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November 13, 2026

MEMORANDUM

TO: President Cynthia Lee Almond
Commissioner Jeremy H. Oden
Commissioner Chris V. Beeker, III
Luke D. Bentley IV, Executive Director
Division Directors
General Public

FROM: Devon D. Beaty DDB
Secretary of the Commission

IN RE: Docketing Framework

The Alabama Supreme Court recently issued an opinion clarifying the definition of "proceeding," and it offers the Commission a good opportunity to address its docketing practice.[1] Based on Alabama law, Commission precedent, and the recent Alabama Supreme Court opinion, as Secretary of the Commission, I recognize the following docketing standards:

Formal Dockets

Formal dockets are identified with a 5-digit number and include matters that may involve interventions, hearings, or public comment. Matters in formal dockets are typically concluded with a Commission vote and an order. Matters within a formal docket generally fall into two categories: adjudications and rulemakings.

[1] *Energy Alabama v. Ala. Pub. Serv. Comm'n*, No. SC-2025-0595, 2026 Ala. (Oct. 30, 2026) (recognizing the difference between a docket and a proceeding, stating that the "Legislature did not establish an all-purpose right of intervention into any and all commission business").

Adjudications	Rulemakings
Proceedings in which the Commission resolves specific disputes, contested cases, or individual claims on a case-by-case basis	Processes by which the Commission creates general regulations, policies, or guidelines
Examples: certificate applications, rate filings, complaints, show cause proceedings, and investigations	Examples: rulemakings to propose changes to Commission rules and generic proceedings to address proposed changes to procedures or policies
Adjudications are "proceedings" under Alabama law	Rulemakings are not "proceedings" under Alabama law
Petitions to Intervene will be considered, but there is no opportunity for public comment	Petitions to Intervene will not be considered, but there will be an opportunity for public comment

If a formal docket is likely to include multiple adjudications or rulemakings, the Chief Administrative Law Judge may assign a case number to designate specific adjudications or rulemakings.

Both adjudications and rulemakings may involve public hearings. However, hearings are only required when designated as such by Alabama law, Commission regulation, or Commission order.

Informal Dockets (Utility Dockets (U-Dockets) and Motor Carrier Dockets (C-Dockets))

Informal dockets are identified with a letter prefix and a number and include matters that will not involve interventions, hearings, or public comment. Matters in informal dockets may be concluded with a Commission vote and order. Matters in informal dockets are not "proceedings" under Alabama law. The Commission, through a proceeding, may designate some matters to be included in informal dockets (such as large load data center contracts under Rate FCR-LLDC).

Examples of matters assigned to informal dockets include submissions under Rate FCR-LLDC, other contract reviews that may involve confidential information, telecom interconnection agreements, and motor carrier certificate revocations/reinstatements.

Description Dockets (D-Dockets)

Description dockets, formally known as Deregulation dockets, are identified with a letter prefix and a number and include matters that require no action by the Commission and will not involve interventions, hearings, or public comment. Matters in description dockets are not "proceedings" under Alabama law.

An example of a matter assigned to a description docket is a notice filing from a telecom company.