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BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF UTAH

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION OF DOMINION ENERGY UTAH FOR A WAIVER OF UTAH ADMIN. CODE. §R746-460 TO ALLOW SHARING WITH LOW INCOME ASSISTANCE PROGRAM ADMINISTRATORS	Docket No. 22-057-19  APPLICATION
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Pursuant to Utah Code Ann. §54-4-1 *et seq.*, Questar Gas Company dba Dominion Energy Utah (Dominion Energy or Company) respectfully submits this Application to the Utah Public Service Commission (Commission) and requests that the Commission waive certain portions of Utah Admin. Code §R746-406 to permit Dominion Energy to share customer usage and billing information with governmental agencies and non-profit entities administering low-income-assistance programs, as more fully set forth herein.

**BACKGROUND**

Dominion Energy currently works closely with a variety of governmental entities and non-profit organizations (Agencies) to enable those organizations to remit payment toward natural gas bills for qualified low-income individuals. More specifically, the Company's Customer Relations department works directly with Agencies who administer low-income assistance programs like Utah's Low Income Home Energy Assistance

Program (LIHEAP), the Utah Home Energy Assistance Target (HEAT), the Company's REACH program, and the Energy Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) (collectively the Programs).

Currently, customers who seek assistance from any of the Agencies are required to provide the Agency with the customer's account number and a copy of the most recent bill in order to apply for payment assistance. However, it has become commonplace for a customer to provide the Agency with the customer's account number but fail to provide a copy of the bill to the Agency. In these instances, the Agency and the customer contact Dominion Energy and a Dominion Energy employee provides the current usage and billing information. This process is becoming administratively burdensome for both the Agencies and Dominion Energy.

In an effort to increase the efficiency of this process and to reduce the costs of assisting Agencies in distributing funds under the Programs, Dominion Energy is developing and deploying a software portal through which the Agencies can take a customer's account number, log in, and obtain current usage and billing information. Permitting this limited access to customer information will enable swift and efficient distribution of low-income energy assistance funds, and to help customers who are struggling financially to maintain service.

The Company will enter into an agreement with each of the Agencies before providing access to the portal. Under those agreements, each Agency will agree to provide log-in access only to its employees and only for purposes of administering funds to be distributed through a low-income assistance program. The agreements will also require the Agencies to notify the Company when any employee with access leaves the Agency's employment. As an added protection, access to the portal will require an

Agency-issued email and password, with two factor authentication. When an individual ceases to be employed by the Agency, they will no longer have an email to receive a code for two factor authentication to access the portal. In addition, the user created password will expire every 60 days.

**REQUEST FOR WAIVER OF UTAH ADMIN. CODE §R746-460**

Utah Admin. Code §R746-460-3 requires utilities like Dominion Energy to share customer data, like billing and usage data, “only if the customer provides Express Consent for such sharing . . .” It further requires that such permission be given in writing and retained by the utility. The rule does permit sharing without permission “in relation to the utilities conduct of its core utility function or to maintain safe and reliable service to customers.” It does not expressly permit Dominion Energy to share customer billing and usage data to third parties who administer low-income energy assistance.

Dominion Energy’s proposed software solution to the burden imposed by the current process could, arguably, run afoul of the aforementioned rule. Therefore, Dominion Energy requests a limited waiver of the rule to permit use of the portal.

**EXPEDITED CONSIDERATION**

Because the heating season is commencing and customer need for funding may soon become more urgent, the Company respectfully requests that the Commission expedite consideration of this Application in order to implement the portal to make the customers’ application process more efficient, and to ensure that customers receive the aid as quickly as possible.

THEREFORE, Dominion Energy respectfully requests that the Commission expressly waive Utah Admin. Code §R746-460 to permit Dominion Energy to share a customer’s current billing and usage data with an Agency for purposes of administering a

Program and disbursing funds to pay a customer's outstanding bill. Dominion Energy further requests that the requirement that it obtain and retain express consent of the customer also be waived for this limited purpose. The Company requests that the Commission act upon this Application on an expedited basis.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED this 24<sup>th</sup> day of October, 2022.

DOMINION ENERGY UTAH



Jenniffer Nelson Clark  
Attorney for Dominion Energy Utah

**CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

This is to certify that a true and correct copy of the Application was served upon the following persons by e-mail on October 24, 2022:

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