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October 1, 2021

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

Aida Camacho-Welch
Secretary of the Board
New Jersey Board of Public Utilities
44 South Clinton Avenue
P.O. Box 350
Trenton, NJ 08625

**Re: In the Matter of the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities’
Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic
BPU Docket No. AO20060471**

Dear Secretary Camacho-Welch:

This submission is respectfully made on behalf of Elizabethtown Gas Company (“ETG” or “Company”) in compliance with the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities’ (“BPU”) September 14, 2021 Order (“September 14 Order”), which became effective September 21, 2021. The September 14 Order authorized an extension of the regulatory asset period established in this proceeding from September 30, 2021 to December 31, 2022. It also required “utility companies regulated by the Board to file a formal plan within 10 days from the effective date of ...[the] Order¹ outlining how the additional time afforded by ...[the] Order will be used in meeting the [r]egulatory [a]sset [p]eriod deadline.”² This submission complies with the directive in the September 14 Order to submit such a plan by October 1, 2021.

While the September 14 Order does not specify the information that should be included in the formal plan, in the “Comments of the New Jersey Division of Rate Counsel” dated August 4, 2021 submitted in this proceeding (“Rate Counsel Comments”), Rate Counsel recommended that any approval of the extension of the regulatory asset period require “...the formal filing of a plan on how the additional time will be used by the Companies.” (September 14 Order at page 5). Specifically, the Rate Counsel Comments recommended that the utilities be required to “...file a plan setting forth how it will use the additional time to obtain appropriate federal funds and work with customers to reduce arrearages and avoid disconnections...” (Rate Counsel Comments, PDF page 9 of 19). Attachment A included with this submission contains ETG’s Plan to address these issues.

¹ Ten days from the effective date of September 21, 2021 is October 1, 2021.

² September 14 Order at 6.

In accordance with the March 19, 2020 and May 20, 2020 BPU Orders issued in BPU Docket No. EO20030254, hard copies are not being provided at this time, but can be submitted at a later time, if needed.

Please direct any inquiries to the undersigned. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Respectfully yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Deborah M. Franco".

Deborah M. Franco

cc: Service List (electronic only)

**IN THE MATTER OF THE NEW JERSEY BOARD OF PUBLIC UTILITIES'
RESPONSE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

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Attachment A

In the Matter of the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities' Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic BPU Docket No. AO20060471

Elizabethtown Gas Company Plan

October 1, 2021

A. How Elizabethtown Gas Company Will Use The Additional Time³ to Obtain Appropriate Federal Funds

Elizabethtown Gas will continue to advocate for customers within its service territory to secure needed financial assistance for utility bills. Active participation in discussions with agencies including DCA, will be a priority for Elizabethtown Gas, as will ensuring funds are appropriately and quickly disbursed to customers. Further, more time will allow the company to undertake increased outreach that must be balanced with current, regular resource demand.

B. How Elizabethtown Gas Company Will Work With Customers To Reduce Arrearages and Avoid Disconnections

The efforts of Elizabethtown Gas will continue to focus on collaborative solutions for customers, while responsibly balancing the impacts that non-payment can have on our entire customer base.

Elizabethtown Gas will enhance employee education regarding energy assistance and deferred payment flexibility at all customer touchpoints (CSRs, Payment Centers and Field Employees). With specific consideration being given to customers that may be newly eligible for assistance due to enhancements within certain programs. Additionally, technology enhancements were made at the end of first quarter and a new outbound collections system was added to remind customers of past due balances. Customers are notified within their prefer channel of communication via email, SMS or phone. Customers that are phoned can be routed back to a customer service representative or the

³ Additional time refers to the period associated with the extension of the regulatory asset period from September 30, 2021 to December 31, 2022 authorized by the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities in this proceeding.

new outbound collections team to discuss balances, get setup on payment arrangements, and educated them about the enhanced energy assistance programs.

In the coming weeks, the Elizabethtown Gas outreach team will leverage a new energy assistance outreach tool, the NextDoor app, to target zip codes with the highest arrearages. The zip code data will also be used by the Elizabethtown Gas marketing team for targeted social media ads, organic social media posts and email blasts.

Leveraging customer newsletters, bill inserts, social media platforms, resuming in-person outreach events at schools, libraries, community centers, etc. and improvements to the energy assistance information presented on the company website are in development as Elizabethtown Gas works to improve awareness of the moratorium and the potential for service disconnection.

In the fourth quarter of 2021, Elizabethtown Gas will introduce an outbound collections team made up of four employees that will call customers that are in disconnect status. This team will focus on helping set up customers on payment arrangements and educated them about the enhanced energy assistance programs. The enhancements to the collections process will improve communications around customer payment options to reduce the need for disconnection.