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04/17/25

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BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

R2311001

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 five public participation hearings (PPHs) in the Order Instituting Rulemaking (OIR) to consider revisions and updates to the Deaf and Disabled Telecommunications Program (DDTP).

The dates of the scheduled PPHs are as follows:

- May 16, 2025, Oakland, In-Person and Remote (one PPH)
- September 3, 2025, Los Angeles Region, In-Person (two PPHs)
- September 17, 2025, Bay Area, In-Person (two PPHs)

Details for each PPH are provided in Section 3 of this ruling.

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 disability 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

The Commission has already held eight PPHs in this proceeding in 2024. These events were held on August 15 in Roseville, September 4 in Buena Park, September 11 in Clovis, and virtually on September 17. Each day was comprised of two PPHs. Due to low public attendance at those events, the Commission has decided to host additional PPHs, this time partnering with other events and community-based organizations that provide support to the disability community. Public input into the DDTP, particularly from current or eligible DDTP participants, is essential for the Commission to issue an informed decision in this proceeding

In 2025 there will be three days of PPH events. The details are as follows:

3.1. May 16 – TADDAC/EPAC Business Meeting

The May 16 meeting will be held at the same venue as, and just before, the joint business meeting of the Telecommunications Access for the Deaf and Disabled Administrative Committee (TADDAC) and the Equipment Program

Advisory Committee (EPAC). The May 16 PPH will entail both in-person and remote components.

DATE AND TIME	LOCATION	MEETING ADDRESS
Friday, May 16, 2025 10:00 a.m.	TADDAC / EPAC Business Meeting	Oakland City Center 500 12 th Street, Suite 105 Oakland, CA 94607 Paramount Room
REMOTE PARTICIPATION OPTION		
JOIN THE WEBINAR	https://cpuc.webex.com/cpuc/j.php?MTID=m46bf02b93606978ab6da2b05cd59775e	
WEBINAR NUMBER	2499 062 1351	
WEBINAR PASSWORD	MAYJOINT2025	
JOIN BY PHONE OPTION	1-855-282-6330 United States Toll Free 1-415-655-0002 United States Toll	
ACCESS CODE	2499 062 1351	
PHONE PASSWORD	62956468	

3.2. Los Angeles and Bay Area

The other two days will have two PPHs each day. They will each be held in Northern and Southern California and will be in-person events only. The schedule and location information for the remaining in-person PPHs is as follows:

DATE AND TIME	REGION	MEETING ADDRESS
Wednesday, September 3, 2025 2:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m.	Los Angeles	Greater Los Angeles Agency on Deafness, Inc. (GLAD) 2222 Laverna Avenue Los Angeles, CA 90041
Wednesday, September 17, 2025 2:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m.	Bay Area	Ed Roberts Campus Center for Independent Living 3075 Adeline Street Berkeley, CA 94703

3.3. Procedural Instructions

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.

Updates and further information regarding the PPHs are available at 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. 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.

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. To make a request for other language or accommodation, please contact the Commission’s Public Advisor’s Office at 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 April 17, 2025, at San Francisco, California.

/s/ DAVID R. VAN DYKEN

David R. Van Dyken
Administrative Law Judge