



**STATE OF RHODE ISLAND**  
DIVISION OF PUBLIC UTILITIES & CARRIERS  
89 Jefferson Boulevard, Warwick, Rhode Island 02888

**REGULATORY  
TOPIC  
OVERVIEW**

## **JURISDICTIONAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE RI DIVISION OF PUBLIC UTILITIES & CARRIERS (January 2024)**

1. Ratepayer Advocate and Indispensable Party in all cases before the Public Utilities Commission (“Commission”)  
39-1-11; See *Providence Gas Co. v. Burke*, 419 A.2d. 263 (1980).
2. Defends all appeals in the R.I. Supreme Court taken from Commission decisions  
See *Narragansett Electric v. Harsch*, 368 A.2d 1194 (1977).
3. Rates  
39-1-1, 39-2-5, 39-3-10, 39-3-13, 39-3-13.1, 39-4-7, 39-4-9, 39-4-11.1, 39-4-17, 39-12-12, 39-14-2.2, 39-14.1-6.
4. Authority to conduct investigations and audits  
39-1-15, 39-1-20, 39-1-21, 39-3-14, 39-3-30, 39-4-1, 39-4-3, 39-4-5, 39-4-7, 39-4-10, 39-4-11, 39-4-13, 39-4-14.
5. Authority to Promulgate Rules and Regulations for the Regulation of Public Utilities  
39-3-33, 39-12-4, 39-13-2, 39-14-2, 39-14.1-2, 39-14.2-3.
6. Exclusive Authority to grant operating certificates  
39-3-1, 39-3-3, 39-12-6, 39-13-3, 39-14-3, 39-14.1-3, 39-14.2-5.
7. Regulatory Compliance Enforcement Authority  
39-1.2-13, 39-1.2-13.1, 39-2-8, 39-2-11, 39-3-21, 39-3-31, 39-4-22, 39-4-23, 39-4-24, 39-12-36, 39-14-11, 39-14.1-9, 39-14.2-22, 39-19-8.1.
8. Subpoena Powers  
39-1-13, 39-1-15, 39-1-16.
9. Police Powers  
39-1-15.1, 39-1-15.2.
10. Broad and Incidental Powers  
39-1-38, 39-4-23.
11. Exclusive Authority over Non-Regulated Power Producers  
39-1-27.1.
12. Exclusive Authority to Represent the State on all Utility matters before Federal Agencies  
39-1-29.
13. Exclusive Authority over the Storage, Transportation and Distribution of Natural Gas  
39-1-40, 39-2-18.

14. Authority over Railroads  
39-4-18, 39-6-18, 39-6-23, 39-6-27, 39-6-30, 39-7-1, et. seq.
15. Exclusive Authority over Carriers of Property (household goods movers, towing, dry freight, bulk commodities, etc.)  
39-12-1, et seq., 39-12.1, et seq.
16. Exclusive Authority over Jitneys  
39-13-1, et seq.
17. Exclusive Authority over Public Motor Vehicles  
39-14.1, et seq.
18. Exclusive Authority over Transportation Network Company Services (Uber and Lyft)  
39-14.2, et seq.
19. Authority over Water Carriers (ferries, water taxis, launches, tour boats)  
39-3-3, 39-3-3.1, 39-3-4.
20. Exclusive Authority over Taxicabs  
39-14-1, et seq.
21. Authority to Require Public Utilities to Furnish Safe, Reasonable, and Adequate Services and Facilities  
39-4-10, 39-4-13
22. Exclusive Authority over Excavations Near Underground Utility Facilities (DigSafe)  
39-1.2, et seq.
23. Authority over Infrastructure, Safety and Reliability of Electric Distribution Companies  
39-1-27.7.1, 39-2-25.
24. Authority over Electric and Gas Utility Emergency Response Plans  
39-2-26, 39-2-27, 39-2-28.
25. Authority over R.I. Telecommunications Education Access Fund  
39-1-61.
26. Authority to Fix Standards for Service  
39-3-8, 39-3-9.
27. Authority to Prescribe a System of Forms and Accounts  
39-3-14.
28. Exclusive Authority to Approve Bond Issues, Loans and “Other Evidences of Indebtedness”  
39-3-15, 39-3-16, 39-3-17, 39-3-18, 39-3-19, 39-3-22.
29. Exclusive Authority to Approve Transactions between Public Utilities  
39-3-24, 39-3-25.
30. Exclusive Authority to Approve Transactions between Public Utilities and Affiliates  
39-3-27, 39-3-28, 39-3-29, 39-3-30, 39-3-31, 39-3-32.
31. Exclusive Authority over Cable Television Licensing and Public Access  
39-19-1, et seq.

32. Authority over Public Utilities' Customer Terminations and Collections Practices  
39-1.1-2, 39-1.1-3, 39-2-1.
33. Liaison to the Ratepayers Advisory Board  
39-1-37.1, et seq.
34. Exclusive Authority over the Emergency Restoration Plans of Electric and Natural Gas Distribution Companies  
39-2-26, 39-2-27, 39-2-28.
35. Authority to require Information on Utility Bills  
39-3-37, 39-3-37.1, 39-3-37.2, 39-3-37.3.
36. Authority Regarding Water Quality  
39-4-3, 39-4-4, 39-4-5, 39-4-10, 39-4-11, 39-4-13.
37. Authority to Review/Approve Water Projects Seeking Funding Under The Water Facilities Assistance Program  
46-15.2-4, 46-15.2-5, 46-15.2-6.
38. Authority to Comment on Water Supply Management Plans  
46-15.3-7.6, 46-15.3-19.
39. Authority to Enforce Compliance with Water Supply Management Plans Requirements  
46-15.3-20.
40. Authority to Comment on Clean Water Infrastructure Plans  
46-15.6-5.
41. Authority over Town Public Utility Franchises  
39-17-7.
42. Authority to assist the Energy Facilities Sitting Board in its sitting of Major Energy Facilities  
42-98-9(d).
43. Authority to Participate in an Energy Facility Planning Process to Undertake Evaluations and Projections of Long-and Short-Term Energy Needs, and any Other Matters that are Necessary to Establish the State Energy Plans, Goals and Policies.  
42-98-2(5).