

# The Agency

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## Public Utilities Commission

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### Agency Operations

The Public Utilities Commission comprises two distinct regulatory bodies: an authorized five-member Commission and the Division of Public Utilities and Carriers (Division). The Public Utilities Commission serves as a quasi-judicial tribunal with jurisdiction, powers, and duties to implement and enforce the standards of conduct under §39-1-27.6 and to hold investigations and hearings involving the rates, tariffs, tolls, and charges, and the sufficiency and reasonableness of facilities and accommodations of ferry boats, gas, electric distribution, water and telephone public utilities, the control of railroad grade crossings, the revocation, suspension or alteration of certificates issued pursuant to §39-19-4, appeals under §39-1-30, petitions under §39-1-31, and proceedings under §39-1-32. Through participation in the Energy Facility Siting Board, the commission's chair also exercises jurisdiction over the siting of major energy facilities, pursuant to Chapters 42-98.

The division, which is headed by an Administrator, who is not a Commissioner, exercises the jurisdiction, supervision, powers and duties not specifically assigned to the commission, including the execution of all laws relating to public utilities and carriers and all regulations and orders of the commission governing the conduct and charges of public utilities. The division has exclusive jurisdiction over the rates, tariffs, tolls and charges, and the sufficiency, and reasonableness of facilities and accommodations of common carriers of property and passengers over the State's public roadways, pursuant to Chapters 39-12, 39-13, 39-14 and 39-14.1. Additionally, the division supervises and regulates Community Antenna Television Systems (CATV) in Rhode Island; certifies all public utilities; registers all non-regulated power producers; and has independent regulatory authority over the transactions between public utilities and affiliates; and all public utility equity and debt issuances.

### Agency Objectives

To provide fair regulation of public utilities, CATV, common carriers, and major energy facilities; ensure just and reasonable rates; ensure sufficient utility infrastructure to promote economic development; and cooperate with other states and federal government agencies to coordinate efforts to meet the other previously-stated objectives.

### Statutory History

The Public Utilities Commission and its predecessor agency, the Rhode Island Railroad Commission, have been regulating utilities in this state since 1839. The Railroad Commission was later abolished by an act of the legislature, leading to the creation of the more comprehensive Public Utility Commission in 1912. From 1981 to 1996, the duties of the Administrator of the division and Chairperson of the commission were combined in a single position. The Utility Restructuring Act of 1996 later divided these duties into two separate positions: Chairman of the Commission and Administrator, Division of Public Utilities and Carriers. RIGL 39-1-14 added two more commissioners effective January 1, 2004. These appointments are yet to take effect.

# The Budget

## Public Utilities Commission

	FY 2005 Actual	FY 2006 Actual	FY 2007 Revised	FY 2008 Recommended
<b>Expenditures By Object</b>				
Personnel	4,043,567	4,371,584	5,855,065	6,057,273
Operating Supplies and Expenses	715,346	753,183	853,715	703,937
Aid To Local Units Of Government	-	-	-	-
Assistance, Grants and Benefits	336	336	337	337
<b>Subtotal: Operating Expenditures</b>	<b>\$4,759,249</b>	<b>\$5,125,103</b>	<b>\$6,709,117</b>	<b>\$6,761,547</b>
Capital Purchases and Equipment	58,581	54,118	337,250	339,000
Debt Service	-	-	-	-
Operating Transfers	-	-	-	-
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$4,817,830</b>	<b>\$5,179,221</b>	<b>\$7,046,367</b>	<b>\$7,100,547</b>
<b>Expenditures By Funds</b>				
General Revenue	628,341	656,682	737,811	665,706
Federal Funds	56,367	76,231	99,853	100,124
Restricted Receipts	4,133,122	4,446,308	6,208,703	6,334,717
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$4,817,830</b>	<b>\$5,179,221</b>	<b>\$7,046,367</b>	<b>\$7,100,547</b>
<b>FTE Authorization</b>	<b>46.0</b>	<b>46.0</b>	<b>45.7</b>	<b>45.7</b>
<b>Agency Measures</b>				
Minorities as a Percentage of the Workforce	14.6%	11.1%	11.1%	11.1%
Females as a Percentage of the Workforce	37.2%	35.5%	35.5%	35.5%
Persons with Disabilities as a Percentage of the Workforce	2.3%	2.2%	2.2%	2.2%
<b>Program Measures</b>				
Percentage of Consumer Services Offered that Meet Completion Schedules	88.0%	89.0%	89.0%	89.0%
Percentage of Formal Written Reports of Motor Carrier Applications Completed within 60 Business Days of Filing	94.0%	94.0%	92.0%	92.0%