solar Net Metering Prog Mgr	1.00	1	75,733	22,018	5,793	103,544
370017	033650 - Public Utility Comm Ops Dir.	1.00	1	116,480	45,240	8,911	170,631
377001	90080E - Public Utility Comm Chair	1.00	1	189,616	77,114	12,681	279,411
377002	95080E - Public Utility Comm Member	1.00	1	126,426	68,499	9,671	204,596
377003	95080E - Public Utility Comm Member	1.00	1	126,426	58,977	9,671	195,074
377005	95100E - General Coun-Pub Utility Comm	1.00	1	103,593	53,151	7,925	164,669
377006	95869E - Staff Attorney IV	1.00	1	132,078	70,556	10,104	212,738
377007	95869E - Staff Attorney IV	1.00	1	125,045	68,581	9,566	203,192
377008	05110E - Business Manager A	1.00	1	88,350	49,392	6,759	144,501
377009	96379E - Policy Analyst II	1.00	1	86,534	53,502	6,620	146,656
377010	95869E - Staff Attorney IV	1.00	1	128,072	22,716	9,797	160,585
377012	95869E - Staff Attorney IV	1.00	1	121,843	34,478	9,321	165,642
377014	96377E - Utilities Analyst IV	1.00	1	117,091	32,891	8,958	158,940
377015	95869E - Staff Attorney IV	1.00	1	140,871	58,430	10,777	210,078
377017	96377E - Utilities Analyst IV	1.00	1	117,091	33,478	8,958	159,527
377018	95869E - Staff Attorney IV	1.00	1	135,294	47,874	10,350	193,518
377020	96377E - Utilities Analyst IV	1.00	1	117,049	33,469	8,954	159,472
377022	96130E - Utilities Engineer	1.00	1	0	25,817	0	25,817
377023	03310E - Chief Economist	1.00	1	134,837	57,361	10,315	202,513
377024	95869E - Staff Attorney IV	1.00	1	123,093	55,281	9,417	187,791
377025	96373E - Environmental Analyst IV	1.00	1	106,203	63,291	8,125	177,619
377026	95090E - Clerk Public Utility Comm	1.00	1	92,118	59,340	7,047	158,505
377027	91590E - Private Secretary	1.00	1	0	12,740	0	12,740
377028	95091E - Deputy Clerk PUC	1.00	1	66,742	43,326	5,106	115,174
377029	95869E - Staff Attorney IV	1.00	1	102,101	68,493	7,810	178,404

Report ID: VTPB-14-POSITION_SUMMARY
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State of Vermont
FY2025 Governor's Recommended Budget
Position Summary Report

Position Number	Classification	FTE	Count	Gross Salary	State Benefits	Federally Mandated	Total
377030	95690E - Policy Analyst	1.00	1	87,574	53,793	6,700	148,067
377031	95690E - Policy Analyst	1.00	1	83,637	38,526	6,398	128,561
Total		30.00	30	2,997,172	1,389,322	227,460	4,613,954

Fund Code	Fund Name	FTE	Count	Gross Salary	State Benefits	Federally Mandated	Total
21709	PUC-Special Fds	30.00	30	2,997,172	1,389,322	227,460	4,613,954
Total		30.00	30	2,997,172	1,389,322	227,460	4,613,954

Note: Numbers may not sum to total due to rounding.

Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Development Form: Public Utilities Commission

	General \$\$	Transp \$\$	Educat \$\$	Clean Water \$\$	Special \$\$	Glob Commit \$\$	Federal \$\$	Int. Service \$\$	Interdept'l Transfer \$\$	All other \$\$	Total \$\$
Approp #1 [2250000000]: Public Utilities Commission FY 2024 Approp	0	0	0	0	4,463,875	0	0	0	0	0	4,463,875
Other Changes: (Please insert changes to your base appropriation that occurred after the passage of the FY24 budget)											0
FY 2024 Other Changes	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Approp. After FY 2024 Other Changes	0	0	0	0	4,463,875	0	0	0	0	0	4,463,875
CURRENT SERVICE LEVEL/CURRENT LAW	0	0	0	0	327,332	0	0	0	0	0	327,332
<i>Personal Services</i>	0	0	0	0	302,952	0	0	0	0	0	302,952
500000: Salary & Wages: Classified Employees					134,907						134,907
500010: Salary & Wages: Exempt Employees											
501500: Health Insurance: Classified Employees					78,467						78,467
501510: Health Insurances: Exempt Employees											
502000: Retirement: Classified Employees					68,435						68,435
502010: Retirement: Exempt Employees											
All Other Employee Payroll Related Fringe Benefits					11,799						11,799
504040: VT Family & Medical Leave Insurance Premium					8,467						8,467
504045: Child Care Contribution					8,988						8,988
505200: Workers' Compensation Insurance Premium					(318)						(318)
508000: Vacancy Turnover Savings					(5,000)						(5,000)
506230: Sheriffs					(2,793)						(2,793)
											0
											0
<i>Operating Expenses</i>	0	0	0	0	24,380	0	0	0	0	0	24,380
515010: Fee-for-Space Charge					25,428						25,428
516000: Insurance Other Than Employee Benefits					(418)						(418)
516010: Insurance - General Liability					(2,191)						(2,191)
516671: VISION/ISD					(2,779)						(2,779)
516685: ADS Allocated Fee					1,609						1,609
519006: Human Resources Services					1,841						1,841
523620: Single Audit Allocation					40						40
516652: Telecom-Telephone Services					(700)						(700)
522216: Hardware-Desktop & Laptop PCs					2,050						2,050
522217: HW - Printers, Copiers, Scanners					(500)						(500)
REDUCTIONS TO TARGET	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Personal Services</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
											0
<i>Operating Expenses</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
											0
<i>Grants</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
											0
Subtotal of Increases/Decreases	0	0	0	0	327,332	0	0	0	0	0	327,332
FY 2025 Governor Recommend	0	0	0	0	4,791,207	0	0	0	0	0	4,791,207
FY 2025 Governor Recommend Target	0	0	0	0	4,463,875	0	0	0	0	0	4,463,875
FY 2025 Target vs. Recommend	0	0	0	0	(327,332)	0	0	0	0	0	(327,332)
Public Utilities Commission FY 2024 Appropriation	0	0	0	0	4,463,875	0	0	0	0	0	4,463,875
Reductions and Other Changes	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
FY 2024 Total After Other Changes	0	0	0	0	4,463,875	0	0	0	0	0	4,463,875
TOTAL INCREASES/DECREASES	0	0	0	0	327,332	0	0	0	0	0	327,332
Public Utilities Commission FY 2025 Governor Recommend	0	0	0	0	4,791,207	0	0	0	0	0	4,791,207
FY 2025 Governor Recommend Target	0	0	0	0	4,463,875	0	0	0	0	0	4,463,875
FY 2025 Target vs. Recommend	0	0	0	0	(327,332)	0	0	0	0	0	(327,332)

VERMONT PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION'S FY23 CASE-PROCESSING PERFORMANCE MEASURE RESULTS

February 12, 2024

I. Introduction

This report provides detailed information on the Vermont Public Utility Commission’s (“Commission”) case-processing performance by case type. Historically the Commission has used two “time-to-disposition” performance measures to measure its performance. In FY23, for the first time, the Commission has also calculated its clearance rate.

Both time-to-disposition and clearance rate are part of the National Center for State Courts’ CourTools performance measurement system.

- Time-to-disposition focuses on cases “disposed” (resolved or otherwise closed) during the fiscal year. It measures the percentage of cases that were disposed within the disposition time standard or goal for that case type.
- Clearance rate measures the number of disposed cases as a percentage of incoming cases. The purpose is to measure whether the Commission is keeping up with its incoming caseload.

II. Structure of Time-to-Disposition Performance Measure

The National Center for State Courts recognizes that some cases are more complex than others and therefore can be expected to take longer to resolve. For this reason, in the CourTools performance measurement system, the time-to-disposition goals for individual case types are broken out into two or three “tiers” that correspond to simple, average, and complex cases. The Commission followed this best practice when it created its time-to-disposition performance measures.

The Commission established timeframe goals for each tier before ePUC, the Commission’s online case management system, was operational. As a result, the goals were not based on actual data regarding how long different types of cases took to resolve. During FY24, the Commission will be using data from ePUC to reevaluate the timeframe goals.

When the Commission developed the time-to-disposition performance measures, the Commission also estimated the percentage of cases that would fall within each tier.¹ In practice, whether a case is simple, average, or complex depends on factors that are often outside the Commission’s control, such as how many parties are in a case and how many issues are being

¹ When the Commission developed its time-to-disposition performance measures, the National Center for State Courts’ model case processing time standards provided for resolution of 100% of cases of a particular case type within the longest tier for that case type. Since then, the National Center for State Courts has revised its model time standards. Now the model time standards provide for resolution of only 98% of cases of a particular case type within the longest tier for that case type, presumably recognizing that there can be outliers.

contested in that case. Therefore, it is expected that the percentage of cases in each tier will vary from year to year.

III. Time-to-Disposition of Net-Metering Registration Cases

Because the number of net-metering registration cases² filed with the Commission each year is significantly larger than all other case types, the Commission measures its performance on net-metering registration cases separately from other types of cases.

The tiers for net-metering registration cases reflect the fact that smaller systems have a 10-business-day comment period while larger systems have a 30-calendar-day comment period. In addition, cases in which an electric utility files a technical objection to the project's interconnection take longer to resolve than cases in which no objection is filed. Over time, the Commission has seen growth in the number of larger net-metering registrations with longer comment periods as well as an increase in the number of utility objections filed on systems of all sizes. These trends directly affect the percentage of cases that are resolved within the first two tiers.

The Commission's tiers, timeframe goals, and estimates of the percentage of cases that will fall within each tier are shown below.

Timeframes	Goal	% Achieved	Number of Cases
Within 16 days	70%	58.58%	1,505
Within 34 days	85%	89.57%	2,301
Within 90 days	100%	97.28%	2,499
Did not meet goal			70
Total Number of Cases			2,569

IV. Time-to-Disposition of Other Types of Cases

The Commission's second time-to-disposition performance metric includes 11 types of cases: Section 248a cases, Section 248 cases, Section 248(j) cases, special contracts, accounting orders, financings, net-metering applications, net-metering petitions, telecommunications certificates of public good ("CPGs"), commercial mobile radio service ("CMRS") CPGs, and tariffs. Some of these case types are divided into two tiers while others are divided into three tiers.

² There are three different types of net-metering cases, each of which follows a different application and review process. Net-metering registrations include rooftop solar systems with a capacity of 500 kW or less, ground-mounted solar systems with a capacity of 15 kW or less, and hydroelectric systems with a capacity of 500 kW or less. Net-metering applications include solar systems with a capacity of greater than 15 kW and up to and including 50 kW, and non-photovoltaic systems with a capacity of up to and including 50 kW. Net-metering petitions include systems of all generation types with a capacity of greater than 50 kW and up to and including 500 kW.

It is important to recognize that, for some case types, the Commission resolves only a few cases each year. This means that one case that is an outlier can materially affect the percentage of cases of that case type that met the timeframe goal.

While the Commission resolved more than 95% of cases within the goals for resolving 100% of cases, there are several types of cases for which the Commission resolved a much smaller percentage of cases within the timeframe for the first tier than it had estimated that it would. For example, the Commission resolved 33% of Section 248(j) cases within the timeframe for the first tier compared to the estimate of 70%. Similarly, the Commission resolved 17% of net-metering petitions within the timeframe for the first tier compared to the estimate of 50%.

The causes for these differences vary. For example, the Commission only resolved three Section 248(j) cases in FY23; if it had resolved one more case within the timeframe for the first tier, the Commission would have been very close to meeting the estimate of 70%. And in two of the previous four years the Commission met the timeframe goal for the first tier of Section 248(j) cases.

In contrast, in the last four years the Commission has resolved a substantially smaller percentage of net-metering petitions within the timeframe for the first tier than it had estimated that it would. However, the Commission’s FY23 performance matches its best performance in this area during this time period.

During FY22 the Commission implemented a new “uncontested net-metering waiver process” to try to streamline the processing of such cases. The effects of that process improvement can be seen by looking at the Commission’s results for the second tier of net-metering petition cases, which at 75% were close to the 80% estimate, and significantly higher than the Commission’s results in previous years for this case type, which varied between 34% and 64%.

The Commission’s tiers, timeframe goals, and estimates of the percentage of cases that will fall within each tier for each type of case are shown below.

Case Types and Timeframes	Goal	% Achieved	Number of Cases
§ 248a			
Within 90 days	90%	99.28%	138
Within 180 days	100%	99.28%	138
Did not meet goal			1
§ 248			
Within 180 days	33%	15.38%	2
Within 365 days	80%	84.62%	11
Within 545 days	100%	92.31%	12
Did not meet goal			1
§248(j)			
Within 90 days	70%	33.33%	1
Within 180 days	90%	66.67%	2
Within 270 days	100%	100.00%	3

Case Types and Timeframes	Goal	% Achieved	Number of Cases
Did not meet goal			0
Special Contracts			
Within 60 days	95%	100.00%	1
Within 120 days	100%	100.00%	1
Did not meet goal			0
Accounting Orders			
Within 45 days	95%	0.00%	N/A
Within 90 days	100%	0.00%	N/A
Did not meet goal			N/A
Financings			
Within 60 days	95%	62.50%	5
Within 90 days	100%	100.00%	8
Did not meet goal			0
Net-Metering Applications			
Within 60 days	75%	42.86%	3
Within 90 days	85%	57.14%	4
Within 120 days	100%	85.71%	6
Did not meet goal			1
Net-Metering Petitions			
Within 60 days	50%	16.67%	2
Within 120 days	80%	75.00%	9
Within 270 days	100%	75.00%	9
Did not meet goal			3
Telecommunications CPGs			
Within 30 days	75%	75.00%	3
Within 45 days	100%	100.00%	4
Did not meet goal			0
Cellular CPGs			
Within 30 days	75%	56.25%	9
Within 45 days	100%	68.75%	11
Did not meet goal			5
Tariffs			
Within 45 days	90%	89.06%	57
Within 135 days	100%	100.00%	64
Did not meet goal			0
Total Number of Cases			267
Within first time period		82.77%	221
Within second time period		94.38%	252
Within third time period (includes cases within second period for those case types without a third period)		95.88%	256
Did not meet goal		4.12%	11

V. Clearance Rate

The clearance rate reflects the number of resolved cases as a percentage of the number of incoming cases. The purpose is to measure whether a court is keeping up with its incoming caseload. A clearance rate above 100% indicates that the Commission is resolving more cases than it is adding. Conversely, a clearance rate below 100% indicates that the Commission has resolved fewer cases than have been added, which means that a backlog of cases may be developing.

The clearance rate is calculated by comparing the number of cases filed during a fiscal year (in this report during FY23) with the number of cases that were resolved during the same time period. For the purpose of calculating this performance measure, “filed” means when a case was first submitted to the Commission, even if the case submission did not yet include all the information necessary for the Commission to process the case.

As with the Commission’s time-to-disposition measures, it is important to recognize that for some case types, only a few cases are filed or resolved each year. This means that for those case types, the clearance rate could be significantly above or below 100% simply because one more case was resolved than filed or vice versa.

It is also important to note that the Commission does not have control over when cases are filed and there can be significant variability from year to year regarding when cases are filed. Because cases filed close to the end of a fiscal year are likely to be resolved during the next fiscal year, differences in the number of cases filed close to the end of one fiscal year compared to the previous fiscal year can affect the clearance rate. For example, if more cases were filed close to the end of FY22 than were filed close to the end of FY23, the FY23 clearance rate could be greater than 100%. The converse is also true – if more cases were filed close to the end of FY23 than were filed close to the end of FY22, there could be an FY23 clearance rate of less than 100%.

The Commission’s clearance rate for each case type is shown below.

Case Types	Number of Cases Filed	Number of Cases Resolved	Clearance Rate
§ 248a	133	139	104.51%
§ 248	19	13	68.42%
§248(j)	4	3	75.00%
Special Contracts	3	1	33.33%
Accounting Orders	1	0	0.00%
Financings	8	8	100.00%
Net-Metering Applications	12	7	58.33%
Net-Metering Petitions	11	12	109.09%
Telecommunications CPGs	4	4	100.00%
Cellular CPGs	18	16	88.89%
Tariffs	68	64	94.12%
Sum of Cases Other Than Net-Metering Registrations	281	267	95.02%
Net-Metering Registrations	2606	2,569	98.58%

VI. Future Plans

As noted above, the Commission is planning to reevaluate in FY24 its two time-to-disposition measures, including the tiers, the timeframe goals for each tier, and the estimates of the percentages of cases that will be resolved in each tier for each type of case.

In addition, the Commission intends to implement for FY24 a third performance measure recommended by the National Center for State Courts – age of active pending caseload. This is a point-in-time measurement that is typically done on the last day of the fiscal year. The age of the active pending cases is measured against the time standard or disposition goal for that case type set by the Commission to determine how many of the active unresolved cases are within the goal and how many have exceeded the goal.