



**STATE OF NEW JERSEY**  
**Board of Public Utilities**  
44 South Clinton Avenue, 9<sup>th</sup> Floor  
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Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0350  
[www.nj.gov/bpu/](http://www.nj.gov/bpu/)

CUSTOMER ASSISTANCE

IN THE MATTER OF THE PETITION OF PUBLIC SERVICE ) ORDER OF APPROVAL  
ELECTRIC AND GAS COMPANY PURSUANT TO N.J.A.C. )  
14:3-5.1(E) FOR APPROVAL OF THE RELOCATION OF )  
ITS NORTH HUDSON CUSTOMER SERVICE CENTER )  
FROM 4808 BERGENLINE AVENUE, UNION CITY TO )  
5665 JOHN F. KENNEDY BOULEVARD, NORTH )  
BERGEN, NEW JERSEY ) DOCKET NO. EO20020110

**Parties of Record:**

**Katherine E. Smith, Esq.**, PSEG Services Corporation, on behalf of Petitioner, Public Service Electric and Gas Company  
**Stefanie A. Brand, Esq., Director**, Division of Rate Counsel

BY THE BOARD:

On February 4, 2020, Public Service Electric and Gas Company, (“PSE&G”, “Company” or “Petitioner”) filed a petition, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 14:3-5.1(c), to relocate its North Hudson Customer Service Center (“CSC”) from 4808 Bergenline Avenue, Union City to 5665 John F. Kennedy Boulevard, North Bergen, which is 0.7 miles from the current location. The Company stated it has complied with N.J.A.C. 14:3-5.1(c) and (e), including mailing copies of the petition to the Clerk of the affected municipality, as well as to the Division of Rate Counsel (“Rate Counsel”).

**The Petition**

In its petition, PSE&G states the current CSC is located in a rental property, with a lease that is scheduled to expire on May 31, 2021. The relocation of the CSC is intended to provide an improved customer experience through a newly renovated and upgraded space with less likelihood of closures due to existing issues experienced at the current facility. PSEG will continue to maintain the existing CSC at 4808 Bergenline Avenue, while renovating the new site. PSE&G expects that the new site will be under renovation in the third quarter 2020, and will be ready to open as a CSC in fourth quarter 2020 (subject to acquiring all necessary permits and approvals). As with the existing CSC, the new location will provide customers with bill payment, billing, and service-related assistance.

Notice of the relocation was/is posted at the current CSC. In addition, the company published notice of the relocation in the *Newark Star Ledger* on February 7, 2020, *Jersey Journal* on February 7, 2020 and *El Especialito* on February 13, 2020. The public notice detailed the relocation and informed the public that they may submit written comments to the Board with respect to the relocation.

Like the existing CSC, the new location is on a major thoroughfare and vehicular access is positive. New Jersey Transit (“NJT”) buses and trains provide public transportation. As stated above, the proposed new location at 5665 John F. Kennedy Boulevard is located 0.7 miles away from the current location at 4808 Bergenline Avenue, and, according to the Petitioner, enjoys the same access to mass transit that the current CSC offers. The NJT Light Rail Station is about 0.5 miles from the new location, and bus service is available. Furthermore, the new location will have free, onsite parking for customers, which is not available at the current location. In addition, the new facility will be constructed to ensure compliance with requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act for first floor access.

PSE&G states that it will continue the same hours of operation at the new location with the same personnel. It projects rental costs will be comparable to current costs. PSEG will also be incurring fit-out expenses of approximately \$1.5 million to equip the new space to operate as a CSC. According to the Company it currently pays annual base rent of \$163,875 for 3,450 square feet at North Hudson CSC on Bergenline Avenue (with increases at 3% per year). PSE&G and North Bergen Residential Urban Renewal, LLC, an affiliate of AvalonBay Communities, Inc. have entered into a ten-year lease dated December 30, 2019 with an annual rent amount of \$120,224 for lease years one through five for 3,757 square feet associated with the new space. PSE&G evaluated multiple properties in the area surrounding the existing CSC, and obtained guidance from independent real estate professionals. PSE&G is attempting to capitalize on this opportunity while also supporting economic development. According to the Company, the new space will be comprised of ground floor space in a multi-story building.

In order to keep the public informed of the change in locations, PSE&G states it has already or will:

- Post notices at the current CSC.
- Place public notifications in the area newspapers, including information for customers who wish to submit objections in writing.
- Print the new CSC address on the bill for customers in the area.
- All inquiry and collection telephone personnel, as well as field collection personnel, will have information to properly direct customers to the new location.
- Utilize social media messaging.
- Local social and senior agencies will be provided information regarding the new location so they can forward it to their clients.
- Municipal officials will be notified in accordance with N.J.A.C. 14:3-5.1(e)2.
- Public Service's website will be updated to reflect the new CSC's address.

By letter dated March 3, 2020, Senator Brian Stack, Mayor of Union City, New Jersey, expressed his concern that the relocation might have a negative impact on Union City by reducing retail traffic on Bergenline Avenue, and inconveniencing residents of Union City, especially senior citizens who pay their bills in person. By letter dated July 17, 2020, Board of Public Utilities Customer Assistance Division Director Julie Ford Williams responded to Senator Stack, thanked him for his

correspondence, advised him of the requirements enumerated at N.J.A.C. 14:3-5.1(e) applicable here, and assured him that the Board would consider and reflect upon his letter in making its final determination in this matter. No members of the public objected to the petition.

Rate Counsel advised Board Staff by letter dated August 4, 2020 that it has no objection to PSE&G's relocation of its Union City CSC location to North Bergen. Rate Counsel requested that any Board Order granting the petition contain the following provisions:

1. PSE&G shall develop a contingency plan in the event that both its current and its proposed new North Hudson CSC locations become unavailable before completion of the equipping and relocation process.
2. PSE&G shall maintain, at a minimum, the same hours of operation, staffing levels, and level of service at the North Hudson CSC after its relocation.
3. PSE&G shall maintain, at a minimum, the level of accessibility for persons with disabilities at the relocated North Hudson CSC as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act.
4. PSE&G shall notify the Board and Rate Counsel if it anticipates any changes in the hours of operation, staffing levels, or level of service at the North Hudson CSC after its relocation.
5. The rate impact and prudence of PSE&G's costs incurred to renovate, equip and relocate the North Hudson CSC will be reviewed in the Company's next base rate case or other appropriate proceeding.
6. This Order shall not affect, nor in any way, limit the exercise of the authority of the Board or of this State, in any future Petition or in any proceeding with respect to rates, franchises, service, financing, accounting, capitalization, depreciation, or any other matter affecting the Petitioner.

After review of the entire record in this matter, including the comments filed on behalf of Rate Counsel, the Board **HEREBY FINDS**:

1. On February 4, 2020, PSE&G filed a petition, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 14:3-5.1, to relocate its North Hudson CSC from 4808 Bergenline Avenue, Union City to 5665 John F. Kennedy Boulevard, North Bergen; and
2. PSE&G has complied with N.J.A.C. 14:3-5.1, including the relevant notice requirements; and
3. Union City Mayor Stack objected to the move in writing; the Board considered his objections in light of the totality of the request and determined that the benefits of the move were within the criteria for moving the location.
4. Rate Counsel agreed to the move with certain conditions, as noted above. The Board finds the requested notice of change in hours, staffing and/or service levels proposed by Rate Counsel to be overly burdensome and substitutes the following language: PSE&G's John F. Kennedy Boulevard CSC shall maintain the same hours of operation, staffing levels and level of service as were provided at its Bergenline location.
5. No other objections to this relocation have been received by the Board other than as detailed above; and
6. The relocation of the North Hudson CSC office located from 4808 Bergenline Avenue, Union City, New Jersey to 5665 John F. Kennedy Boulevard, North Bergen, New Jersey is not unreasonable and will not unduly prejudice the public interest.

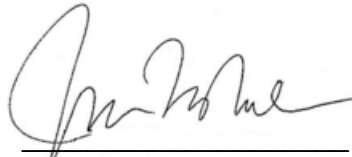
Therefore, based on the foregoing, the Board **HEREBY APPROVES** the relocation of PSEG's North Hudson CSC office located from 4808 Bergenline Avenue, Union City, New Jersey to 5665 John F. Kennedy Boulevard, North Bergen, New Jersey, subject to the following conditions:

1. PSE&G shall develop a contingency plan in the event that both its current and its proposed new North Hudson CSC locations become unavailable before completion of the equipping and relocation process.
2. PSE&G shall maintain, at a minimum, the same hours of operation, staffing levels, and level of service at the new North Hudson CSC after its relocation as it provided at the 4808 Bergenline Avenue, Union City location.
3. PSE&G shall maintain, at a minimum, the level of accessibility for persons with disabilities at the relocated North Hudson CSC as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act.
4. The rate impact and prudence of PSE&G's costs incurred to renovate, equip and relocate the North Hudson CSC will be reviewed in the Company's next base rate case or other appropriate proceeding.
5. This Order shall not affect nor in any way limit the exercise of the authority of the Board or of this State, in any future Petition or in any proceeding with respect to rates, franchises, service, financing, accounting, capitalization, depreciation, or any other matter affecting the Petitioner.

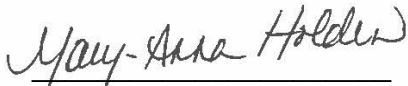
The Order shall become effective on September 19, 2020.

DATED: September 9, 2020

BOARD OF PUBLIC UTILITIES  
BY:



JOSEPH L. FIORDALISO  
PRESIDENT



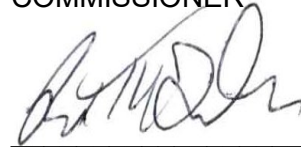
MARY-ANNA HOLDEN  
COMMISSIONER



DIANNE SOLOMON  
COMMISSIONER



UPENDRA J. CHIVUKULA  
COMMISSIONER



ROBERT M. GORDON  
COMMISSIONER

ATTEST:



AIDA CAMACHO-WELCH  
SECRETARY

**IN THE MATTER OF THE PETITION OF PUBLIC SERVICE ELECTRIC AND GAS COMPANY  
PURSUANT TO N.J.A.C. 14:3-5.1(E) FOR APPROVAL OF THE RELOCATION OF ITS  
NORTH HUDSON CUSTOMER SERVICE CENTER FROM 4808 BERGENLINE AVENUE,  
UNION CITY TO 5665 JOHN F. KENNEDY BOULEVARD, NORTH BERGEN, NEW JERSEY**

**BPU DOCKET NO. EO20020110**

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