

# ***PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION***

## ***FAQs Sheet***

### ***What is the PUC?***

The Public Utilities Commission (PUC) is a corporate body established by the Public Utilities Commission Act No. 26 of 1990. This Act was amended on more than one occasions and the Commission is currently operating under Act. 16 of 2010.

### ***What does the PUC do?***

The PUC regulates the utilities currently under its purview - GPL, GTT, GWI and Digicel.

The Commission has the authority to initiate and conduct investigations into the operations and standards of service for the utility companies.

The Commission also consists of a Complaints' Division which deals with consumers concerns against the utilities companies.

### ***When can a complaint be filed with the PUC?***

The PUC investigates complaints that are within six months of the occurrence of the issue.

All complaints should first be queried with the company in question before same can be filed with the Commission. If the Complainant is still aggrieved or not satisfied with the outcome he/she could approach the PUC.

*Note: Complaints engaging the attention of the court will not be pursued by the Commission.*

When filing a complaint, all information/ documents pertaining to the complaint should be submitted to the Commission e.g. investigation reports, bills and receipts, reference numbers.

*Tip: For any complaints filed with a utility company a reference number should be obtained. Consumers please note the name(s) of the Utility person(s) with whom you had initially met regarding your issue(s) and the information received from the utility at the time of interaction.*

### ***Procedure after filing a complaint***

- A) Five (5) days after we are in receipt of all the relevant information from the Consumer, we will then file a complaint with the respective utility company, requesting that the company supplies us with the comments/ the status/ proof of action of the matter.

- B) .The utility companies are given a timeframe within which to respond- this may vary depending on the nature of the complaint and in some instances where additional investigation needs to be conducted.
- C) For GPL matters – 21 days for billing issues/ 30 days for technical issues

Paragraph 7(a) of the rules for determining complaints states that the Complaints' Division shall request the utility company deliberation and response within 21 days. This period may be extended to a further 10 days. However, there are no other documentation obligating the GTT and GWI to respond within this timeframe. As a result, we usually require the utility companies to respond in a timely manner.

The PUC works assiduously to ensure that our complainants are constantly updated on the status of their complaints from the inception to closure and reserves the right to request any utility to respond to a query in a given timeframe..

### **What are the responsibilities of 3 Utilities ?**

#### **General**

- To provide a service that is safe, adequate, efficient, reasonable and non-discriminatory.
- To improve their service as may be necessary
- Incorporate advances in technologies.
- To provide appropriate and accurate bills in a timely manner.

#### **GTT**

By virtue of an Order of the PUC – GTT is required to remedy fault repairs within the following time periods

- 1) For Urban Areas – 5 working days
- 2) For Suburban areas – 8 working days
- 3) For Hinterland areas – 20 working days

#### **GPL**

##### **Installation of New Service**

GPL is required to complete the required jobs within the following periods provided that all requirements are met by the customer and the customer is ready for supply.

- Installation of New Service where Primary/Secondary network (Poles, transformer, cables etc.) is required.

Commercial Service - 50 days

Residential Service - 60 days

- Installation of New Service where only the service line and meter are required

Commercial service -12 days

Residential Service - 12 days

### **Reconnection of Service**

Where the meter and service lines are already in position and the customer rectifies the reason for the disconnection and meets the requirements of the Standard Terms and Conditions, GPL is required to reconnect the service within the following days

Commercial Service/Residential Service - 2 days in Georgetown  
- 3 days out of Georgetown

Where the service line and meter are required to be installed and the customer rectifies the reason for the disconnection and meets the requirements of the Standard Terms and Conditions

Commercial Service/Residential Service - 7 days.

### **Fault Reports**

Once a report of fault has been made and a reference number is obtained a technician from GPL is required to visit to investigate/rectify the issue within the following time period.

Commercial/Residential Service - 1 day.

*Note: Adequate and Accurate address must be provided to the utility.*

### **Investigate Meter**

GPL has **9 days** to complete a meter test.

*Note: The notice to GPL must be in writing stating that the meter may be improperly registering.*

### **Replace Meter**

GPL has 55 days to replace a meter that is not working properly.

*Note: Specific conditions may apply.*

***If any of the conditions above are breached by GPL then the relevant compensations are required to be credited to the consumer's account.***

### ***Inquiries***

*For billing inquiries where **No Site visit** is required GPL is required to respond within **7 days**.*

*All queries where a **site visit is required** GPL is required to respond within **30 days**.*

### ***Consumer Responsibilities***

- A) Consumers should be aware of the terms and conditions of the services they are provided by the utility companies.
- B) Consumers are required to make payments for the service they are receiving even if a bill is not received in a timely manner.

*Note: Consumers can be disconnected for non-payment of services provided by the utilities.*

*Estimated bills are legitimate and are required to be cleared in a timely manner. However, an adjustment should be done to the account when the meter is next read. If you need further assistance in this regard our friendly staff are eager to assist.*

- C) Consumers are urged to immediately report any disturbances or disruptions to their service e.g. voltage fluctuations, telephone and internet service not working, issues with the main valve (stop clock) and water mains to the relevant utilities

*Note: All leaks around the home should be rectified immediately. If you are a metered customer, you pay for water lost due to leaks.*

*Tip: Over tightening of water tap can cause it to damage and leak.*

- D) Read their bills carefully

### **Energy Saving**

Saving energy means to use less energy to provide the same service. This can be achieved by using energy more efficiently. By saving energy you can save money and the environment.

### **Energy Saving Tips**

- Used dusk to dawn energy saving lighting fixtures for security lights

- When replacing refrigerator and air conditioner use types that use the inverter technology.
- Use float valves in water tanks to prevent wastage.
- To save water and energy, turn off faucets, indoors and out, when you're done using them.
- Iron most of your clothes one a week.
- You will save more by waiting to wash until you have a full load.
- Unplug chargers when not in use.
- Unplug electronics when not in use. Computers, DVD players, VCRs, televisions and other electronics use energy when they're plugged in—even though they're turned off.
- Use surge protector that have switch for each outlet.
- Ensure refrigerator doors are properly closed.