

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
OF MARYLAND**

**REPORT ON THE SUPPLIER TRAINING AND
EDUCATION PROGRAM**

Prepared for the
Maryland General Assembly

In compliance with Section 7-311 of
the Public Utilities Article,
Annotated Code of Maryland

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INTRODUCTION

On May 9, 2024, Governor Moore signed Senate Bill 1 (“SB1”)¹ which put in place sweeping changes to the residential retail energy choice markets in Maryland. Among the changes is a requirement that the Maryland Public Service Commission (“Commission”) report to the General Assembly on the status of the development of the training and education program required under §7–311 of the Public Utilities Article. The section below describes in detail the Commission’s overall plan.

TRAINING AND EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

Section 1 of 2024’s SB1 requires that by December 31, 2024, the Maryland Public Service Commission develops a training and educational program for any entity or individual that is licensed by the Commission as an electricity supplier, a gas supplier, an energy salesperson, or an energy vendor. SB1 also requires that the Commission develop the program in consultation with interested stakeholders, including electricity suppliers, gas suppliers, energy salespersons, and energy vendors. At the conclusion of the training, the Commission must conduct an examination; and on a satisfactory score, certify that the salesperson, vendor, or designated representative of the supplier, has successfully completed the training. Finally, the Commission must determine the schedule and frequency by which a designated representative must complete the training and certification.

The Commission delegated to its Technical Staff (“Staff”) the authority to implement the initial Training and Education Program (“Program.”) This program consists of materials covering various statutes and regulations applicable to retail energy suppliers, brokers, aggregators, curtailment service providers (“CSPs”), energy vendors, and energy salespeople. Staff designed two training documents. One is a comprehensive legal reference manual and the other training document is an abridged version of the applicable requirements. These training documents will constitute the basis for the training and educational portion of the Program and will be supplied to all persons completing the training program. It is the intention that the

¹ Ch. 537 of the 2024 Laws of Maryland.

Commission will eventually move to a fully digital platform for this training to allow on-demand testing for licensees.

A licensed entity or applicant for licensure must demonstrate mastery of the material by passing an exam given by Staff. Prior to the commencement of the exam, licensees will be given an opportunity to participate in a virtual session to seek clarification of any items presented in the training materials. The exam will consist of 50 questions and will be administered electronically by Staff. Correctly answering at least 90 percent of the exam questions shall constitute a passing score.

To meet the consultation obligations of this statute, the Public Service Commission's Staff conducted outreach with a variety of stakeholders, including the Office of People's Counsel, consumer advocates, utilities and retail suppliers, receiving valuable feedback to inform the training program. The Commission will provide the training and education materials, along with the testing process on its website for commencement after January 1, 2025. Note that beginning January 1, 2025, training and certification must be completed by new applicants prior to the issuance of any new license. Moreover, the Commission will require that beginning January 1, 2025, training and certification be completed prior to the renewal or modification of any existing license. Failure to earn a passing score on the training examination will prevent licensure or re-licensure. As further directed by SB1, re-licensure of entities will occur on a staggered basis over the course of three years. Therefore, entities will be required to complete the training again to fulfill that obligation.

The Education and Training Program conducted by the Public Service Commission will serve as another resource to ensure that retail supply companies, their directors, salespersons, and vendors uphold the laws and regulations that are critical to protecting customers in Maryland. The Commission will continue to revisit this program to account for changes to these laws and regulations.