



**ANDHRA PRADESH ELECTRICITY REGULATORY  
COMMISSION**

#11-4-660, 4th Floor, Singareni Bhavan, Red Hills, Khairatabad  
Hyderabad 500 004 Phones: 23397 - 381, 399, 556, 656 Fax: 2339 7378

Pdgs.Secy/Hearings/2020

Date: 28-05-2020.

Sub: APERC -- Conduct of Business Regulations, 1999 -- Hearings through Video Conferencing Mode -- Guidelines & Modalities -- Practice Directions issued -- Reg.

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Covid19 pandemic has brought the hearings work of the Commission to a stand still during the last two months consequent to the severe restrictions imposed on the movement of the country's population. Adequate systems were not in place to immediately transition to a remote working culture and the uncertainties associated with the continuation / lifting of the lock downs announced all over the country forced the Commission to a 'wait and watch mode' for the last two months. During the last two months, various courts in the country, starting from the Hon'ble Supreme Court to the High Courts to various Tribunals and Electricity Regulatory Commissions have been experimenting with the conduct of hearings through video conferencing mode. Keeping all these developments and the necessity of carrying on with hearings work despite the continuation of the lock down still in place, the Commission, in exercise of the powers conferred on it under Regulation 55 of the Andhra Pradesh Electricity Regulatory Commission (Conduct of Business) Regulations, 1999 ("CBR" for short hereafter) decides to hold its hearings through Video Conferencing mode until further notice and causes the following Guidelines and Modalities to be issued.

## 1. Filing petitions

- 1.1. The method and manner of preparation and filing of petitions as outlined in the CBR can continue to be followed as the office of the Commission is working even during the prevalence of Covid19 pandemic. However, now, to facilitate those that are not able to file their petitions through delivery by post / courier or in person, the Commission opens up the facility of e-filing their petitions / pleadings. All such petitions / pleadings have to be filed through email only to [commn-secy@aperc.gov.in](mailto:commn-secy@aperc.gov.in). Sending of petitions / pleadings to any other email address will not be taken cognizance of by the Commission.
- 1.2. On receipt of the petitions / pleadings, the existing procedure concerning their scrutiny shall be followed and the result of the scrutiny will be communicated by the Commission's office through email from [commn-secy@aperc.gov.in](mailto:commn-secy@aperc.gov.in). Only those communications received from this email ID will be considered authentic and official communications from the Commission.
- 1.3. All the petitions / pleadings have to be filed only in the form of a single searchable PDF file with running serial numbering. The documents and paragraphs of the petitions / pleadings that are sought to be relied upon during the course of the final arguments have to be necessarily bookmarked for easy referencing in the PDF file.
- 1.4. Petitioners / Respondents / Objectors and concerned parties in the proceedings before the Commission have to invariably mention their email ID through which the correspondence between them and the Commission at [commn-secy@aperc.gov.in](mailto:commn-secy@aperc.gov.in) will be taking place. Each of them have to mention only one email ID during the course of an entire proceeding. They cannot resort to communicating from different email IDs during the course of a proceeding. All

correspondence from the Commission to them will be directed to only that email ID which is provided when the first correspondence is initiated in a proceeding.

- 1.5. Where a Senior Advocate or an arguing counsel is to appear in a hearing, the concerned Advocate / Petitioner shall indicate the contact details like name, email ID and mobile number of the Senior Advocate / Arguing Counsel through email to [common-secy@aperc.gov.in](mailto:common-secy@aperc.gov.in).

## 2. Urgent hearings / mentions

- 2.1. Persons / entities desiring their cases to be heard in an urgent manner have the following two options to mention their urgency:

- 2.1.1. The urgency can be mentioned during the course of the online hearing where they are already participating.

- 2.1.2. The urgency can be explained through an email to [commn-secy@aperc.gov.in](mailto:commn-secy@aperc.gov.in).

- 2.2. On receipt of a request for urgent hearing received during an ongoing video hearing, the Commission might communicate its decision.

- 2.3. In case of requests for urgent hearings received through email, the decision of the Commission will be made known to the requesters (from [commn-secy@aperc.gov.in](mailto:commn-secy@aperc.gov.in)) within 7 days from the date of receipt of the request. Urgent hearing requests through email can be made only once per petition. Repeated requests will not be entertained and replied to.

## 3. Payment of fees

- 3.1. Those who are able to make the payment of fees as per the existing procedure, can continue to do so, if feasible and practicable for them. Those desirous of making payment of fees through online mode , can remit their fees to the following account of the Commission:

Name of the Account	APERC Fund Account
Current Account Number	33888237865
IFSC Code	SBIN0005893

3.2. A scanned copy of the remittance slip / reference number generated during the course of the remittance, evidencing credit into the account of the Commission, must be enclosed to the petition being filed. On verification of the receipt of the fees only, the scrutiny and further processing of the petition will be taken up in the Commission.

#### 4. Scrutiny & numbering of the petitions

4.1. Procedure for the scrutiny of petitions filed in online mode, will be the same as that for the petitions that are filed in physical mode. However, the result of the scrutiny and any communication that needs to be resorted to during the course of the scrutiny will be carried out only through [commn-secy@aperc.gov.in](mailto:commn-secy@aperc.gov.in) and communication from / to any other email ID from the Commission side will not be taken cognizance of.

#### 5. Schedule of Hearings

5.1. The schedule of hearings will be published on the website of the Commission at [www.aperc.gov.in](http://www.aperc.gov.in) as is happening so far.

#### 6. Hearings

6.1. Hearings will be conducted only through a web-based video conferencing system on Google Meet platform. For this purpose they should log in to <https://meet.google.com>. It may kindly be noted that the smooth functioning of the video hearing is squarely dependent upon and subject to the connectivity (signal strength / bandwidth) available at the end of the remote user(s), and

hence it is expected that parties joining video hearing shall ensure robust connectivity and bandwidth at their end. It is preferable that during the video hearing, no other device or application is connected to or using the bandwidth.

- 6.2. All the persons intending to appear before the Commission through Google Meet should use only a laptop or a computer to login to the Video Hearings. Joins through phone dial-ins are not allowed; unless otherwise specifically permitted by the Commission.
- 6.3. Participants should use head-phones to avoid unnecessary interference in the meeting. They should mute their mic at all times during the video hearing unless permitted to speak by the Hon'ble Commission during the course of the video hearing.
- 6.4. It is important for parties to remember to keep their MIC muted failing which the possibility of MIC catching audio feed from speakers and creating echo / noise disturbance would be very high and may disturb the video conference.
- 6.5. It may be noted that simultaneous submissions by more than one party at any given time should be avoided and each party may indicate requirement to speak / submit by asking for permission from the Hon'ble Commission by raising a hand. Once permitted by the Hon'ble Commission, that party shall first unmute the MIC and thereafter make submissions.
- 6.6. A day before the scheduled hearing date, the meeting code will be emailed to the petitioners / respondents / objectors or concerned persons. Only those who are emailed the code need to log in to take part in the meeting. Unauthorized persons / intruders will be disabled from the hearing.
- 6.7. A half hour before the scheduled hearing, intending participants can log in to the meeting and interact with the Commission officers / staff assisting the Commission in the conduct of the hearing. These interactions will only be

confined in scope to the method and manner of participating in the hearing and for testing purpose.

- 6.8. Parties may kindly keep in mind that they are participating in court proceedings and hence should not resort to any indecorous conduct or dress inappropriately or disturb the proceedings through unnecessary chatter. Advocates must wear white shirt and white bands, while others must wear a formal dress either white or other sober colours.
- 6.9. Participants are required not to record/copy/store and/or broadcast, by any means, the Commission hearings and proceedings.
- 6.10. Participants intending to make presentations to the Commission should seek prior permission of the Commission.
- 6.11. Participants are required to stay online till the Hon'ble Commission concludes the hearing of their matter, whereafter the parties may disconnect from the video conference.

## 7. Communication of Notices & Orders

- 7.1. Record of Proceedings before the Commission will be published on the website of the Commission at [www.aperc.gov.in](http://www.aperc.gov.in) as is happening so far.
- 7.2. Orders -- final or interim -- of the Commission consequent to a hearing of the Commission will be published on the website of the Commission at [www.aperc.gov.in](http://www.aperc.gov.in).
- 7.3. Petitioners / Respondents / Objectors or other related parties in the proceedings before the Commission will be communicated the orders, directions or decisions of the Commission only through the email [commn-secy@aperc.gov.in](mailto:commn-secy@aperc.gov.in). Communication from any other email ID will not be treated as official and originating from the Commission.

7.4. If and when a doubt arises as to whether a communication has been officially issued by the Commission, the decision of the Commission thereon is final and binding on everyone concerned with the communication.

8. Communication of hearing schedules in respect of existing cases

8.1. All the hearings in the last two months could not be taken up due to the prevailing pandemic. The Commission will be communicating the hearing schedule in respect of all those cases that have not been heard in the last two months through the website of the Commission at [www.aperc.gov.in](http://www.aperc.gov.in). No separate notices will be issued to the Petitioners / Respondents / Objectors concerning these hearings.

8.2. The office of the Commission will make an attempt, on a best effort basis, to call each of the concerned parties on phone and communicate to them the latest hearing schedule. Non-communication through this method, however, shall not invalidate the proceedings before the Commission.

(By order of the Commission)

  
**Commission Secretary**

To  
The Licensees  
The Standing counsel & AOR  
All the Petitioners / Respondents / Objectors in the various proceedings before the Commission -- through any of the available modes viz., post / email / fax

Copy to:

1. All the Officers of the Commission
2. JD/Engg. -- to publish on the website of the Commission.

Copy to:

PS to Hon'ble Chairman

PS to Hon'ble Member / PRR

PS to Hon'ble Member / TRS



for information