

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION  
OF THE STATE OF HAWAII

-----In the Matter of----- )  
 )  
HAWAIIAN ELECTRIC COMPANY, INC., ) (NON-DOCKETED)  
HAWAII ELECTRIC LIGHT COMPANY,) )  
INC., AND MAUI ELECTRIC COMPANY,) )  
LTD. )  
 )  
Letter Request for a Temporary) )  
Waiver of Meter Reading) )  
Requirements Due to COVID-19. ) )  
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ORDER NO. 37057

GRANTING THE HAWAIIAN ELECTRIC COMPANIES' REQUEST FOR TEMPORARY  
WAIVER OF METER READING REQUIREMENTS DUE TO COVID-19

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION  
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GRANTING THE HAWAIIAN ELECTRIC COMPANIES' REQUEST FOR TEMPORARY  
WAIVER OF METER READING REQUIREMENTS DUE TO COVID-19

By this Order, the Public Utilities Commission ("commission") grants the Hawaiian Electric Companies' ("HECO Companies" or "Companies") request for a temporary waiver of meter reading requirements set forth in the commission's General Order No. 7 ("G.O.7"), Section 3.3, and Tariff Rule No. 8.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Letter from Kevin Katsura to the commission, "Hawaiian Electric Request for Temporary Waiver of Meter Reading Requirements due to COVID-19," filed on March 26, 2020 ("Letter Request").

The Commission is in receipt of the Companies' Letter, dated March 26, 2020, requesting

a temporary waiver from General Order No. 7 ("GO7"), Section 3.3 and Tariff Rule No. 8 to read meters on an other-than-monthly basis for all of its service territories. Specifically, Hawaiian Electric seeks authorization to temporarily suspend all efforts to take actual customer meter reads (which require Company employees to physically go out into the community for both residential and commercial customers) through May 31, 2020 ("Waiver Period") due to serious health and safety concerns related to COVID-19 and instead provide customers with estimated bills.<sup>2</sup>

In their Letter Request, the Companies provide background on the COVID-19 situation in Hawaii, as well as their plans to suspend meter reading activity, and state that they make this request to be "proactive and provide the Companies wide flexibility in this dynamic situation to determine how to proceed."<sup>3</sup> The Companies plan, for a two-week period starting on March 24, 2020, to estimate energy usage for all residential and non-demand service commercial customers,<sup>4</sup> but to continue meter

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<sup>2</sup>Letter Request at 1.

<sup>3</sup>Letter Request at 1.

<sup>4</sup>The Companies plan to estimate using the last actual meter read that covers a period of at least 24 days. Letter Request at 5.

reads for customers on demand service rate schedules, and intend to evaluate their approach at the end of this two-week period.

After this two-week period, the Companies will assess "whether to continue the current process for an extended period, whether the Compan[ies] will commence estimating usage for demand service rate schedules, or whether the Compan[ies] can safely re-commence actual meter reads for residential and non-demand service rate schedules."<sup>5</sup> The Companies plan to prioritize communication to residential and non-demand service commercial customers to explain the temporary suspension of meter reading and its impact on billing, and state that they have readied their call centers to explain the estimated reads, as well. Any customers that are given estimated reads will have their account balances trued-up upon recommencement of meter reading.

As noted above, the Companies reference both HECO Tariff Rule No. 8, as well as G.O.7, Section 3.3, in the course of their request for the temporary waiver. HECO's Tariff Sheet No. 1 states in relevant part that "[t]he rules and rate schedules set forth herein have been fixed by order of the Public Utilities Commission of the State of Hawaii and may not be abandoned, changed,

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<sup>5</sup>Letter Request at 5.

modified or departed from without the prior approval of the Commission."

THE COMMISSION ORDERS that based on the extraordinary circumstances related to COVID-19, the Commission finds good cause to grant the Companies' request for a temporary waiver from G.O.7, Section 3.3 and Tariff Rule No. 8 during the aforementioned Waiver Period,<sup>6</sup> and notes that the Commission will review any subsequent request by the Companies to extend the Waiver Period, as necessary.

DONE at Honolulu, Hawaii APRIL 1, 2020.

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION  
OF THE STATE OF HAWAII

By James P. Griffin  
James P. Griffin, Chair

By Jennifer M. Potter  
Jennifer M. Potter, Commissioner

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Caroline C. Ishida  
Caroline C. Ishida  
Commission Counsel

By Leodoloff R. Asuncion, Jr.  
Leodoloff R. Asuncion, Jr., Commissioner

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<sup>6</sup>See, e.g., In re Haw. Elec. Co., Inc., Docket No. 2008-0175, Decision and Order filed on November 19, 2009 (granting HECO's request for a waiver of Rule 13 of its tariff).

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

Pursuant to Order No. 37043, the foregoing order was served on the date of filing by electronic mail addressed to the following parties:

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COMMISSION

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