

# The Agency

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## Public Utilities Commission

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### Agency Operations

The Public Utilities Commission comprises two distinct regulatory bodies: a three-member Commission and the Division of Public Utilities and Carriers. 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 railroad, ferry boats, gas, electric distribution, water, telephone, telegraph, and pipeline public utilities, the location of railroad depots and stations, and the control of 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. Additionally, the division supervises and regulates Community Antenna Television Systems (CATV) in Rhode Island; certifies all public utilities; 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 regulation of public utilities in Rhode Island dates back to the Rhode Island Railroad Commission, which was established in 1839. This commission was later abolished by an act of the legislature that created the more comprehensive Public Utility Commission in 1912. From 1981 to 1996, the duties of 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. Section 39-1-14 of the General Laws of Rhode Island states that two additional Commissioners shall be appointed to the Rhode Island Public Utilities Commission in January of 2004. These appointments have not yet been made.

# The Budget

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## Public Utilities Commission

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	FY 2004 Actual	FY 2005 Actual	FY 2006 Revised	FY 2007 Recommended
<b>Expenditures By Object</b>				
Personnel	3,867,883	4,041,801	5,418,665	5,769,739
Other State Operations	717,050	738,640	843,682	852,650
Aid To Local Units Of Government	-	-	-	-
Assistance, Grants and Benefits	2,022	2,102	37,137	2,137
<b>Subtotal: Operating Expenditures</b>	<b>\$4,586,955</b>	<b>\$4,782,543</b>	<b>\$6,299,484</b>	<b>\$6,624,526</b>
Capital Improvements	22,926	35,287	300,000	300,000
Capital Debt Service	-	-	-	-
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$4,609,881</b>	<b>\$4,817,830</b>	<b>\$6,599,484</b>	<b>\$6,924,526</b>
 <b>Expenditures By Funds</b>				
General Revenue	639,946	628,341	693,544	746,530
Federal Funds	60,539	56,367	83,562	88,567
Restricted Receipts	3,909,396	4,133,122	5,822,378	6,089,429
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$4,609,881</b>	<b>\$4,817,830</b>	<b>\$6,599,484</b>	<b>\$6,924,526</b>
 <b>FTE Authorization</b>				
	<b>45.0</b>	<b>46.0</b>	<b>46.0</b>	<b>45.7</b>
 <b>Agency Measures</b>				
Minorities as a Percentage of the Workforce	11.6%	14.6%	10.9%	10.9%
Females as a Percentage of the Workforce	37.2%	37.2%	37.0%	37.0%
Persons with Disabilities as a Percentage of the Workforce	2.3%	2.3%	2.2%	2.2%
 <b>Program Measures</b>				
Percentage of Consumer Services Offered that Meet Completion Schedules	89.0%	88.0%	89.0%	89.0%
Percentage of Formal Written Reports of Motor Carrier Applications Completed within 60 Business Days of Filing	65.0%	94.0%	92.0%	92.0%