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R2311001

**BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

Order Instituting Rulemaking to Consider Revisions and Updates to the Deaf and Disabled Telecommunications Program

Rulemaking 23-11-001

**ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE'S RULING SETTING  
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION HEARINGS**

This ruling schedules eight remote and in-person public participation hearings (PPHs) in the Order Instituting Rulemaking (OIR) to consider revisions and updates to the Deaf and Disabled Telecommunications Program (DDTP).

There will be two PPHs each day and are scheduled as follows:

- August 15, 2024, Northern California, In-Person
- September 4, 2024, Southern California, In-Person
- September 11, 2024, Central California, In-Person
- September 17, 2024, Remote

Details for each PPH event are provided below.

The PPHs will provide an opportunity for anyone from the public, including subscribers and eligible subscribers of DDTP, to communicate directly with the California Public Utilities Commission (Commission) regarding the issues raised in this proceeding.

**1. About the DDTP**

The Commission established the DDTP through a series of decisions issued in the 1970s and 1980s. DDTP originally provided specialized telecommunications equipment to individuals who are deaf and hard of hearing. The Commission later expanded the program to include disability groups that

have functional difficulty using the phone. The provisions that govern the DDTP are found in the California Public Utilities Code § 2881.

DDTP provides three types of services and offerings:

1. the Equipment Distribution Program,
2. California Relay Service (CRS), and
3. the Augmentative and Assistive Communication (AAC) Program.

The Equipment Distribution Program provides specialized telecommunications equipment at no cost to individuals with functional limitations of hearing, vision, movement, manipulation, speech, and interpretation of information. CRS is a service offered to individuals with limitations to hearing or speaking and provides access to a specially trained communications assistant that can relay telephone conversations to another individual. The AAC Program provides funding for Speech Generating Devices (SGD) as the provider of last resort, and distributes iPads installed with applications that allow the tablet to function as an SGD, enabling individuals with severe speech impairments to verbally communicate.

## **2. Purpose of the Rulemaking**

Public Utilities Code Section 2881(k) requires the Commission to perform an ongoing assessment of the DDTP in its entirety and, if appropriate, expand its scope to allow for additional access capability consistent with evolving telecommunications policy. To this end, the Commission's Communications Division (CD) staff conducted a needs assessment to collect information on issues faced by the deaf and disabled community. CD staff utilized a three-prong approach to gathering data for the analysis, which included in-person engagements and visits at community-based organizations (CBOs), distributing a CBO questionnaire, and disseminating an online survey for those who were

unable to attend the in-person engagements. The data collected through the aforementioned methods resulted in findings and recommendations that were captured in a Needs Assessment Report.

The Commission opened Rulemaking 23-11-001 to enable the public to review and provide comments on the Needs Assessment Report, as well as supply input on how the DDTP can be modernized. This rulemaking considers the need for revisions and updates to the DDTP. Given the changing communications landscape since the inception of the program, participants’ needs, and the advancement in telecommunication technologies, this rulemaking looks at whether DDTP should be updated to better serve the needs of the disability community.

**3. PPH Details**

**3.1. In Person PPHs**

There will be three days of in-person PPHs, with two PPHs held per day. Each of the three locations will serve different parts of California. The schedule and location information for the in-person PPHs is as follows:

DATE AND TIME	REGION	MEETING ADDRESS
Thursday, August 15, 2024 2:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m.	Northern California	Roseville City Council Chambers 311 Vernon Street Roseville, CA 95678
Wednesday, September 4, 2024 2:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m.	Southern California	Buena Park City Council Chambers 6650 Beach Blvd. Buena Park, CA 90621
Wednesday, September 11, 2024 2:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m.	Central California	Clovis City Council Chambers 1033 5 <sup>th</sup> Street Clovis, CA 93612

Public Officials wishing to speak at the PPH should provide their name, title, and governmental entity at the beginning of their comment. Based on the number of participants waiting to comment, the Administrative Law Judge may limit an individual's comment time.

### 3.2. Remote PPHs

There will be one day comprised of two remote PPHs. Details regarding how to participate in the remote PPHs are provided in the table below. To provide public comment during the remote PPHs, participants should use the toll-free telephone number and participant code noted below. Participants who wish to speak must then press "star one" and record their first and last name when prompted. This will alert the operator who will then queue the speakers one-at-a-time and announce each speaker's name at the allotted time. When it is time for public comment, the Administrative Law Judge will make an announcement through the telephone line for those who wish to speak.

DATE	TIME	MEETING ACCESS INFORMATION
Tuesday, September 17, 2024	2:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m.	Phone Number: 800-857-1917 Passcode: 6032788# Webcast: <a href="http://www.adminmonitor.com/ca/cpuc/">http://www.adminmonitor.com/ca/cpuc/</a>

Public Officials wishing to speak at the PPH should provide the telephone operator with their name, title, and governmental entity. Based on the number of participants waiting to comment, the Administrative Law Judge may limit an individual's comment time.

Updates and further information regarding the PPHs are available at [cpuc.ca.gov/pph](http://cpuc.ca.gov/pph). Documents filed in this proceeding are available and the

court reporters' transcripts of statements made during the PPH will be made available through the Docket for this proceeding at [apps.cpuc.ca.gov/p/R2311001](https://apps.cpuc.ca.gov/p/R2311001). Written public comments may be provided at any time during this proceeding through the Add Public Comment tab on the Docket at [apps.cpuc.ca.gov/c/R2311001](https://apps.cpuc.ca.gov/c/R2311001).

### **3.3. Procedural Instructions**

For the remote PPHs, the court reporters will be relying on the audio from the Verizon telephone system, to transcribe the PPH. To ensure a complete and accurate record, participants should comply with the following instructions:

- Speakers must identify themselves before speaking each time and state and spell their name the first time that they speak;
- Speakers must speak slowly, clearly, and one at a time; and
- Speakers should pause between statements during the PPH.

For both the in-person and remote PPHs, a court reporter will be present to transcribe statements by those in attendance in verbatim format. The reporter will interrupt the speakers, if necessary, when there is/are inaudible statement(s) or portions thereof. If a statement could not be understood by the court reporter, the reporter will insert the word "inaudible" in the transcript.

### **3.4. Accommodations**

American Sign Language (ASL) interpretation will be available at all the in-person PPHs. For the remote PPHs, ASL will be view only (one-way) via our AdminMonitor stream; those wishing to make a comment in ASL should contact the Commission's Public Advisor's Office at [public.advisor@cpuc.ca.gov](mailto:public.advisor@cpuc.ca.gov) at least five business days prior to the PPH. Written public comments may be provided

at any time during this proceeding through the Add Public Comment tab on the Docket at [apps.cpuc.ca.gov/c/R2311001](https://apps.cpuc.ca.gov/c/R2311001).

To make a request for other language or accommodation, please contact the Commission's Public Advisor's Office at [public.advisor@cpuc.ca.gov](mailto:public.advisor@cpuc.ca.gov) at least five business days prior to the PPH. When making your request, please specify the PPH date, time, location, and accommodation requested.

**IT IS SO RULED.**

Dated June 12, 2024, at San Francisco, California.

/s/ DAVID R. VAN DYKEN

David R. Van Dyken  
Administrative Law Judge