



Ontario  
Energy  
Board | Commission  
de l'énergie  
de l'Ontario

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# **DECISION AND ORDER**

## **EB-2019-0265**

### **BURLINGTON HYDRO INC.**

**Application for Electricity Distribution Licence Amendment**

**BY DELEGATION, BEFORE: Brian Hewson**

Vice President,  
Consumer Protection & Industry Performance

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**February 11, 2020**

## DECISION AND ORDER

Burlington Hydro Inc. (BHI) applied on October 25, 2019, under section 74 of the *Ontario Energy Board Act, 1998* (OEB Act) for an amendment to its Electricity Distribution Licence ED-2003-0004. The amendment would provide a temporary exemption from section 2.6.3 of the Distribution System Code (DSC) and section 2.6.2 (d) of the Standard Supply Service Code (SSSC) for the period March 1, 2020 to August 31, 2020. Both of these sections are amendments to the respective codes which do not come into force until March 1, 2020, as per the Ontario Energy Board's (OEB) March 14, 2019 notice of amendments to the DSC, the SSSC, and the Unit Sub-Metering Code (USMC) (together, Codes) and Gas Distribution Access Rule (GDAR).<sup>1</sup>

BHI stated the rationale for the exemption is that it is in the process of implementing a new Customer Information System (CIS), which will meet all the requirements of the amended customer service rules, with an estimated in-service date in Q3 of 2020. BHI submitted that in its view it is not possible to economically implement the changes required by the amendments to section 2.6.3 of the DSC and new section 2.6.2(d) of the SSSC, as doing so would require significant labour resources and costly and invasive programing and testing to BHI's current CIS, which is now 24 years old and soon to be replaced. Implementing the changes required by 2.6.3 of the DSC and 2.6.2(d) of the SSSC would require the diversion of resources from the implementation of its new CIS. BHI also stated that there was no acceptable way to implement manual processes that would comply with the two specific requirements until the new CIS was operational.

Specifically with regard to the amendments to section 2.6.3 of the DSC, which will require a distributor to change the current minimum payment period of 16 calendar days to 20 calendar days, BHI stated it would need to reconfigure the integrated set of rules and assumptions in its existing CIS that would impact a number of downstream automated processes. Similarly, in respect of the 2.6.2(d) of the SSSC, which requires that a distributor provide options other than pre-authorized automatic monthly payments to residential customers requesting equal monthly payment plans, BHI stated that its current CIS does not have the ability to accept any form of payment other than pre-authorized from customers on an equal payment plan.

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<sup>1</sup> EB-2017-0183

This Decision and Order is being issued by the Delegated Authority, without holding a hearing pursuant to section 6(4) of the OEB Act.

The OEB accepts that it would not be prudent for BHI to incur significant costs to customize its existing CIS. The OEB also acknowledges that re-allocation of the resources from the implementation of the new CIS to the extensive programming and testing of the existing CIS, which will soon be replaced, may potentially delay implementation of the new CIS.

The OEB finds that the application for a temporary exemption from sections 2.6.3 of the DSC and 2.6.3 (d) of the SSSC should be granted. During the exemption period, the OEB expects that BHI will take appropriate steps to address customer concerns in relation to the payment timelines, which are the focus of 2.6.3 of the DSC, as part of its customer services.

**IT IS ORDERED THAT:**

1. Burlington Hydro Inc.'s Electricity Distribution Licence ED-2003-0004, specifically Schedule 3 "List of Code Exemptions", is amended to include an exemption from section 2.6.3 of the Distribution System Code. This exemption takes effect on March 1, 2020 and expires on August 31, 2020.
2. Burlington Hydro Inc.'s Electricity Distribution Licence ED-2003-0004, specifically Schedule 3 "List of Code Exemptions", is amended to include an exemption from section 2.6.2 (d) of the Standard Supply Service Code. This exemption takes effect on March 1, 2020 and expires on August 31, 2020.

**DATED** at Toronto, February 11, 2020

**ONTARIO ENERGY BOARD**

*Original Signed By*

Brian Hewson  
Vice President, Consumer Protection & Industry Performance