

**STATE OF MISSOURI  
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION**

At a session of the Public Service Commission held by telephone and internet audio conference on the 12<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2021.

In the Matter of Aptitude Internet, LLC                    )  
Application for Designation as an Eligible                )  
Telecommunications Carrier for Purposes of            ) **File No. TA-2021-0198**  
Receiving Federal Universal Service Support         )

**ORDER GRANTING DESIGNATION AS  
AN ELIGIBLE TELECOMMUNICATIONS CARRIER**

Issue Date: May 12, 2021

Effective Date: June 7, 2021

On January 5, 2021, Aptitude Internet, LLC (Aptitude) filed its application for designation as a wireless Eligible Telecommunications Carrier.<sup>1</sup> Aptitude was recently awarded federal Rural Digital Opportunity Fund (RDOF) support to build broadband facilities in more rural areas. Aptitude initially sought statewide ETC designation.

The Commission issued notice and set a deadline for intervention. The Small Telephone Company Group (STCG) sought to intervene due to Aptitude seeking ETC designation in exchanges where STCG also serves. The Commission granted the application to intervene.

Aptitude amended its application on April 27, 2021. Aptitude now asks for ETC status only for the specific census blocks for which it was granted RDOF funds.

The Staff of the Missouri Public Service Commission (Staff) conducted an investigation and on May 3, 2021, filed its recommendation and memorandum. Staff

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<sup>1</sup> Aptitude is presently certificated in Missouri as an interconnected voice over internet protocol (IVoIP) services provider. That application was deficient due to Aptitude not having Missouri counsel. Aptitude has since corrected the deficiency.

recommended that the Commission approve Aptitude's request for designation as an eligible telecommunications carriers for the purpose of receiving federal high-cost and low-income support for census blocks identified in Exhibit A of the application. Staff stated Aptitude met the requirements of Commission Rule 20 CSR 4240-31.016 governing eligible telecommunications carriers. Staff notes that Aptitude requests a waiver of the 60-day notice requirement of Commission Rule 20 CSR 4240-4.017, and recommends that such waiver be granted.

The Commission allowed for responses to Staff's Recommendation. STCG took no position, and asked that if the Commission approved Aptitude's request, then the Commission should limit ETC designation to the census blocks listed in Exhibit A to Aptitude's application. Aptitude stated that it agreed with STCG.

Under federal authority, the application is within the Commission's jurisdiction to decide.<sup>2</sup> Since no law requires a hearing, this is a non-contested case.<sup>3</sup> Non-contested cases do not require formal proceedings or hearings before the Commission, and as such, there is no evidentiary record.<sup>4</sup> Consequently, the Commission bases its decision on the verified filings.

Based upon its review of the verified application and Staff's recommendation and memorandum, the Commission finds that Aptitude has met the requirements for ETC designation. Further, for good cause shown, Aptitude will be granted a waiver of the 60-day filing requirement of the Commission's rules. Aptitude asks that its application be

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<sup>2</sup> 47 U.S.C. § 214(e)(2).

<sup>3</sup> *In the Matter of Kansas City Power & Light Co.'s Request for Authority to Implement a General Rate Increase for Elec. Serv. v. Pub. Serv. Comm'n*, 509 S.W.3d 757, 783-784 (Mo. App. W.D. 2016).

<sup>4</sup> *State ex rel. Pub. Counsel v. Pub. Serv. Comm'n*, 210 S.W.3d 344, 353-354 (Mo. App. W.D. 2006).

granted by June 7, 2021 to meet the requirements of federal law. For that reason, the Commission will make this order effective in less than 30 days.

**THE COMMISSION ORDERS THAT:**

1. Aptitude's application is granted. Aptitude is granted ETC status for the purpose of receiving federal high-cost and low-income support where they receive RDOF support in the area identified by census block groups described in Exhibit A to its application.
2. Aptitude is granted a waiver of the 60-day notice requirement of Commission Rule 20 CSR 4240-4.017.
3. This order shall become effective on June 7, 2021.
4. This file shall be closed on June 8, 2021.



**BY THE COMMISSION**

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

Morris L. Woodruff  
Secretary

Silvey, Chm., Rupp, Coleman, and  
Holsman, CC., concur.  
Kolkmeier, C., abstains.

Pridgin, Regulatory Law Judge