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STATE OF FLORIDA



OFFICE OF COMMISSION CLERK  
CARLOTTA S. STAUFFER  
COMMISSION CLERK  
(850)413-6770

# Public Service Commission

## NOTICE OF COMPLAINT

TO

**DUKE ENERGY**  
**106 EAST COLLEGE AVENUE, SUITE 800**  
**TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA 32301-7740**  
(via Certified Mail No. 7011 3500 0001 5977 7755)

RECEIVED-FPSC  
2016 APR 28 AM 11:36  
COMMISSION  
CLERK

**Re: Docket No. 160097-EI- - Complaint of Patrick King against Duke Energy for alleged high bills.**

Notice is hereby given, via certified U.S. mail, that the above-referenced complaint was filed with the Public Service Commission on April 27, 2016, a copy of which is attached.

You may file a response to this complaint with the Office of Commission Clerk at the address below, with a copy sent to the complainant. The Commission also accepts documents for filing by electronic transmission provided the electronic filing requirements are met. For information regarding these requirements, visit the Commission's Web site at [www.floridapsc.com](http://www.floridapsc.com).

Noticed this 28 day of April, 2016.

Sincerely,

*Carlotta S. Stauffer*  
Carlotta S. Stauffer  
Commission Clerk

CSS/TB  
Enclosure

cc: Patrick King  
Office of Public Counsel  
Office of General Counsel  
Office of Consumer Assistance & Outreach  
Docket File

2016 APR 27 AM 9:30

RECEIVED-FPSC

COMMISSION  
CLERK

April 20, 2016

To: Angela Charles

Fm: Patrick King

Subj: Filling of formal complaint, #1195838E

Hello! Angela;

Enclosed please find a copy of the letter sent to me from Pamela H. Page. At this time I wish to take the next step and file the petition to the Commission, to adopt, amend, or repeal the ruling.

I have been in dispute with Duke Energy going on over three (3) years of my high energy bill each month. Duke Energy had always said my bills were correct and I was only being billed for my usage. When I received a bill in the mail for \$19.99 for March of 2015, I called Duke Energy and asked if that was correct. They said it was most likely in error and they would someone out. Duke Energy came on April 9, 2015 and removed the old meter and replaced it with a new meter that day.

Duke Energy said it would take up to three (3) months to run test, before they would have an answer as to what the problem was. I said fine, I'll wait the three (3) months and call back. After the three (3) months I called Duke Energy and was told the meter tested fine, there was nothing wrong with the meter. I said I disagree, so they said we will connect you to our "High Billing Dept.". I left several voice mail messages and was unable to speak with a live person about the matter in any detail. After five (5) weeks of not being able to speak with someone, I contacted the Florida Public Service Commission in October 2015.

My points of issue are as follow:

- #1. Duke Energy is the one that told me, I had to wait three (3) months to get the results of the test.
- #2. PSC said they could not do anything because I had waited over three (3) months before contacting the PSC. After all I was trying to resolve the issue myself, before taking the next step of contacting PSC.
- #3. Duke Energy said they had disposed of the meter and were only required to hold the meter for the three (3) months.
- #4. Duke Energy NEVER called me, when and if they ever found out what the results were of the test. Why wouldn't they call the customer when test were being run on an on-going dispute.
- #5. Common sense rules that if a bill was averaging \$258.00 per month with the OLD meter and then when the NEW meter was installed the billed is averaging \$148.00 per month. Common sense is, OLD meter BAD; NEW meter GOOD...
- #6. Duke Energy NEVER forward the complete file to the PSC on my account, as per requested by the PSC. Several pages were missing.

#7. PSC requested for Duke Energy to explain what they meant by the meter could have been running intermittently. Duke Energy has NEVER responded back to PSC about this.

I had initially started out requesting a refund of what I figured I had been over charged for over the past few years, which amounted to \$1,950.00. Now that it has been an additional year and all the time, energy, aggravation and misc. expense this issue has caused me, I feel I should be compensated for a much higher amount.

Most people in my situation would have given up over all the frustration, aggravation and time needed to follow this through, both with Duke Energy and the Florida Public Service Commission. Both parties have flawed systems and need to be addressed, so other senior residence do not have to go through what I have been through.

My personal belief's is, when I'm right about something, by God I will fight for what is right. I only want what is mine and not pay more than what I should have.

Thank you for your time and I look forward to hearing back from you.

Sincerely:

  
Patrick E. King

email: [koolking2007@gmail.com](mailto:koolking2007@gmail.com)

100 Hampton Road #90

Clearwater, Fl. 33759

1-727-726-3890

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JIMMY PATRONIS

STATE OF FLORIDA



OFFICE OF THE GENERAL COUNSEL  
KEITH C. HETRICK  
GENERAL COUNSEL  
(850) 413-6199

## Public Service Commission

April 15, 2016

*Certified and Regular Mail*

Mr. Patrick King  
100 Hampton Rd Lot 90  
Clearwater, FL 33759-3956

**RE: Florida Public Service Commission Complaint Number 1195838E**

Dear Mr. King:

This letter is in response to your complaint filed with the Florida Public Service Commission (PSC or Commission). According to your complaint, Duke Energy Florida (DEF) has overbilled your DEF account. Therefore, you requested that a credit adjustment of \$1,950 be applied to your account.

Because you did not accept the Commission's actions to informally resolve your complaint, it was reviewed by the PSC's Process Review Team (PRT) on April 6, 2016, in accordance with Commission Rule 25-22.032, Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.). Based on the PRT's review, it does not appear that DEF violated applicable statutes, rules, company tariffs, or Commission orders. Your complaint has been thoroughly reviewed, and the informal complaint process is concluded.

Pursuant to the provisions of Section 120.54(7), Florida Statutes (F.S.), (enclosed for your review) any person having a substantial interest in a Commission rule may petition the Commission to adopt, amend, or repeal a rule. The petition to initiate rulemaking must be filed in accordance with the provisions of Section 120.54(7)(a), F.S. If you wish to file a petition for rulemaking, you may do so with the Office of the Commission Clerk at the mailing address specified below or electronically via the Commission's web portal, as identified below. If you have further questions regarding a rulemaking petition, please call the Office of Commission Clerk at 850-413-6770.

If you disagree with your complaint conclusion, you may file a petition for initiation of formal proceedings for relief against DEF. The request for formal proceedings must follow the complaint requirements in Rule 25-22.036, F.A.C. - Initiation of Formal Proceedings (enclosed for your review). The rule can be found online at [www.flrules.org](http://www.flrules.org).

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An Affirmative Action / Equal Opportunity Employer

PSC Website: <http://www.floridapsc.com>

Internet E-mail: [contact@psc.state.fl.us](mailto:contact@psc.state.fl.us)

Mr. Patrick King  
PSC Complaint # 1195838E  
April 15, 2016  
Page 2 of 2

You may file your petition by mail (address below) or electronically via the Commission's web portal. Access the Electronic Filing Requirements and e-filing instructions at <http://www.floridapsc.com/dockets/e-filings/instructions2.aspx>, and the Electronic Filing Web Portal at [https://secure.floridapsc.com/\(S\(fqysgv3tm4qy3545xfnr04j2\)\)/e-filings/efiling.aspx](https://secure.floridapsc.com/(S(fqysgv3tm4qy3545xfnr04j2))/e-filings/efiling.aspx). The PSC cannot accept this request via fax.

*Mailing address:*

Office of Commission Clerk  
Florida Public Service Commission  
2540 Shumard Oak Boulevard  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0850

The utility can respond to your formal complaint. After considering your complaint and the utility's response, the Commission will rule on your petition. In its consideration, the Commission will consider whether your complaint meets the rule requirements and whether the Commission is able to grant your requested relief.

If your formal complaint application does not meet the requirements specified in Rule 25-22.036, F.A.C., or if the Commission is unable to grant the relief you are seeking, your formal petition may be dismissed. If you have questions about a formal petition or formal proceedings, I can be reached at (850) 413-6214 or [PHPage@psc.state.fl.us](mailto:PHPage@psc.state.fl.us).

Sincerely,



Pamela H. Page  
Senior Attorney

cc: Duke Energy Florida  
Enclosures

**25-22.036 Initiation of Formal Proceedings.**

(1) Application. An application is appropriate when a person seeks authority from the Commission to engage in an activity subject to Commission jurisdiction.

(2) Complaints. A complaint is appropriate when a person complains of an act or omission by a person subject to Commission jurisdiction which affects the complainant's substantial interests and which is in violation of a statute enforced by the Commission, or of any Commission rule or order.

(3) Form and Content.

(a) Application. An application shall be governed by the statute or rules applicable to applications for authority. In the absence of a specific form and content, the application shall conform to this rule.

(b) Complaint. Each complaint, in addition to the requirements of paragraph (3)(a) above shall also contain:

1. The rule, order, or statute that has been violated;
2. The actions that constitute the violation;
3. The name and address of the person against whom the complaint is lodged;
4. The specific relief requested, including any penalty sought.

*Rulemaking Authority 350.01(7), 350.127(2) FS. Law Implemented 120.569, 120.57, 350.123, 364.035, 364.05, 364.057, 364.058, 364.335, 364.337, 366.04, 366.06, 366.071, 366.076(1), 366.8255, 367.031, 367.045, 367.071, 367.081, 367.0814, 367.0817, 367.082, 367.0822, 367.091, 367.101, 367.171 FS. History—New 12-21-81, Formerly 25-22.36, Amended 5-3-99, 7-17-00.*

Select Year:  

## The 2015 Florida Statutes

Title X  
PUBLIC OFFICERS, EMPLOYEES, AND  
RECORDS

Chapter 120  
ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE  
ACT

[View Entire  
Chapter](#)

### 120.54 Rulemaking.—

#### (1) GENERAL PROVISIONS APPLICABLE TO ALL RULES OTHER THAN EMERGENCY RULES.—

(a) Rulemaking is not a matter of agency discretion. Each agency statement defined as a rule by s. 120.52 shall be adopted by the rulemaking procedure provided by this section as soon as feasible and practicable.

1. Rulemaking shall be presumed feasible unless the agency proves that:

- a. The agency has not had sufficient time to acquire the knowledge and experience reasonably necessary to address a statement by rulemaking; or
- b. Related matters are not sufficiently resolved to enable the agency to address a statement by rulemaking.

2. Rulemaking shall be presumed practicable to the extent necessary to provide fair notice to affected persons of relevant agency procedures and applicable principles, criteria, or standards for agency decisions unless the agency proves that:

- a. Detail or precision in the establishment of principles, criteria, or standards for agency decisions is not reasonable under the circumstances; or
- b. The particular questions addressed are of such a narrow scope that more specific resolution of the matter is impractical outside of an adjudication to determine the substantial interests of a party based on individual circumstances.

(b) Whenever an act of the Legislature is enacted which requires implementation of the act by rules of an agency within the executive branch of state government, such rules shall be drafted and formally proposed as provided in this section within the times provided in s. 120.74(4) and (5).

(c) No statutory provision shall be delayed in its implementation pending an agency's adoption of implementing rules unless there is an express statutory provision prohibiting its application until the adoption of implementing rules.

(d) In adopting rules, all agencies must, among the alternative approaches to any regulatory objective and to the extent allowed by law, choose the alternative that does not impose regulatory costs on the regulated person, county, or city which could be reduced by the adoption of less costly alternatives that substantially accomplish the statutory objectives.

(e) No agency has inherent rulemaking authority, nor has any agency authority to establish penalties for violation of a rule unless the Legislature, when establishing a penalty, specifically provides that the penalty applies to rules.

(f) An agency may adopt rules authorized by law and necessary to the proper implementation of a statute prior to the effective date of the statute, but the rules may not be effective until the statute

upon which they are based is effective. An agency may not adopt retroactive rules, including retroactive rules intended to clarify existing law, unless that power is expressly authorized by statute.

(g) Each rule adopted shall contain only one subject.

(h) In rulemaking proceedings, the agency may recognize any material which may be judicially noticed, and it may provide that materials so recognized be incorporated into the record of the proceeding. Before the record of any proceeding is completed, all parties shall be provided a list of these materials and given a reasonable opportunity to examine them and offer written comments or written rebuttal.

(i)1. A rule may incorporate material by reference but only as the material exists on the date the rule is adopted. For purposes of the rule, changes in the material are not effective unless the rule is amended to incorporate the changes.

2. An agency rule that incorporates by specific reference another rule of that agency automatically incorporates subsequent amendments to the referenced rule unless a contrary intent is clearly indicated in the referencing rule. A notice of amendments to a rule that has been incorporated by specific reference in other rules of that agency must explain the effect of those amendments on the referencing rules.

3. In rules adopted after December 31, 2010, material may not be incorporated by reference unless:

a. The material has been submitted in the prescribed electronic format to the Department of State and the full text of the material can be made available for free public access through an electronic hyperlink from the rule making the reference in the Florida Administrative Code; or

b. The agency has determined that posting the material on the Internet for purposes of public examination and inspection would constitute a violation of federal copyright law, in which case a statement to that effect, along with the address of locations at the Department of State and the agency at which the material is available for public inspection and examination, must be included in the notice required by subparagraph (3)(a)1.

4. A rule may not be amended by reference only. Amendments must set out the amended rule in full in the same manner as required by the State Constitution for laws.

5. Notwithstanding any contrary provision in this section, when an adopted rule of the Department of Environmental Protection or a water management district is incorporated by reference in the other agency's rule to implement a provision of part IV of chapter 373, subsequent amendments to the rule are not effective as to the incorporating rule unless the agency incorporating by reference notifies the committee and the Department of State of its intent to adopt the subsequent amendment, publishes notice of such intent in the Florida Administrative Register, and files with the Department of State a copy of the amended rule incorporated by reference. Changes in the rule incorporated by reference are effective as to the other agency 20 days after the date of the published notice and filing with the Department of State. The Department of State shall amend the history note of the incorporating rule to show the effective date of such change. Any substantially affected person may, within 14 days after the date of publication of the notice of intent in the Florida Administrative Register, file an objection to rulemaking with the agency. The objection shall specify the portions of the rule incorporated by reference to which the person objects and the reasons for the objection. The agency shall not have the authority under this subparagraph to adopt those portions of the rule specified in such objection. The agency shall publish notice of the objection and of its action in response in the next available issue of the Florida Administrative Register.

6. The Department of State may adopt by rule requirements for incorporating materials pursuant to



this paragraph.

(j) A rule published in the Florida Administrative Code must be indexed by the Department of State within 90 days after the rule is filed. The Department of State shall by rule establish procedures for indexing rules.

(k) An agency head may delegate the authority to initiate rule development under subsection (2); however, rulemaking responsibilities of an agency head under subparagraph (3)(a)1., subparagraph (3)(e)1., or subparagraph (3)(e)6. may not be delegated or transferred.

**(2) RULE DEVELOPMENT; WORKSHOPS; NEGOTIATED RULEMAKING.—**

(a) Except when the intended action is the repeal of a rule, agencies shall provide notice of the development of proposed rules by publication of a notice of rule development in the Florida Administrative Register before providing notice of a proposed rule as required by paragraph (3)(a). The notice of rule development shall indicate the subject area to be addressed by rule development, provide a short, plain explanation of the purpose and effect of the proposed rule, cite the specific legal authority for the proposed rule, and include the preliminary text of the proposed rules, if available, or a statement of how a person may promptly obtain, without cost, a copy of any preliminary draft, if available.

(b) All rules should be drafted in readable language. The language is readable if:

1. It avoids the use of obscure words and unnecessarily long or complicated constructions; and
2. It avoids the use of unnecessary technical or specialized language that is understood only by members of particular trades or professions.

(c) An agency may hold public workshops for purposes of rule development. An agency must hold public workshops, including workshops in various regions of the state or the agency's service area, for purposes of rule development if requested in writing by any affected person, unless the agency head explains in writing why a workshop is unnecessary. The explanation is not final agency action subject to review pursuant to ss. 120.569 and 120.57. The failure to provide the explanation when required may be a material error in procedure pursuant to s. 120.56(1)(c). When a workshop or public hearing is held, the agency must ensure that the persons responsible for preparing the proposed rule are available to explain the agency's proposal and to respond to questions or comments regarding the rule being developed. The workshop may be facilitated or mediated by a neutral third person, or the agency may employ other types of dispute resolution alternatives for the workshop that are appropriate for rule development. Notice of a rule development workshop shall be by publication in the Florida Administrative Register not less than 14 days prior to the date on which the workshop is scheduled to be held and shall indicate the subject area which will be addressed; the agency contact person; and the place, date, and time of the workshop.

(d)1. An agency may use negotiated rulemaking in developing and adopting rules. The agency should consider the use of negotiated rulemaking when complex rules are being drafted or strong opposition to the rules is anticipated. The agency should consider, but is not limited to considering, whether a balanced committee of interested persons who will negotiate in good faith can be assembled, whether the agency is willing to support the work of the negotiating committee, and whether the agency can use the group consensus as the basis for its proposed rule. Negotiated rulemaking uses a committee of designated representatives to draft a mutually acceptable proposed rule.

2. An agency that chooses to use the negotiated rulemaking process described in this paragraph shall publish in the Florida Administrative Register a notice of negotiated rulemaking that includes a listing of the representative groups that will be invited to participate in the negotiated rulemaking process. Any

person who believes that his or her interest is not adequately represented may apply to participate within 30 days after publication of the notice. All meetings of the negotiating committee shall be noticed and open to the public pursuant to the provisions of this chapter. The negotiating committee shall be chaired by a neutral facilitator or mediator.

3. The agency's decision to use negotiated rulemaking, its selection of the representative groups, and approval or denial of an application to participate in the negotiated rulemaking process are not agency action. Nothing in this subparagraph is intended to affect the rights of an affected person to challenge a proposed rule developed under this paragraph in accordance with s. 120.56(2).

(3) ADOPTION PROCEDURES.—

(a) *Notices.*—

1. Prior to the adoption, amendment, or repeal of any rule other than an emergency rule, an agency, upon approval of the agency head, shall give notice of its intended action, setting forth a short, plain explanation of the purpose and effect of the proposed action; the full text of the proposed rule or amendment and a summary thereof; a reference to the grant of rulemaking authority pursuant to which the rule is adopted; and a reference to the section or subsection of the Florida Statutes or the Laws of Florida being implemented or interpreted. The notice must include a summary of the agency's statement of the estimated regulatory costs, if one has been prepared, based on the factors set forth in s. 120.541(2); a statement that any person who wishes to provide the agency with information regarding the statement of estimated regulatory costs, or to provide a proposal for a lower cost regulatory alternative as provided by s. 120.541(1), must do so in writing within 21 days after publication of the notice; and a statement as to whether, based on the statement of the estimated regulatory costs or other information expressly relied upon and described by the agency if no statement of regulatory costs is required, the proposed rule is expected to require legislative ratification pursuant to s. 120.541(3). The notice must state the procedure for requesting a public hearing on the proposed rule. Except when the intended action is the repeal of a rule, the notice must include a reference both to the date on which and to the place where the notice of rule development that is required by subsection (2) appeared.

2. The notice shall be published in the Florida Administrative Register not less than 28 days prior to the intended action. The proposed rule shall be available for inspection and copying by the public at the time of the publication of notice.

3. The notice shall be mailed to all persons named in the proposed rule and to all persons who, at least 14 days prior to such mailing, have made requests of the agency for advance notice of its proceedings. The agency shall also give such notice as is prescribed by rule to those particular classes of persons to whom the intended action is directed.

4. The adopting agency shall file with the committee, at least 21 days prior to the proposed adoption date, a copy of each rule it proposes to adopt; a copy of any material incorporated by reference in the rule; a detailed written statement of the facts and circumstances justifying the proposed rule; a copy of any statement of estimated regulatory costs that has been prepared pursuant to s. 120.541; a statement of the extent to which the proposed rule relates to federal standards or rules on the same subject; and the notice required by subparagraph 1.

(b) *Special matters to be considered in rule adoption.*—

1. Statement of estimated regulatory costs.—Before the adoption, amendment, or repeal of any rule other than an emergency rule, an agency is encouraged to prepare a statement of estimated regulatory costs of the proposed rule, as provided by s. 120.541. However, an agency must prepare a statement of

estimated regulatory costs of the proposed rule, as provided by s. 120.541, if:

- a. The proposed rule will have an adverse impact on small business; or
- b. The proposed rule is likely to directly or indirectly increase regulatory costs in excess of \$200,000 in the aggregate in this state within 1 year after the implementation of the rule.

2. Small businesses, small counties, and small cities.—

a. Each agency, before the adoption, amendment, or repeal of a rule, shall consider the impact of the rule on small businesses as defined by s. 288.703 and the impact of the rule on small counties or small cities as defined by s. 120.52. Whenever practicable, an agency shall tier its rules to reduce disproportionate impacts on small businesses, small counties, or small cities to avoid regulating small businesses, small counties, or small cities that do not contribute significantly to the problem the rule is designed to address. An agency may define “small business” to include businesses employing more than 200 persons, may define “small county” to include those with populations of more than 75,000, and may define “small city” to include those with populations of more than 10,000, if it finds that such a definition is necessary to adapt a rule to the needs and problems of small businesses, small counties, or small cities. The agency shall consider each of the following methods for reducing the impact of the proposed rule on small businesses, small counties, and small cities, or any combination of these entities:

- (I) Establishing less stringent compliance or reporting requirements in the rule.
- (II) Establishing less stringent schedules or deadlines in the rule for compliance or reporting requirements.
- (III) Consolidating or simplifying the rule’s compliance or reporting requirements.
- (IV) Establishing performance standards or best management practices to replace design or operational standards in the rule.
- (V) Exempting small businesses, small counties, or small cities from any or all requirements of the rule.

b.(I) If the agency determines that the proposed action will affect small businesses as defined by the agency as provided in sub-subparagraph a., the agency shall send written notice of the rule to the rules ombudsman in the Executive Office of the Governor at least 28 days before the intended action.

(II) Each agency shall adopt those regulatory alternatives offered by the rules ombudsman in the Executive Office of the Governor and provided to the agency no later than 21 days after the rules ombudsman’s receipt of the written notice of the rule which it finds are feasible and consistent with the stated objectives of the proposed rule and which would reduce the impact on small businesses. When regulatory alternatives are offered by the rules ombudsman in the Executive Office of the Governor, the 90-day period for filing the rule in subparagraph (e)2. is extended for a period of 21 days.

(III) If an agency does not adopt all alternatives offered pursuant to this sub-subparagraph, it shall, before rule adoption or amendment and pursuant to subparagraph (d)1., file a detailed written statement with the committee explaining the reasons for failure to adopt such alternatives. Within 3 working days after the filing of such notice, the agency shall send a copy of such notice to the rules ombudsman in the Executive Office of the Governor.

(c) *Hearings.*—

1. If the intended action concerns any rule other than one relating exclusively to procedure or practice, the agency shall, on the request of any affected person received within 21 days after the date of publication of the notice of intended agency action, give affected persons an opportunity to present evidence and argument on all issues under consideration. The agency may schedule a public hearing on the rule and, if requested by any affected person, shall schedule a public hearing on the rule. When a

public hearing is held, the agency must ensure that staff are available to explain the agency's proposal and to respond to questions or comments regarding the rule. If the agency head is a board or other collegial body created under s. 20.165(4) or s. 20.43(3)(g), and one or more requested public hearings is scheduled, the board or other collegial body shall conduct at least one of the public hearings itself and may not delegate this responsibility without the consent of those persons requesting the public hearing. Any material pertinent to the issues under consideration submitted to the agency within 21 days after the date of publication of the notice or submitted to the agency between the date of publication of the notice and the end of the final public hearing shall be considered by the agency and made a part of the record of the rulemaking proceeding.

2. Rulemaking proceedings shall be governed solely by the provisions of this section unless a person timely asserts that the person's substantial interests will be affected in the proceeding and affirmatively demonstrates to the agency that the proceeding does not provide adequate opportunity to protect those interests. If the agency determines that the rulemaking proceeding is not adequate to protect the person's interests, it shall suspend the rulemaking proceeding and convene a separate proceeding under the provisions of ss. 120.569 and 120.57. Similarly situated persons may be requested to join and participate in the separate proceeding. Upon conclusion of the separate proceeding, the rulemaking proceeding shall be resumed.

(d) *Modification or withdrawal of proposed rules.—*

1. After the final public hearing on the proposed rule, or after the time for requesting a hearing has expired, if the rule has not been changed from the rule as previously filed with the committee, or contains only technical changes, the adopting agency shall file a notice to that effect with the committee at least 7 days prior to filing the rule for adoption. Any change, other than a technical change that does not affect the substance of the rule, must be supported by the record of public hearings held on the rule, must be in response to written material submitted to the agency within 21 days after the date of publication of the notice of intended agency action or submitted to the agency between the date of publication of the notice and the end of the final public hearing, or must be in response to a proposed objection by the committee. In addition, when any change is made in a proposed rule, other than a technical change, the adopting agency shall provide a copy of a notice of change by certified mail or actual delivery to any person who requests it in writing no later than 21 days after the notice required in paragraph (a). The agency shall file the notice of change with the committee, along with the reasons for the change, and provide the notice of change to persons requesting it, at least 21 days prior to filing the rule for adoption. The notice of change shall be published in the Florida Administrative Register at least 21 days prior to filing the rule for adoption. This subparagraph does not apply to emergency rules adopted pursuant to subsection (4).

2. After the notice required by paragraph (a) and prior to adoption, the agency may withdraw the rule in whole or in part.

3. After adoption and before the rule becomes effective, a rule may be modified or withdrawn only in the following circumstances:

- a. When the committee objects to the rule;
- b. When a final order, which is not subject to further appeal, is entered in a rule challenge brought pursuant to s. 120.56 after the date of adoption but before the rule becomes effective pursuant to subparagraph (e)6.;
- c. If the rule requires ratification, when more than 90 days have passed since the rule was filed for adoption without the Legislature ratifying the rule, in which case the rule may be withdrawn but may

not be modified; or

d. When the committee notifies the agency that an objection to the rule is being considered, in which case the rule may be modified to extend the effective date by not more than 60 days.

4. The agency shall give notice of its decision to withdraw or modify a rule in the first available issue of the publication in which the original notice of rulemaking was published, shall notify those persons described in subparagraph (a)3. in accordance with the requirements of that subparagraph, and shall notify the Department of State if the rule is required to be filed with the Department of State.

5. After a rule has become effective, it may be repealed or amended only through the rulemaking procedures specified in this chapter.

(e) *Filing for final adoption; effective date.*—

1. If the adopting agency is required to publish its rules in the Florida Administrative Code, the agency, upon approval of the agency head, shall file with the Department of State three certified copies of the rule it proposes to adopt; one copy of any material incorporated by reference in the rule, certified by the agency; a summary of the rule; a summary of any hearings held on the rule; and a detailed written statement of the facts and circumstances justifying the rule. Agencies not required to publish their rules in the Florida Administrative Code shall file one certified copy of the proposed rule, and the other material required by this subparagraph, in the office of the agency head, and such rules shall be open to the public.

2. A rule may not be filed for adoption less than 28 days or more than 90 days after the notice required by paragraph (a), until 21 days after the notice of change required by paragraph (d), until 14 days after the final public hearing, until 21 days after a statement of estimated regulatory costs required under s. 120.541 has been provided to all persons who submitted a lower cost regulatory alternative and made available to the public, or until the administrative law judge has rendered a decision under s. 120.56(2), whichever applies. When a required notice of change is published prior to the expiration of the time to file the rule for adoption, the period during which a rule must be filed for adoption is extended to 45 days after the date of publication. If notice of a public hearing is published prior to the expiration of the time to file the rule for adoption, the period during which a rule must be filed for adoption is extended to 45 days after adjournment of the final hearing on the rule, 21 days after receipt of all material authorized to be submitted at the hearing, or 21 days after receipt of the transcript, if one is made, whichever is latest. The term “public hearing” includes any public meeting held by any agency at which the rule is considered. If a petition for an administrative determination under s. 120.56(2) is filed, the period during which a rule must be filed for adoption is extended to 60 days after the administrative law judge files the final order with the clerk or until 60 days after subsequent judicial review is complete.

3. At the time a rule is filed, the agency shall certify that the time limitations prescribed by this paragraph have been complied with, that all statutory rulemaking requirements have been met, and that there is no administrative determination pending on the rule.

4. At the time a rule is filed, the committee shall certify whether the agency has responded in writing to all material and timely written comments or written inquiries made on behalf of the committee. The department shall reject any rule that is not filed within the prescribed time limits; that does not comply with all statutory rulemaking requirements and rules of the department; upon which an agency has not responded in writing to all material and timely written inquiries or written comments; upon which an administrative determination is pending; or which does not include a statement of estimated regulatory costs, if required.

5. If a rule has not been adopted within the time limits imposed by this paragraph or has not been adopted in compliance with all statutory rulemaking requirements, the agency proposing the rule shall withdraw the rule and give notice of its action in the next available issue of the Florida Administrative Register.

6. The proposed rule shall be adopted on being filed with the Department of State and become effective 20 days after being filed, on a later date specified in the notice required by subparagraph (a) 1., on a date required by statute, or upon ratification by the Legislature pursuant to s. 120.541(3). Rules not required to be filed with the Department of State shall become effective when adopted by the agency head, on a later date specified by rule or statute, or upon ratification by the Legislature pursuant to s. 120.541(3). If the committee notifies an agency that an objection to a rule is being considered, the agency may postpone the adoption of the rule to accommodate review of the rule by the committee. When an agency postpones adoption of a rule to accommodate review by the committee, the 90-day period for filing the rule is tolled until the committee notifies the agency that it has completed its review of the rule.

For the purposes of this paragraph, the term "administrative determination" does not include subsequent judicial review.

(4) EMERGENCY RULES.—

(a) If an agency finds that an immediate danger to the public health, safety, or welfare requires emergency action, the agency may adopt any rule necessitated by the immediate danger. The agency may adopt a rule by any procedure which is fair under the circumstances if:

1. The procedure provides at least the procedural protection given by other statutes, the State Constitution, or the United States Constitution.

2. The agency takes only that action necessary to protect the public interest under the emergency procedure.

3. The agency publishes in writing at the time of, or prior to, its action the specific facts and reasons for finding an immediate danger to the public health, safety, or welfare and its reasons for concluding that the procedure used is fair under the circumstances. In any event, notice of emergency rules, other than those of educational units or units of government with jurisdiction in only one or a part of one county, including the full text of the rules, shall be published in the first available issue of the Florida Administrative Register and provided to the committee along with any material incorporated by reference in the rules. The agency's findings of immediate danger, necessity, and procedural fairness shall be judicially reviewable.

(b) Rules pertaining to the public health, safety, or welfare shall include rules pertaining to perishable agricultural commodities or rules pertaining to the interpretation and implementation of the requirements of chapters 97-102 and chapter 105 of the Election Code.

(c) An emergency rule adopted under this subsection shall not be effective for a period longer than 90 days and shall not be renewable, except when the agency has initiated rulemaking to adopt rules addressing the subject of the emergency rule and either:

1. A challenge to the proposed rules has been filed and remains pending; or

2. The proposed rules are awaiting ratification by the Legislature pursuant to s. 120.541(3).

Nothing in this paragraph prohibits the agency from adopting a rule or rules identical to the emergency rule through the rulemaking procedures specified in subsection (3).

(d) Subject to applicable constitutional and statutory provisions, an emergency rule becomes

effective immediately on filing, or on a date less than 20 days thereafter if specified in the rule, if the adopting agency finds that such effective date is necessary because of immediate danger to the public health, safety, or welfare.

**(5) UNIFORM RULES.—**

(a)1. By July 1, 1997, the Administration Commission shall adopt one or more sets of uniform rules of procedure which shall be reviewed by the committee and filed with the Department of State. Agencies must comply with the uniform rules by July 1, 1998. The uniform rules shall establish procedures that comply with the requirements of this chapter. On filing with the department, the uniform rules shall be the rules of procedure for each agency subject to this chapter unless the Administration Commission grants an exception to the agency under this subsection.

2. An agency may seek exceptions to the uniform rules of procedure by filing a petition with the Administration Commission. The Administration Commission shall approve exceptions to the extent necessary to implement other statutes, to the extent necessary to conform to any requirement imposed as a condition precedent to receipt of federal funds or to permit persons in this state to receive tax benefits under federal law, or as required for the most efficient operation of the agency as determined by the Administration Commission. The reasons for the exceptions shall be published in the Florida Administrative Register.

3. Agency rules that provide exceptions to the uniform rules shall not be filed with the department unless the Administration Commission has approved the exceptions. Each agency that adopts rules that provide exceptions to the uniform rules shall publish a separate chapter in the Florida Administrative Code that delineates clearly the provisions of the agency's rules that provide exceptions to the uniform rules and specifies each alternative chosen from among those authorized by the uniform rules. Each chapter shall be organized in the same manner as the uniform rules.

(b) The uniform rules of procedure adopted by the commission pursuant to this subsection shall include, but are not limited to:

1. Uniform rules for the scheduling of public meetings, hearings, and workshops.

2. Uniform rules for use by each state agency that provide procedures for conducting public meetings, hearings, and workshops, and for taking evidence, testimony, and argument at such public meetings, hearings, and workshops, in person and by means of communications media technology. The rules shall provide that all evidence, testimony, and argument presented shall be afforded equal consideration, regardless of the method of communication. If a public meeting, hearing, or workshop is to be conducted by means of communications media technology, or if attendance may be provided by such means, the notice shall so state. The notice for public meetings, hearings, and workshops utilizing communications media technology shall state how persons interested in attending may do so and shall name locations, if any, where communications media technology facilities will be available. Nothing in this paragraph shall be construed to diminish the right to inspect public records under chapter 119. Limiting points of access to public meetings, hearings, and workshops subject to the provisions of s. 286.011 to places not normally open to the public shall be presumed to violate the right of access of the public, and any official action taken under such circumstances is void and of no effect. Other laws relating to public meetings, hearings, and workshops, including penal and remedial provisions, shall apply to public meetings, hearings, and workshops conducted by means of communications media technology, and shall be liberally construed in their application to such public meetings, hearings, and workshops. As used in this subparagraph, "communications media technology" means the electronic transmission of printed matter, audio, full-motion video, freeze-frame video, compressed video, and

digital video by any method available.

3. Uniform rules of procedure for the filing of notice of protests and formal written protests. The Administration Commission may prescribe the form and substantive provisions of a required bond.

4. Uniform rules of procedure for the filing of petitions for administrative hearings pursuant to s. 120.569 or s. 120.57. Such rules shall require the petition to include:

- a. The identification of the petitioner, including the petitioner's e-mail address, if any, for the transmittal of subsequent documents by electronic means.
- b. A statement of when and how the petitioner received notice of the agency's action or proposed action.
- c. An explanation of how the petitioner's substantial interests are or will be affected by the action or proposed action.
- d. A statement of all material facts disputed by the petitioner or a statement that there are no disputed facts.
- e. A statement of the ultimate facts alleged, including a statement of the specific facts the petitioner contends warrant reversal or modification of the agency's proposed action.
- f. A statement of the specific rules or statutes that the petitioner contends require reversal or modification of the agency's proposed action, including an explanation of how the alleged facts relate to the specific rules or statutes.
- g. A statement of the relief sought by the petitioner, stating precisely the action petitioner wishes the agency to take with respect to the proposed action.

5. Uniform rules for the filing of request for administrative hearing by a respondent in agency enforcement and disciplinary actions. Such rules shall require a request to include:

- a. The name, address, e-mail address, and telephone number of the party making the request and the name, address, and telephone number of the party's counsel or qualified representative upon whom service of pleadings and other papers shall be made;
- b. A statement that the respondent is requesting an administrative hearing and disputes the material facts alleged by the petitioner, in which case the respondent shall identify those material facts that are in dispute, or that the respondent is requesting an administrative hearing and does not dispute the material facts alleged by the petitioner; and
- c. A reference by file number to the administrative complaint that the party has received from the agency and the date on which the agency pleading was received.

The agency may provide an election-of-rights form for the respondent's use in requesting a hearing, so long as any form provided by the agency calls for the information in sub-subparagraphs a. through c. and does not impose any additional requirements on a respondent in order to request a hearing, unless such requirements are specifically authorized by law.

6. Uniform rules of procedure for the filing and prompt disposition of petitions for declaratory statements. The rules shall also describe the contents of the notices that must be published in the Florida Administrative Register under s. 120.565, including any applicable time limit for the filing of petitions to intervene or petitions for administrative hearing by persons whose substantial interests may be affected.

7. Provision of a method by which each agency head shall provide a description of the agency's organization and general course of its operations. The rules shall require that the statement concerning the agency's organization and operations be published on the agency's website.



8. Uniform rules establishing procedures for granting or denying petitions for variances and waivers pursuant to s. 120.542.

(6) **ADOPTION OF FEDERAL STANDARDS.**—Notwithstanding any contrary provision of this section, in the pursuance of state implementation, operation, or enforcement of federal programs, an agency is empowered to adopt rules substantively identical to regulations adopted pursuant to federal law, in accordance with the following procedures:

(a) The agency shall publish notice of intent to adopt a rule pursuant to this subsection in the Florida Administrative Register at least 21 days prior to filing the rule with the Department of State. The agency shall provide a copy of the notice of intent to adopt a rule to the committee at least 21 days prior to the date of filing with the Department of State. Prior to filing the rule with the Department of State, the agency shall consider any written comments received within 14 days after the date of publication of the notice of intent to adopt a rule. The rule shall be adopted upon filing with the Department of State. Substantive changes from the rules as noticed shall require republishing of notice as required in this subsection.

(b) Any rule adopted pursuant to this subsection shall become effective upon the date designated by the agency in the notice of intent to adopt a rule; however, no such rule shall become effective earlier than the effective date of the substantively identical federal regulation.

(c) Any substantially affected person may, within 14 days after the date of publication of the notice of intent to adopt a rule, file an objection to rulemaking with the agency. The objection shall specify the portions of the proposed rule to which the person objects and the specific reasons for the objection. The agency shall not proceed pursuant to this subsection to adopt those portions of the proposed rule specified in an objection, unless the agency deems the objection to be frivolous, but may proceed pursuant to subsection (3). An objection to a proposed rule, which rule in no material respect differs from the requirements of the federal regulation upon which it is based, is deemed to be frivolous.

(d) Whenever any federal regulation adopted as an agency rule pursuant to this subsection is declared invalid or is withdrawn, revoked, repealed, remanded, or suspended, the agency shall, within 60 days thereafter, publish a notice of repeal of the substantively identical agency rule in the Florida Administrative Register. Such repeal is effective upon publication of the notice. Whenever any federal regulation adopted as an agency rule pursuant to this subsection is substantially amended, the agency may adopt the amended regulation as a rule. If the amended regulation is not adopted as a rule within 180 days after the effective date of the amended regulation, the original rule is deemed repealed and the agency shall publish a notice of repeal of the original agency rule in the next available Florida Administrative Register.

(e) Whenever all or part of any rule proposed for adoption by the agency is substantively identical to a regulation adopted pursuant to federal law, such rule shall be written in a manner so that the rule specifically references the regulation whenever possible.

(7) **PETITION TO INITIATE RULEMAKING.**—

(a) Any person regulated by an agency or having substantial interest in an agency rule may petition an agency to adopt, amend, or repeal a rule or to provide the minimum public information required by this chapter. The petition shall specify the proposed rule and action requested. Not later than 30 calendar days following the date of filing a petition, the agency shall initiate rulemaking proceedings under this chapter, otherwise comply with the requested action, or deny the petition with a written statement of its reasons for the denial.

(b) If the petition filed under this subsection is directed to an unadopted rule, the agency shall, not

later than 30 days following the date of filing a petition, initiate rulemaking, or provide notice in the Florida Administrative Register that the agency will hold a public hearing on the petition within 30 days after publication of the notice. The purpose of the public hearing is to consider the comments of the public directed to the agency rule which has not been adopted by the rulemaking procedures or requirements of this chapter, its scope and application, and to consider whether the public interest is served adequately by the application of the rule on a case-by-case basis, as contrasted with its adoption by the rulemaking procedures or requirements set forth in this chapter.

(c) Within 30 days following the public hearing provided for by paragraph (b), if the agency does not initiate rulemaking or otherwise comply with the requested action, the agency shall publish in the Florida Administrative Register a statement of its reasons for not initiating rulemaking or otherwise complying with the requested action, and of any changes it will make in the scope or application of the unadopted rule. The agency shall file the statement with the committee. The committee shall forward a copy of the statement to the substantive committee with primary oversight jurisdiction of the agency in each house of the Legislature. The committee or the committee with primary oversight jurisdiction may hold a hearing directed to the statement of the agency. The committee holding the hearing may recommend to the Legislature the introduction of legislation making the rule a statutory standard or limiting or otherwise modifying the authority of the agency.

(8) **RULEMAKING RECORD.**—In all rulemaking proceedings the agency shall compile a rulemaking record. The record shall include, if applicable, copies of:

- (a) All notices given for the proposed rule.
- (b) Any statement of estimated regulatory costs for the rule.
- (c) A written summary of hearings on the proposed rule.
- (d) The written comments and responses to written comments as required by this section and s. 120.541.
- (e) All notices and findings made under subsection (4).
- (f) All materials filed by the agency with the committee under subsection (3).
- (g) All materials filed with the Department of State under subsection (3).
- (h) All written inquiries from standing committees of the Legislature concerning the rule.

Each state agency shall retain the record of rulemaking as long as the rule is in effect. When a rule is no longer in effect, the record may be destroyed pursuant to the records-retention schedule developed under s. 257.36(6).

**History.**—s. 1, ch. 74-310; s. 3, ch. 75-191; s. 3, ch. 76-131; ss. 1, 2, ch. 76-276; s. 1, ch. 77-174; s. 13, ch. 77-290; s. 3, ch. 77-453; s. 2, ch. 78-28; s. 2, ch. 78-425; s. 7, ch. 79-3; s. 3, ch. 79-299; s. 69, ch. 79-400; s. 5, ch. 80-391; s. 1, ch. 81-309; s. 2, ch. 83-351; s. 1, ch. 84-173; s. 2, ch. 84-203; s. 7, ch. 85-104; s. 1, ch. 86-30; s. 3, ch. 87-385; s. 36, ch. 90-302; ss. 2, 4, 7, ch. 92-166; s. 63, ch. 93-187; s. 758, ch. 95-147; s. 6, ch. 95-295; s. 10, ch. 96-159; s. 6, ch. 96-320; s. 9, ch. 96-370; s. 3, ch. 97-176; s. 3, ch. 98-200; s. 4, ch. 99-379; s. 9, ch. 2001-75; s. 2, ch. 2003-94; s. 50, ch. 2005-278; s. 3, ch. 2006-82; ss. 5, 6, ch. 2008-104; s. 7, ch. 2008-149; s. 4, ch. 2009-187; ss. 1, 5, ch. 2010-279; HJR 9-A, 2010 Special Session A; s. 49, ch. 2011-142; s. 8, ch. 2011-208; s. 1, ch. 2011-225; s. 2, ch. 2012-27; s. 1, ch. 2012-63; s. 4, ch. 2013-14; s. 13, ch. 2013-15; s. 1, ch. 2015-162.