

**STANDING ORDER
ABATING CERTAIN CONSUMER COMPLAINT MATTERS
REFERRED TO SOAH BY
THE PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION OF TEXAS**

WHEREAS, the State Office of Administrative Hearings (SOAH) receives contested case referrals from the Public Utility Commission of Texas (the Commission) for various water and electric utility matters;

WHEREAS, the Commission routinely refers consumer complaint matters to SOAH for resolution through a unique process requiring the consumer to present evidence and testimony necessary to prove alleged violations of utility laws and regulations;

WHEREAS, current resource limitations combined with unanticipated increases in referrals and the need to give priority to cases relating to the Permian Basin Reliability Plan require SOAH to reorganize its docket to ensure effective case management and the proper allocation of adjudicatory services;

WHEREAS, SOAH must prioritize matters with statutory deadlines, including, but not limited to, certificate-of-convenience-and necessity cases relating to the Permian Basin Reliability Plan, and other emergency and expedited matters across the entire statewide docket for over 50 state agencies;

WHEREAS, consumer complaint matters referred by the Commission are not subject to a statutory deadline for resolution;

WHEREAS, the Commission and SOAH are engaged in ongoing discussions to revise the process for consumer-initiated complaint and enforcement matters to ensure administrative efficiency and promote consistency with dispute resolution procedures across other Texas state agencies,;

THEREFORE, IT IS NOW ORDERED that, effective as of the date of this Standing Order, all water and electric complaint matters shall be subject to the following procedures and requirements:

1. **ALJ Review:** For all matters referred to SOAH by the Commission, the presiding Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) shall review the record to determine if it is subject to abatement according to this Standing Order, or if the matter should be dismissed without abatement based upon some other legal or procedural grounds.
2. **Abatement Required:** If the ALJ determines that a matter is subject to abatement according to this Standing Order, the ALJ shall issue an abatement order stating that any hearings or mediations are continued without being reset at this time, and the matter shall be abated until otherwise ordered.
3. **Effect on Deadlines:** The timeframes for issuing orders, scheduling hearings or mediations, conducting discovery, or issuing any proposals for decision shall recommence only after the abatement has been lifted.
4. **Status Report and Motions During Abatement:** If appropriate, the ALJ may additionally order Commission Staff and the parties to confer and submit, **by June 1, 2026**, a status report along with one of the following motions: (a) to dismiss; (b) to extend the abatement, citing good cause for the request; or (c) proposed dates to reset each hearing or mediation, which shall be **no earlier than September 15, 2026**.

Signed on March 24, 2026.


Christopher S. Monson
Chief Administrative Law Judge
State Office of Administrative Hearings