

BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF MISSOURI

William L. Gehrs, Jr.,)	
)	
Complainant)	
)	
vs.)	File No. EC-2018-0033
)	
The Empire District Electric Company)	
602 S. Joplin Avenue)	
Joplin, MO 64801)	
CERTIFIED MAIL)	
)	
Respondent.)	

NOTICE OF CONTESTED CASE AND ORDER

Issue Date: August 1, 2017

Effective Date: August 1, 2017

On July 31, 2017, the complainant filed the complaint, a copy of which is attached. The filing of a complaint requires the Commission to set a hearing.¹ The requirement of a hearing on such issues signifies a contested case.² A contested case is a formal hearing procedure, but it allows for waiver of procedural formalities and a decision without a hearing, including by stipulation and agreement.³ The Commission's provisions for discovery are at 4 CSR 240-2.090.

Also, as an alternative to the formal evidentiary hearing procedure, the Commission offers mediation. Mediation is a voluntary process in which a neutral person assists the parties in exploring opportunities for settlement. Upon a request for mediation, the Commission may suspend the schedule set forth in this order.

¹ Section 386.390.5, RSMo 2016.

² Section 536.010(4), RSMo 2016.

³ Section 536.060, RSMo 2000; 4 CSR 240-2.115.

THE COMMISSION ORDERS THAT:

1. The Commission's Data Center shall serve a copy of this notice and order, and a copy of the complaint, upon the respondent by certified mail, postage prepaid.
2. The respondent shall file an answer no later than August 31, 2017.
3. The Commission's staff shall file a recommendation on the complaint no later than September 14, 2017.
4. This order shall be effective when issued.

BY THE COMMISSION



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Morris L. Woodruff".

Morris L. Woodruff
Secretary

Daniel Jordan, Senior Regulatory Law Judge,
by delegation of authority pursuant
to Section 386.240, RSMo 2016.

Dated at Jefferson City, Missouri,
on this 1st day of August, 2017.



Commissioners

DANIEL Y. HALL
Chairman

STEPHEN M. STOLL

WILLIAM P. KENNEY

SCOTT T. RUPP

MAIDA J. COLEMAN

Missouri Public Service Commission

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General Counsel

MORRIS WOODRUFF
Secretary

WESS A. HENDERSON
Director of Administration
and Regulatory Policy

CHERLYN D. VOSS
Director of Regulatory Review

KEVIN A. THOMPSON
Chief Staff Counsel

Information Sheet Regarding Mediation of Commission Formal Complaint Cases

Mediation is a process where the parties work together to try to resolve their dispute with the aid of a neutral party, the mediator. The mediator's role is help the parties talk to each other. The mediator may offer suggested solutions, but the mediator has no authority to tell the parties what they must do or to determine who "wins." Instead, the mediator simply works with both parties to help them reach an agreement.

Typically, at a mediation session the parties meet for an off-the-record discussion. The mediation session is not a formal proceeding like a hearing and no attorney is required to participate. The Regulatory Law Judges at the Public Service Commission are trained mediators and this service is offered to parties who have formal complaints pending before the Public Service Commission at no charge. If mediation is agreed to by the parties, the Commission will send notice of who the mediator will be and that person will set up the first meeting.

There cannot be a mediation unless both parties to the complaint agree to try in good faith to resolve the dispute. If both parties agree to mediate the complaint, the only information about the mediation that will be disclosed to the Commission is (a) whether the case has been settled and (b) whether the mediation effort was considered to be helpful. The Commission will not ask what was discussed during the mediation.

If the dispute is settled at the mediation, the Commission will require a signed release from the party filing the complaint before the formal complaint case can be dismissed. If the dispute is not resolved through the mediation process, neither party will be penalized for having taken part in the mediation and the formal complaint case will simply pick up where it left off.

Morris L. Woodruff
Secretary

STATE OF MISSOURI

OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

I have compared the preceding copy with the original on file in this office and I do hereby certify the same to be a true copy therefrom and the whole thereof.

WITNESS my hand and seal of the Public Service Commission, at Jefferson City, Missouri, this 1st day of August 2017.




Morris L. Woodruff
Secretary

MISSOURI PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

August 1, 2017

File/Case No. EC-2018-0033

**Missouri Public Service
Commission**

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**Empire District Electric
Company, The**

Legal Department
602 S. Joplin Avenue
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Joplin, MO 64802

William Lawrence Gehrs, Jr.

William L. Gehrs, Jr.
201 N. Wall #17
Joplin, MO 64801
bodgehrs@yahoo.com

Enclosed find a certified copy of an Order or Notice issued in the above-referenced matter(s).

Sincerely,



**Morris L. Woodruff
Secretary**

Recipients listed above with a valid e-mail address will receive electronic service. Recipients without a valid e-mail address will receive paper service.