

NOTICE OF REMOTE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION HEARING FOR THE PONDEROSA TELEPHONE CO.'S GENERAL RATE CASE APPLICATION (A.22-10-004)

Wednesday, February 8, 2023, 6:00 p.m.
Phone number: 1-800-857-1917 Passcode: 1767567#
Webcast: adminmonitor.com/ca/cpuc/

The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) wants to hear from you! A Public Participation Hearing (PPH) has been scheduled to receive your comments about The Ponderosa Telephone Co.'s (Ponderosa) request to adjust its revenue requirement, but not its basic residential or business rates, and for other further relief, as discussed below. A CPUC Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) will be presiding at this PPH to listen to concerns, comments, and opinions on the application. One or more Commissioners or their advisors may attend, but no decisions will be reached at this hearing. In addition, representatives of Ponderosa and the Public Advocates Office (Cal Advocates) will attend the PPH and be available to answer any questions. All public comments from this PPH will be included in the administrative record of this proceeding and become public record. The remote hearing location, date and time, and details on how to view and participate are listed above. Any customer may observe the remote PPH via the webcast information provided above. To participate and provide public comment, dial the toll-free telephone number and provide the passcode noted above. When it is time for public comment, an ALJ will make an announcement through the telephone line for those who wish to speak. Participants who wish to speak must then press "star one (*1)" to alert the operator, who will queue the speakers one-at-a-time and announce each speaker's name at the allotted time.

You may also submit written comments at any time directly to the PAO at the address noted at the bottom of this notice. You may also submit written comments by using the "Add Public Comment" button on the "Public Comment" tab of the Docket Card for A.22-10-004 at apps.cpuc.ca.gov/c/A2210004

If you need a language or sign interpreter, or would like to request assisted listening devices, please contact the CPUC's Public Advisor's Office (PAO) at least five business days prior to the hearing.

ABOUT THE APPLICATION

On October 3, 2022, Ponderosa filed an application with the CPUC requesting a review of its intrastate rates, revenue requirement and rate design. Ponderosa does not propose to change the prices for its basic residential or basic business rates. Ponderosa's application includes a request to review California High Cost Fund-A amounts that the company receives.

Ponderosa's current residential end user rate is \$25.00 per month, which is approximately \$35.91 when applicable federal and state fees and surcharges are included. This rate is consistent with the Commission's decision resolving Phase 2 of the California High Cost Fund A (CHCF-A) proceeding, Decision 21-06-004, which found that small incumbent local exchange carriers' residential basic rates must be set within a range of \$30.00 to \$40.00, including federal and state fees and surcharges. Ponderosa proposes to modify its basic single-line residential and business services to include the following custom calling features and voicemail for the same price as the current basic rates: Call Forwarding, Call Waiting, Three-Way Calling, Speed Calling, Toll Restriction, Remote Access to Call Forwarding, Warm Line, Teen Service, Automatic Redial, Selective Call Forwarding, Selective Call Acceptance, Selective Call Rejection, Priority Ringing, Anonymous Call Rejection, Call ID Blocking, Caller ID, Calling Name and Number, Call Trace, Call Return, and Automatic Redial.

In setting rates in this proceeding, the Commission will consider input from other parties, including Cal Advocates, who may propose rates that are higher or lower than Ponderosa's proposed rates but also within the Commission's required residential all-inclusive rate range of \$30.00 to \$40.00 mentioned above. In resolving this proceeding, the Commission may adopt any party's proposal, or it could adopt a proposal of its own, which could involve rates that are higher or lower than the rates presented.

Ponderosa believes that its proposal is necessary to preserve its access to universal service support from state and federal sources and to ensure that it can continue to provide safe, reliable, modern telecommunications services to its customers, while covering its expenses and earning a reasonable rate of return on its investments.

Further information may be obtained by contacting Ponderosa's Business Office toll free at 1-800-682-1878. A copy of Ponderosa's application and its related exhibits are available at the office of the CPUC at 505 Van Ness Avenue, San Francisco, California 94102, or at Ponderosa's Business Office located at 47034 Road 201, O'Neals, California 93645. An electronic copy of the application and its related exhibits may be examined on the Docket Card of the CPUC's website at apps.cpuc.ca.gov/p/A2210004.

CAL ADVOCATES' PARTICIPATION

Parties to the proceeding will review Ponderosa's application, including Cal Advocates, which is an independent consumer advocate within the CPUC. For more information about Cal Advocates, please call 1-415-703-1584, e-mail address at publicadvocatesoffice@cpuc.ca.gov or visit Cal Advocates' website at publicadvocates.cpuc.ca.gov.

CPUC PROCESS

The assigned ALJ will determine how to receive evidence and other related documents necessary for the CPUC to establish a record upon which to base its decision. Evidentiary Hearings (EHs) will be held where utilities, consumer advocacy groups, and other entities which have been given official status as "parties," will present their testimony and may be subject to cross-examination by other parties. The schedule for these EHs will be determined in the forthcoming scoping memo and ruling from the assigned ALJ for this proceeding. The parties expect these hearings to be held virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic or in San Francisco and are open to the public, but only those who are parties may participate. The hearings and documents submitted in the proceeding become what the ALJ relies upon when writing a proposed decision to present to the Commissioners for their consideration.

After considering all proposals and all evidence presented during the formal hearing process, the assigned ALJ will issue a proposed decision determining whether to adopt Ponderosa's request, modify it, or deny it. Any CPUC Commissioner may sponsor an alternate decision. The proposed decision, and any alternate decisions, will be discussed and voted upon at a CPUC Voting Meeting.

STAY INFORMED

If you would like to follow this proceeding, or any other issue before the CPUC, you may use the CPUC's free subscription service. Sign up at subscribecpuc.cpuc.ca.gov. The proceeding number is A.22-10-004.

If you would like to learn how you can participate in the proceeding, or if you have informal comments or questions about the CPUC processes, you may access the CPUC's PAO webpage at cpuc.ca.gov/pao. You may also contact the PAO as follows:

Write: CPUC Public Advisor's Office
505 Van Ness Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94102

Email: public.advisor@cpuc.ca.gov

Phone: 1 (866) 849-8390 (toll free) or 1 (415) 703-2074
1 (866) 836-7825 (toll free) or TTY 1 (415) 703-5282

Please reference "The Ponderosa Telephone Co., Application No. A.22-10-004" in any communications you have with the Commission regarding this matter. All public comments will be part of the public correspondence file for this proceeding and available for review by the assigned ALJ, the Commissioners, and appropriate CPUC staff.