How to Become a Party in a Proceeding

What Does it Mean to be a Party in a Proceeding?

A Party is a person or organization that is formally and directly involved in the decision-making process.

Participating as a formal party in a proceeding of the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) is the best way to influence decisions. Formal participation as a party comes with rights and responsibilities.

As a party you have the right to:

- Present evidence and witnesses to strengthen your position.
- Obtain information from other parties.
- File relevant motions, petitions, objections, and briefs.

As a party you must:

- Make witnesses available for cross-examination when witnesses have presented testimony.
- Serve documents on all parties.
- Respond to data and information requests from other parties.
- Fully disclose on whose behalf the filing is made, and fully disclose the interests of such persons or entities during the proceeding.
- Demonstrate that your perspective will be relevant to the proceeding's issues.

The CPUC Administrative Law Judge may grant or deny party status or may limit the degree to which a party may participate.

California Public Utilities Commission

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How Do I Become a Party in a Proceeding?

You become a party when you:

- File a motion to become a party.
- File an application, petition, or complaint.
- Become a defendant to a complaint or a respondent to a CPUC Investigation or Rulemaking.
- File a protest or response to an application or petition or file comments in a Rulemaking.
- Enter an appearance at a Pre-hearing Conference or hearing.

Do I Have to Be an Attorney to Become a Party?

You do not have to be an attorney to be a party in a proceeding. Those granted "party" status in a proceeding have the same rights, responsibilities, and obligations as all other parties, including the applicant, if there is one.

Rules for Participating as a Party

When becoming a party to a proceeding, you must follow the CPUC's Rules of Practice and Procedure and other guidelines. These include:

- A formal courtroom etiquette.
- Specific rules related to conversations between parties and decision-makers, known as ex parte communications.
- Rules on how to format your submitted documents.
- Rules on how to participate in a hearing.

You can find comprehensive information about participating as a party at http://cpuc.ca.gov/Party_to_a_Proceeding/.

This Sounds Complicated, Can the CPUC Help Me?

You can get help and guidance on how to become a party by contacting the **CPUC's Public Advisor's Office**:

public.advisor@cpuc.ca.gov

866-849-8390 or 415-703-2074
or TTY 866-836-7825

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