

PUNJAB STATE ELECTRICITY REGULATORY COMMISSION

AMENDMENTS IN SUPPLY CODE, 2014

Explanatory Memorandum

The Punjab State Electricity Regulatory Commission in exercise of the powers conferred under Section 181 read with Sections 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 50, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 126, 127, 135, 152, 154 & 163 of the Electricity Act, 2003 (Central Act 36 of 2003) read with Electricity (Amendment) Act, 2007 (No. 26 of 2007) and all other powers enabling it in this behalf and in compliance of Electricity (Removal of Difficulties) Order, 2005, issued by the Ministry of Power, Government of India bearing No.S.O.790 (E) dated 8th June 2005, notified the Punjab State Electricity Regulatory Commission (Electricity Supply Code and Related Matters) Regulations, 2014 vide notification dated 5th November, 2014 (in short Supply Code, 2014). The first amendment was issued vide notification no. PSERC/Secy./Regu. 114 dated 22.06.2016, second amendment was issued vide notification no. PSERC/Secy./Regu.116 dated 05.10.2016, third amendment was issued vide notification no. PSERC/Secy./Regu.119 dated 21.03.2017, the fourth amendment was issued vide notification no. PSERC/Secy./Regu.125 dated 17.05.2018, the fifth amendment was issued vide notification no. PSERC/Secy./Regu. 137 dated 28.01.2019, the sixth amendment was issued vide notification no. PSERC/Secy./Regu. PSERC/Secy./Regu.146 dated 09.01.2020, the seventh amendment was issued vide notification no. PSERC/Secy./Regu.151 dated 18.09.2020 published in Punjab Govt. Gaz.(Extra) dated 18.09.2020, the eighth amendment was issued vide notification no. PSERC/Secy./Regu.155 dated 10.03.2021 published in Punjab Govt. Gaz.(Extra) dated 10.03.2021, the ninth amendment was issued vide notification no. PSERC/Secy./Regu.157 dated 20.07.2021 published in Punjab Govt. Gaz.(Extra) dated 20.07.2021 and the tenth amendment was issued vide notification no. PSERC/Secy./Regu.162 dated 02.02.2022 published in Punjab Govt. Gaz.(Extra) dated 17.03.2022. The Supply Code, 2014 including first to tenth amendments hereinafter shall be referred to as Principal Regulations..

In terms of provisions of Regulation 3.1 of the Principal Regulations, the Commission constituted the Supply Code Review Panel to consider views of the

licensee(s), consumers and other stakeholders regarding implementation of the Supply Code and to recommend amendments in the Supply Code, wherever required. Government of India notified Electricity (Rights of Consumers) Rules, 2020 vide notification G.S.R. 818(E) dated 31.12.2020. Section 181 of the Electricity Act, 2003 empowers the Commission to make regulations consistent with the Act and the Rules to carry out the provisions of the Act. Accordingly the draft amendments which are required to align the Supply Code, 2014 in line with Electricity (Rights of Consumers) Rules, 2020 were circulated amongst the members of the Review panel. Some proposals were also received from PSPCL. These were discussed in the Review Panel meetings held on 08.03.2022 and 26.04.2022. The Review Panel recommended various amendments in Supply Code, 2014 to the Commission. After examination of the recommendations of the Review Panel and provisions of Electricity (Right of Consumers) Rules, 2020, the Commission now intends to amend various provisions of the Principal Regulations.. The gist of the amendments proposed is as under;

1. The consumers/applicants shall have the option to apply for new connection or change in load/demand either in electronic form such as online through web portal or physically in hard copy form.
2. The distribution licensee shall provide application tracking system to monitor the status of processing of application.
3. The applicant for load/demand upto 50 kW/kVA, shall submit application along with all applicable charges and no separate demand notice shall be issued. The timelines for release of connection shall start from the date of submission of application complete in all respect.
4. For individual consumers, only identity proof and ownership/occupancy of premises proof shall be required for registration of application.
5. Where no augmentation, erection and extension of distribution main etc is required, the connection shall be released within Seven (7) working days in case of DS/NRS category consumers and Fifteen (15) working days for other than DS/NRS consumers from the date of submission of application complete

in all respects or from the date of compliance of the Demand Notice, as the case may be.

6. The distribution licensee shall release all connections through smart meters with pre-payment facility. The existing meters shall be replaced with smart meters with pre-payment facility as per the timelines prescribed by the Central Government.
7. A consumer can request the distribution licensee to test the meter if he doubts its accuracy and no test fee shall be charged from the consumer at this stage. In case meter is found to be correct then testing fee shall be recovered through bill.
8. If a consumer disputes the results of testing, the meter shall be tested at a third party testing facility selected by the consumer from the list of third party testing agencies approved by the Commission. If it is successfully established that the results of this test are contrary to the results of the test performed by the distribution licensee, then the cost of undertaking such test shall be borne by the distribution licensee. However, in case it is established that the results of this test are same as the results of the test performed by the distribution licensee, then the cost of undertaking such test shall be borne by the Consumer.
9. It shall be the responsibility of the owner/occupant of a premises to get a special reading done by the distribution licensee at the time of change of occupancy or on the premises falling vacant. The distribution licensee shall arrange a special reading and deliver the final bill, including all arrears till the date of billing, within 7 days of the meter reading. On receipt of final payment from the consumer, the distribution licensee shall issue a No-Dues certificate to the consumer within 7 days.
10. Where a distribution licensee has disconnected supply of electricity to any premises in consequence of a default on the part of the consumer and if the consumer seeks reconnection within 6 months from the date of disconnection then the distribution licensee shall resume supply of electricity (other than

theft cases) within six working hours from the time the consumer makes the payment.

11. For providing common services like new connection, disconnection, reconnection, shifting of connection, change in name and particulars, load change, replacement of meter, no supply, the distribution licensee shall establish a centralised 24x7 toll-free call centre.
12. The distribution licensees shall endeavour to provide all services through a common Customer Relation Manager (CRM) System to get a unified view of all the services requested, attended and pending, at the backend for better monitoring and analytics.
13. Any consumer aggrieved by the non-redressal of his/her grievance by the distribution licensee may himself/herself or through his/her authorized representative, approach the Appropriate Forum established by the distribution licensee as per PSERC (Forum and Ombudsman) Regulations, 2016 in writing for the redressal of his/her grievance.
14. In the event of failure to meet the Standards of Performance specified in Annexure-1 of the Supply Code, the distribution licensee shall be liable to pay compensation to the affected consumers. The consumers shall be compensated automatically for those parameters which can be monitored remotely, as may be decided by the Commission.
15. The distribution licensee shall be required to ensure reliability of supply on the basis of number and duration of interruptions.
16. The distribution licensee shall replace the defective/burnt/stolen meter within 24 hours in urban areas and 72 hours in rural areas. However supply shall be restored immediately even by bypassing the meter.
17. To bring clarity in assessment of charges (Unauthorised Use of Electricity) where electricity is being used by a consumer for the purpose other than for which the usage of electricity was authorized or for the premises or the areas other than those for which the supply of electricity was authorized, the relevant regulation has been reworded with explanation.

In addition, some proposals received from PSPCL for amendments in Supply Code, 2014 were discussed by the Review Panel and on the recommendations of the Panel, following amendments have also been proposed;

18. To remove ambiguity in Regulation 4.2 regarding Supply Voltage, a separate Regulation 4.2 A has been proposed for determining connectivity voltage in case of single point supply for colonies/commercial complexes on the basis of estimated load.
19. Of late, the Commission has been receiving number of complaints/petitions from the residents of licensed colonies/complexes regarding denial of connections as the developers have abandoned the project without completing the LD system of the colony, as per the conditions of licence issued under PAPRA. To streamline the procedure for release of connection in these colonies and to clearly specify the roles and responsibilities of distribution licensee and the promoters of these colonies, the Regulation 6.7 is proposed to be amended. The loading norms have also been specified in detail as per the suggestions of some promoters to streamline the procedure for estimation of load of colonies/commercial complexes including Malls and IT parks.

Draft PSERC (Electricity Supply Code and Related Matters) (11th Amendment) Regulations, 2021 are enclosed as Annexure-A. The comments/suggestions/objections from all the stakeholders are solicited under Sub-section (3) of Section 181 of the Electricity Act, 2003 read with Rule 3 of the Electricity (Procedure for Previous Publication) Rules, 2005 on the proposed amendments in Supply Code, 2014.