

980 CMR: ENERGY FACILITIES SITING BOARD

980 CMR 1.00: RULES FOR THE CONDUCT OF ADJUDICATORY PROCEEDINGS

Section

- 1.01: Scope and Construction of Rules
- 1.02: Rules of General Applicability
- 1.03: General Procedures
- 1.04: Institution of an Adjudicatory Proceeding
- 1.05: Intervention
- 1.06: Conduct of Adjudication
- 1.07: Post-hearing
- 1.08: Rendering of Decisions in Adjudicatory Proceedings
- 1.09: Supplemental Procedures
- 1.10: Decommissioning and Site Restoration Plan

1.01: Scope and Construction of Rules

- (1) Scope. 980 CMR 1.00 shall govern the conduct of adjudicatory proceedings before the Energy Facilities Siting Board.
- (2) Application of 980 CMR 1.00. 980 CMR 1.00 shall apply to all adjudications conducted by the Board except when a specific provision of 980 CMR indicates otherwise.
- (3) Effective Date. 980 CMR 1.00 shall take effect on February 27, 2026, and shall apply to proceedings initiated July 1, 2026, and afterwards.
- (4) Definitions. For the purpose of 980 CMR, the following definitions shall apply unless the context or subject matter requires a different interpretation:

Anaerobic Digestion Facility means a facility that:

- (a) generates electricity from a biogas produced by the accelerated biodegradation of organic materials under controlled anaerobic conditions; and
- (b) has been determined by the department of energy resources, in coordination with the department of environmental protection, to qualify under the department of energy resources regulations as a Class I renewable energy generating source under M.G.L. c. 25A, § 11F.

Ancillary Structure means new or expanded equipment or structure which is an integral part of the operation of any CEIF or Facility.

Applicant means a Person who submits to the Board a petition to construct a Facility, an application for a Consolidated Permit for a LCEIF or SCEIF, an application for a Consolidated State Permit for a SCEIF, or a petition for a certificate of environmental impact and public need. An Applicant also means a Person who submits an application for a Consolidated Local Permit to a Local Government pursuant to 225 CMR 29.00: *Small Clean Energy Infrastructure Facility Siting and Permitting*.

Board means the Energy Facilities Siting Board established under M.G.L. c. 164, § 69H.

Board Member means any of the eleven individuals set forth in 980 CMR 2.03(1) or any individual named to serve as a designee under the terms of 980 CMR 2.03(3).

Chair means the Chair of the Energy Facilities Siting Board.

Clean Energy Infrastructure Facility (CEIF) means an LCEGF, LCESF, LCTDIF, SCEGF, SCESF, or SCTDIF. A CEIF is not a Facility as defined in M.G.L. c. 164, § 69G.

Consolidated Permit means a permit issued by the Board for an LCEIF or a SCEIF that includes all municipal, regional, and state permits that the LCEIF or SCEIF would otherwise need to obtain individually, with the exception of certain federal permits that are delegated to specific state agencies as determined by the Board.

Consolidated Local Permit means a permit issued by a Local Government for a SCEIF that includes all required local permits, approvals, or authorizations that the Applicant would otherwise need to obtain individually from the Local Government.

1.01: continued

Consolidated State Permit means a permit issued by the Board for an SCESF or an SCEGF that includes all state permits, approvals, or authorizations that the Applicant would otherwise need to obtain individually from state agencies, authorities, boards, commissions, offices or other entities, with the exception of certain federal permits that are delegated to specific state agencies as determined by the Board.

Constructive Approval means approval, pursuant to 980 CMR 17.00, of an Application for a CEIF where the Board fails to issue a final decision by the deadlines established in M.G.L. c. 164, §§ 69T, 69U, 69V, and 980 CMR 13.00.

Cumulative Impact Analysis Report means a written report as defined in 980 CMR 15.00: *Cumulative Impact Analysis and Standards for Applying Site Suitability Criteria*.

Department means the Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities.

De Novo Adjudication means an adjudicatory proceeding where the Director will consider an application for a Consolidated Local Permit based on evidence submitted in the proceeding that may include but is not limited to the information submitted to the Local Government as part of the application for a proposed SCEIF.

Director means the individual appointed by the Chair of the Department of Public Utilities to direct the work of the siting division and to conduct the day-to-day business of the Board as well as to perform any other duty delegated by the Chair. The Director may issue decisions in *De Novo* Adjudications of local permit applications pursuant to M.G.L. c. 164, § 69W.

Distribution means delivery of electricity as defined in M.G.L. c. 164, § 1.

DOER means the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources.

EFSB Consolidated Permit means a Consolidated Permit or a Consolidated State Permit.

Facility means any "facility" described in M.G.L. c. 164, § 69G including:

- (a) any generating unit designed for or capable of operating at a gross capacity of 25 megawatts or more, including associated buildings, ancillary structures, transmission and pipeline interconnections that are not otherwise facilities, and fuel storage facilities;
- (b) a new electric transmission line having a design rating of 69 kilovolts or more and which is one mile or more in length on a new transmission corridor;
- (c) a new electric transmission line having a design rating of 115 kilovolts or more which is ten miles or more in length on an existing transmission corridor except reconductoring or rebuilding of transmission lines at the same voltage;
- (d) an ancillary structure which is an integral part of the operation of any transmission line which is a facility;
- (e) a unit, including multiple tanks and associated buildings and structures, designed for, or capable of, the manufacture or storage of gas, except such units below a minimum threshold size as established by regulation;
 1. a unit with a total gas storage capacity of less than 25,000 gallons and also with a manufacturing capability of less than 2,000 MMBtu per day;
 2. a unit whose primary purpose is research, development, or demonstration of technology and whose sale of gas, if any, is incidental to that primary purpose; or
 3. a landfill or sewage treatment plant.
- (f) a new pipeline for the transmission of gas having a normal operating pressure in excess of 100 lbs. per square inch gauge, which is greater than one mile in length except restructuring, rebuilding, or relaying of existing pipelines of the same capacity; and
- (g) any new unit, including associated buildings and structures, designed for, or capable of, the refining, the storage of more than 500,000 barrels or the transshipment of oil or refined oil products and any new pipeline for the transportation of oil or refined oil products which is greater than one mile in length except restructuring, rebuilding, or relaying of existing pipelines of the same capacity.

1.01: continued

Gas means an energy source which includes natural gas, propane air, synthetic natural gas, liquefied natural gas, renewable natural gas, and hydrogen.

Generating Facility means any generating unit designed for or capable of operating at a gross capacity of 25 megawatts or more, that is not a LCEGF or SCEGF, including associated buildings, Ancillary Structures, transmission and pipeline interconnections that are not otherwise facilities and fuel storage facilities.

Hand Delivery means delivery by methods other than pre-paid U.S. mail (e.g., Federal Express or paid courier service). Hand Delivery shall not include delivery by electronic mediums such as facsimile or e-mail unless authorized by the Presiding Officer.

Language Access Plan means the Language Access Plan established by the Board pursuant to Executive Order No. 615.

Large Clean Energy Generation Facility (LCEGF) means energy generation infrastructure with a nameplate capacity of not less than 25 megawatts that is an Anaerobic Digestion Facility, Solar Facility or Wind Facility, including any Ancillary Structure that is an integral part of the operation of the LCEGF.

Large Clean Energy Infrastructure Facility (LCEIF) means an LCEGF, LCESF, or LCTDIF.

Large Clean Energy Storage Facility (LCESF) means an energy storage system as defined under M.G.L. c. 164, § 1, with a rated capacity of not less than 100 megawatt hours, including any Ancillary Structure that is an integral part of the operation of the LCESF.

Large Clean Transmission and Distribution Infrastructure Facility (LCTDIF) means electric transmission and distribution infrastructure and related ancillary infrastructure that is:

- (a) a new electric transmission line having a design rating of not less than 69 kilovolts and that is not less than one mile in length on a new transmission corridor, including any Ancillary Structure that is an integral part of the operation of the transmission line;
- (b) a new electric transmission line having a design rating of not less than 115 kilovolts that is not less than ten miles in length on an existing transmission corridor except reconducted or rebuilt transmission lines at the same voltage, including any Ancillary Structure that is an integral part of the operation of the transmission line;
- (c) any other new electric transmission infrastructure requiring zoning exemptions, including standalone transmission substations and upgrades and any Ancillary Structure that is an integral part of the operation of the transmission line; and
- (d) facilities needed to interconnect offshore wind to the grid.

A LCTDIF shall be:

- (e) designed, fully or in part, to directly interconnect or otherwise facilitate the interconnection of a CEIF to the electric grid;
- (f) approved by the regional transmission operator in relation to interconnecting a CEIF;
- (g) proposed to ensure electric grid reliability and stability; or
- (h) designed to help facilitate the electrification of the building and transportation sectors.

A LCTDIF shall not include new transmission and distribution infrastructure that solely interconnects new and existing energy generation powered by fossil fuels on or after January 1, 2026.

Limited Participant means any Person allowed to participate in an adjudicatory proceeding pursuant to M.G.L. c. 30A, § 10, and 980 CMR 1.05(2). A limited participant is not a party.

Local Government means a municipal or regional authority, board, commission, office, or other entity, as defined in M.G.L. c. 25A, § 21, that would have had jurisdiction to issue at least one permit for an LCEIF or SCEIF absent a Consolidated Permit. Local Governments enforce the portions of a Consolidated Permit that relate to subject matter within their jurisdiction as if that portion of the Consolidated Permit had been directly granted by the Local Government.

Local Government Representative means the Chief Administrative Officer of the Local Government, or their designee(s), pursuant to 225 CMR 29.02: *Definitions*.

1.01: continued

Party means an applicant, any Person allowed to intervene in an adjudicatory proceeding pursuant to M.G.L. c. 30A, § 1(3), and 980 CMR 1.05(1), or any Person who intervenes in an adjudicatory proceeding by right.

Person means a natural person, partnership, corporation, association, society, authority, agency, department, or division of the Commonwealth, or any body politic or political subdivision of the Commonwealth including municipal corporations.

Permit means a municipal, regional, or state permit, authorization, determination, license, or approval that would otherwise be individually required to construct and operate a CEIF Project, absent an EFSB Consolidated Permit.

Presiding Officer means Board staff assigned by the Director to conduct adjudicatory proceedings for matters within the jurisdiction of the Board.

Project means the structures, equipment, facilities, and land uses, and the construction and operation thereof, for which an applicant requires an approval, permits, or authorizations of the Board. The specific elements of a Project will be unique in each proceeding.

Small Clean Energy Generation Facility (SCEGF) means energy generation infrastructure with a nameplate capacity of less than 25 megawatts that is an Anaerobic Digestion Facility, Solar Facility or Wind Facility, including any Ancillary Structure that is an integral part of the operation of the SCEGF.

Small Clean Energy Infrastructure Facility (SCEIF) means an SCEGF, SCESF or SCTDIF.

Small Clean Energy Storage Facility (SCESF) means an energy storage system as defined in M.G.L. c. 164, § 1, with a rated capacity of less than 100 megawatt hours, including any Ancillary Structure that is an integral part of the operation of the SCESF.

Small Clean Transmission and Distribution Infrastructure Facility (SCTDIF) means electric transmission and distribution infrastructure and related ancillary infrastructure, including:

- (a) electric transmission line reconductoring or rebuilding projects;
- (b) new or substantially altered electric transmission lines located in an existing transmission corridor that are not more than ten miles long, including any Ancillary Structure that is an integral part of the operation of the transmission line;
- (c) new or substantially altered electric transmission lines located in a new transmission corridor that are not more than one mile long, including any Ancillary Structure that is an integral part of the operation of the transmission line;
- (d) any other electric transmission infrastructure, including standalone transmission substations and upgrades and any Ancillary Structure that is an integral part of the operation of the transmission line and that does not require zoning exemptions; and
- (e) electric distribution-level projects that meet a certain threshold, as determined by the Department of Energy Resources.

A SCTDIF shall be:

- (a) designed, fully or in part, to directly interconnect or otherwise facilitate the interconnection of a CEIF to the electric grid;
- (b) designed to ensure electric grid reliability and stability; or
- (c) designed to help facilitate the electrification of the building and transportation sectors.

A SCTDIF shall not include new transmission and distribution infrastructure facilities that solely interconnect new or existing generation powered by fossil fuels to the electric grid on or after January 1, 2026.

Solar Facility means a ground-mounted facility that uses sunlight to generate electricity. The nameplate capacity for a Solar Facility shall be calculated in direct current.

Wind Facility means an onshore or offshore facility that uses wind to generate electricity.

(5) Adding Facility Type to the Definition of LCEGF. The Board may promulgate regulations to include additional facility types that do not emit greenhouse gases to the definition of a LCEGF. In promulgating the regulations, the Board shall consult with DOER.

1.02: Rules of General Applicability

- (1) Waiver of Rules. Where good cause appears, not contrary to statute, the Board and any Presiding Officer may permit deviation from any rules contained in 980 CMR.
- (2) Severability. If any provision of 980 CMR is held to be invalid, such invalidity shall not affect the provisions or the applications thereof not specifically held invalid.
- (3) Project Segmentation. In determining whether a CEIF or Facility is subject to Board jurisdiction or meets or exceeds any review threshold, the Board will consider the entirety of a CEIF or Facility, including any future expansion that is reasonably likely to occur in the next five years, and not be limited to review of separate phases or segments of a CEIF or Facility. The Board shall consider all circumstances as to whether various work or activities constitute one CEIF or Facility including, but not limited to, whether the work or activities, taken together, comprise a common plan or independent undertakings, regardless of whether there is more than one CEIF or Facility owner; any time interval between the work or activities; and whether the environmental and public health impacts caused by the work or activities are cumulative in nature and collectively would have a Disproportionate Adverse Effect, as defined in 980 CMR 15.00: *Cumulative Impact Analysis and Standards for Applying Site Suitability Criteria*. An Applicant may not segment a CEIF or Facility such that a CEIF or Facility is constructed in phases to evade, defer, or curtail Board review, or restrict the means by which potential environmental and public health impacts from any other phase of a CEIF or Facility may be avoided, minimized or mitigated. The Board will implement the Project Segmentation provision on a case-by-case basis, with due consideration of the integrated nature of the electric grid, and the requirements of federal and regional agencies.

1.03: General Procedures

- (1) Docket. A numbered docket shall be maintained for all adjudicatory proceedings and shall contain all documents filed in a proceeding and other relevant material.
- (2) Filing of Documents with the Board.
 - (a) Filing.
 1. Any document filed with the Board pursuant to 980 CMR 1.00 shall be filed electronically with the Board or the Presiding Officer at the Board. Documents containing confidential, protected, or critical energy infrastructure information must be filed separately consistent with 980 CMR 1.06(5)(f). The Presiding Officer may allow documents to be filed by other means.
 2. A document shall be deemed to be timely filed if received by the Board on or before 5:00 P.M. on the day it is due. A document received after 5:00 P.M. shall be deemed filed on the following business day.
 - (b) Filing Format.
 1. Format Requirements. All documents filed for possible inclusion in the record shall be clear and legible and shall be presented in accordance with the standards established by the Presiding Officer. All documents electronically filed with the Board shall be in a searchable electronic file format.
 2. Form. Every document filed shall contain a title which indicates the nature of the proceeding, the name of the applicant, and the docket number if available. The Presiding Officer shall determine whether hard copies of documents are required. The Board may provide forms to be used for specific purposes by any person or party; in such cases, use of forms provided shall be mandatory.
- (3) Service to Board, Parties and Participants.
 - (a) Service of a document upon the Board or the Presiding Officer shall be in accordance with 980 CMR 1.03(2).
 - (b) Any Person filing documents with the Board or Presiding Officer shall simultaneously serve an electronic copy on all Parties and Limited Participants required to be served in the proceeding using the name(s) and email address(es) stated on the service list issued by the Presiding Officer. The Presiding Officer may require delivery of hard copies of any documents.
 - (c) All documents filed with the Board or the Presiding Officer shall be accompanied by a statement certifying the date and means of service and the persons to whom service was made. Failure to comply with these rules may be grounds for the Board or Presiding Officer to refuse to accept documents for filing.

1.03: continued

(d) Electronic documents shall be deemed served on the date and time the email is received by the Board or Presiding Officer. If the email is received on or before 5:00 P.M., the document is deemed served on that date. If the email is received after 5:00 P.M., the document is deemed served on the next business day. Documents shall be deemed served on the day of Hand Delivery or, if mailed, on the earlier of receipt or three days after mailing. The postmark shall be evidence of the date of mailing.

(4) Signatures. Every document filed pursuant to 980 CMR 1.03(2) or served pursuant to 980 CMR 1.03(3) shall be signed by the Party making such filing or service or by the Party's authorized representative. Electronic signatures shall satisfy this requirement. Such signature shall constitute certification by the signatory or authorized representative that they have read the document, that, to the best of his or her knowledge, every statement contained in the document is true, and that the document is not being filed to delay the proceeding.

(5) Computation of Time. Unless otherwise specifically provided by 980 CMR 1.00 or 2.00 or by other applicable law, computation of any time period referred to in 980 CMR 1.00 or 2.00 shall begin with the first day following the act which initiates the running of the time period. The last day of the time period is included unless it is a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday or any other day on which the office of the Board is closed, in which case the period shall run until the end of the next following business day. When the time period is less than seven days, intervening days when the office of the Board is closed shall be excluded.

(6) Extensions of Time. At the discretion of the Board or the Presiding Officer, for good cause shown, any time limit prescribed or allowed in 980 CMR may be extended. All requests for extensions of time must be made either by oral motion during a hearing or conference or by written motion served upon all parties or as directed by the Presiding Officer. All requests for extensions of time must be made before the expiration of the original time period or before the expiration of any subsequent extension(s) granted. Provisions contained in 980 CMR 1.03(6) shall not apply to any limitation of time prescribed by statute, unless extensions are permitted by the applicable statute.

(7) Ex Parte Communications in Adjudicatory Proceedings.

(a) From the initial filing in an adjudicatory proceeding until the rendering of a final decision, no Party or Limited Participant may communicate *ex parte* with the Presiding Officer, any Board Member or the Board staff involved in the decision process for the adjudicatory proceeding regarding the merits of such adjudicatory proceeding.

(b) Communications concerning scheduling and other procedural matters, as well as the receipt of information available in the public docket file are not prohibited by 980 CMR 1.00.

(c) The director of the Department's Division of Public Participation and staff of the Division of Public Participation shall not participate as adjudicatory staff, nor have any input or substantive communication with adjudicatory or decisional staff, in adjudicatory matters before the Department or Board, nor shall they serve as legal counsel to or otherwise represent any Party before the Department or the Board. The director of the Department's Division of Public Participation may communicate with Parties or Persons seeking to intervene in Board proceedings about procedural matters and such communication shall not be deemed an *ex parte* communication.

(d) If a Party or Limited Participant makes or attempts to make an *ex parte* communication prohibited by 980 CMR 1.03(7)(a), the Board Member, Presiding Officer, or staff member shall advise the Person that the communication is prohibited and shall immediately terminate the prohibited communication.

(e) If a Board Member, Presiding Officer, or staff member violates the *ex parte* rule, they shall, no later than two business days after determining that the communication was prohibited, serve on each Party and place in the docket file associated with the adjudicatory proceeding the following:

1. A written statement including the substance and circumstances surrounding the communication; the identity of each Person who participated in the communication; the time, date, and duration of the communication; and whether, in their opinion, the receipt of the *ex parte* communication disqualifies them from further participation in the adjudicatory proceeding; and

1.03: continued

2. Any written or electronic documentation of the communication. The above documents shall be placed in the docket file associated with the adjudicatory proceeding but shall not be made part of the evidentiary record.
- (f) The Board may, upon the motion of any Party or on its own motion, accept or require the submission of additional evidence of the substance of a communication prohibited by 980 CMR 1.03(7).
- (g) Where a Party or Limited Participant has violated 980 CMR 1.03(7), the Board or Presiding Officer may take such action as is deemed appropriate within the circumstances.

1.04: Institution of an Adjudicatory Proceeding

(1) Commencement of Proceeding.

- (a) Proceedings may be initiated by a petition to construct, a petition for a certificate of environmental impact and public interest, an application for a Consolidated Permit or a *De Novo* Adjudication, a petition for other matters over which the Board has jurisdiction, or the Board's own motion. Commencement of a proceeding does not begin the review time frame that is used to determine the deadline for issuance of a Constructive Approval as described in 980 CMR 13.02(3)(a): *Review Timeframe* or 980 CMR 17.00: *Constructive Approvals*.
- (b) In filing a petition to construct a Facility, a petition for a certificate of environmental impact and public interest, an application for a Consolidated Permit, or an application for a *De Novo* Adjudication, an Applicant shall follow the form required by the Board, as updated from time to time. A petition for a certificate of environmental impact and public interest shall be filed consistent with the requirements in 980 CMR 6.00: *Certification of Environmental Impact and Public Need*. An application for a Consolidated Permit shall be filed consistent with the requirements in 980 CMR 13.00: *Consolidated Permits for Clean Energy Infrastructure Facilities*. A petition for a *De Novo* Adjudication of a Consolidated Local Permit application shall be filed consistent with the requirements in 980 CMR 14.00: *De Novo Adjudications of Consolidated Local Permit Applications*.
- (c) An Applicant filing a petition to construct a Facility or an application for an EFSB Consolidated Permit shall demonstrate compliance with the cumulative impact analysis requirements in 980 CMR 15.00: *Cumulative Impact Analysis and Standards for Applying Site Suitability Criteria*. An Applicant filing a petition to construct a Facility or an application for an EFSB Consolidated Permit shall demonstrate compliance with the pre-filing consultation and community engagement requirements in 980 CMR 16.00: *Pre-filing Consultation and Engagement Requirements*.

(2) Presiding Officer.

- (a) A Presiding Officer shall be assigned by the Director to conduct each adjudicatory proceeding. The Presiding Officer shall have the authority to take all actions necessary to ensure a fair, orderly and efficient proceeding. Such actions may include, but are not limited to: conducting evidentiary and public comment hearings; conducting site visits; ruling on petitions to intervene or to participate in a proceeding; establishing ground rules for a proceeding; holding procedural or other conferences; regulating the course and schedule of the hearing; prescribing the order in which evidence shall be presented; administering oaths and affirmations; examining witnesses and requiring them to produce evidence which will aid in the determination of any question of law or fact at issue; disposing of procedural requests or similar matters; hearing and ruling upon motions; issuing subpoenas; causing depositions to be taken; ruling upon offers of proof and receiving relevant material and probative evidence; fixing the time for filing briefs, motions and other documents in connection with hearing; and excluding any person from a hearing for disrespectful, disorderly, or contumacious language or conduct.
- (b) A Presiding Officer may at any time withdraw from a proceeding if the Presiding Officer deems himself or herself disqualified. Should a Presiding Officer withdraw, another Presiding Officer shall be appointed. Any Party who becomes aware of grounds that may exist for the disqualification of a Presiding Officer shall immediately file an affidavit which clearly sets forth the grounds for the disqualification.

(3) Notice of Adjudication.

- (a) Notice shall be given at the beginning of any adjudicatory proceeding. The Presiding Officer shall give notice or shall require the applicant to give notice of an adjudication.
- (b) A notice shall set forth a summary statement of the matter to be adjudicated. The notice shall state:
 1. the name and address of the applicant;

1.04: continued

2. the address of the Board and the statement that any person desiring further information or wishing to participate in the proceeding may contact the Board; and
 3. the date, time, and address of any scheduled public comment hearing.
- (c) In cases where a proposed CEIF or facility is the subject of the proceeding, notice shall be given by publication in at least two newspapers available in the vicinity of the proposed CEIF or Facility and as otherwise ordered by the Presiding Officer. In cases where a proposed CEIF or Facility is not the subject of the proceeding, notice by publication shall be given as ordered by the Presiding Officer. Notice shall further be given by first class mail or Hand Delivery to any person required by law or regulation to be so notified and to such other persons as the Presiding Officer may direct. Additional notice or publication shall be made, if required by statute or regulation, in the manner prescribed therein. Unless otherwise directed by the Board or Presiding Officer, the applicant is responsible for all costs related to the publication and distribution of notice.
- (d) In cases where a proposed CEIF or Facility is the subject of the proceeding, the notice shall contain a deadline for the filing of petitions to intervene as a party or participate as a limited participant. This deadline shall be no less than 14 days after the public comment hearing.
- (e) In cases where a proposed CEIF or Facility is not the subject of the proceeding, the deadline for the filing of petitions to intervene as a party or participate as a limited participant shall be as ordered by the Presiding Officer.
- (f) The Presiding Officer shall require the Applicant to provide notice by U.S. Mail to all property owners and renters within the following distances from a proposed project:
1. 300 feet from the edge of the right-of-way for linear projects or linear project components such as transmission lines and Gas pipelines;
 2. one-quarter mile from the property line for projects and project components for electrical switching stations, substations, pipeline meter stations, Gas regulators, SCEGF and SCESF; and
 3. one-half mile from the property line for electric Generating Facilities, LCEGF, Gas storage Facilities, LCESF, and Gas compressor stations.
- Property owners and renters shall be determined by using publicly available data sources (such as MassGIS), to notify by first class mail or Hand Delivery any abutter who occupies, but does not own, the subject abutting real property. For Applicants seeking zoning exemptions, property owners shall be determined consistent with M.G.L. c. 40A, § 11. For purposes of satisfying this requirement, such notice shall be mailed (or hand delivered) at least two weeks before the public comment hearing to each known U.S. Mail address within the geographic areas prescribed above, and may be addressed without the occupant's name.
- (g) Notice shall include notice of the availability of the Intervenor Support Grant Program as defined in 220 CMR 34.00: *Intervenor Support Grant Program*.
- (h) The Board shall provide language access services, including translation of documents and interpretation, consistent with its current Language Access Plan. The Board's notice requirements shall be consistent with the current Public Involvement Plan developed by the Board pursuant to Executive Order No. 552.

(4) Repository of Documents. The Presiding Officer may require an applicant to place certain documents in one or more repositories to provide for public access to these documents. The Presiding Officer shall require the repository of documents consistent with the Board's current Language Access Plan. A repository of documents is a public library, public office, applicant's office, or similar location where documents involved in a particular proceeding may be kept and made available to members of the public. If a repository is required, the applicant shall be responsible for placing the documents therein and making adequate arrangements for convenient public access to the documents. The Presiding Officer shall require the Applicant to post documents on its project website, and to ensure that the documents remain posted until the Board issues a final decision in the proceeding.

(5) Public Comment Hearing. When required by statute or otherwise determined appropriate by the Presiding Officer, the Board shall conduct a public comment hearing in one or more of the affected cities or towns in which a CEIF or Facility would be located. The Board shall conduct its public comment hearings in a mode that allows for both in-person and remote participation, where practicable. The Applicant shall be responsible for any costs relating to audio-video, and language interpretation services required to conduct the public comment hearing in such manner. A public comment hearing shall be conducted to afford members of the public an opportunity to comment on that matter. A public comment hearing shall be held as soon as practicable after the commencement of a proceeding. Comments made at a public comment hearing are not deemed to be evidence.

1.05: Intervention

(1) Parties.

(a) Any person who desires to intervene as a party in any proceeding shall file a written petition to intervene as a party. A petition to intervene as a Party shall be deemed to constitute, in the alternative, a petition to participate as a Limited Participant under 980 CMR 1.05(2).

(b) If a petitioner desires to intervene pursuant to M.G.L. c. 30A, § 10, the petition shall state the name and address of the petitioner, the manner in which the petitioner is substantially and specifically affected by the proceeding, the representative capacity, if any, in which the petition is brought, and shall state the contention of the petitioner and the purpose for which intervention is requested.

(c) If ten or more persons desire to intervene pursuant to M.G.L. c. 30A, § 10A, the petition shall state the names and addresses of the petitioners, the representative capacity, if any, in which the petition is brought, and the damage to the environment as defined in M.G.L. c. 214, § 7A that is or might be at issue. Intervention pursuant to M.G.L. c. 30A, § 10A shall be limited to the issue of damage to the environment and the elimination or reduction thereof in order that any decision in such proceeding shall include the disposition of such issue.

(d) Each petitioner under M.G.L. c. 30A, § 10A shall file an affidavit stating the intent to be part of the group and to be represented by its authorized representative.

(e) In accordance with M.G.L. c. 30A, § 10A, an intervenor pursuant to M.G.L. c. 30A, § 10A may introduce evidence, present witnesses and make written or oral argument, excepting that the Presiding Officer may exclude repetitive or irrelevant material.

(f) The Presiding Officer shall rule on the petitions to intervene as a party under M.G.L. c. 30A, §§ 10 and 10A, and may condition any allowance of a petition on such reasonable terms as the Presiding Officer may set or as otherwise required by law.

(g) Persons who are granted leave to intervene as a party must comply with all requirements of 980 CMR 1.00 and with all directives of the Presiding Officer. In addition, parties may be required to respond to discovery by the Presiding Officer and by other parties if allowed by the Presiding Officer after motion.

(h) Generally, the rights of a Person who is granted leave to intervene as a party include the right to present witnesses, the right to cross-examine witnesses, the right to file a brief, the right to file comments on a tentative decision and the appellate status as a party in interest who may be aggrieved by any final decision. In addition, persons who are granted leave to intervene as a party may also be afforded an opportunity to issue discovery and to present oral or written comments regarding a tentative decision under such conditions as the Board may provide.

(i) An individual or entity filing a petition to intervene is not required to be represented by an attorney, with the exception of corporations, which must be represented by an attorney in good standing. For entities appearing without an attorney, a petition to intervene shall include:

1. an affidavit naming a duly authorized representative; and
2. an affidavit by the duly authorized representative accepting the appointment and certifying that they will abide by the procedural rules set forth in 980 CMR and the Presiding Officer's directives.

(2) Limited Participants.

(a) Any Person who desires to participate as a Limited Participant in any proceeding shall make a written request for such status. Every request to participate as a Limited Participant shall describe the manner in which the petitioner is interested and his or her representative capacity, if any, and it shall state the contention of the petitioner and the purpose for which participation is requested.

(b) The Presiding Officer may grant leave to a Person to participate as a Limited Participant and may condition any grant on such reasonable terms as the Presiding Officer may set.

(c) Unless otherwise provided for in 980 CMR 1.00 or directed by the Presiding Officer, a Limited Participant's rights shall be limited to filing a brief and to filing comments on a tentative decision pursuant to 980 CMR 1.08(2). A Limited Participant may be afforded an opportunity to present oral comments regarding a tentative decision under such conditions as the Board may provide.

(d) Limited Participants are not Parties. Therefore, a grant of leave to participate as a Limited Participant in a proceeding, unless so stated, does not confer status as a Party in interest who may be aggrieved by any final decision.

1.05: continued

(3) Additional rules for intervention that may apply in CEIF proceedings are contained in 980 CMR 13.00: *Consolidated Permits for Clean Energy Infrastructure Facilities*.

1.06: Conduct of Adjudication

(1) Procedural Conferences.

(a) The Presiding Officer may schedule a procedural conference, either on his or her own initiative or upon written request by a party.

(b) At a procedural conference the following matters may be considered:

1. the schedule for the proceeding;
2. simplification and limitation of issues; and
3. such other matters as will aid in the efficiency of the proceeding.

(c) Unless the Presiding Officer has approved a stipulation to the contrary, statements made by any Person at a procedural conference shall not be evidence in the proceeding or in any subsequent proceeding.

(2) Evidentiary Record. For every adjudicatory proceeding, there shall be an evidentiary record which shall include testimony as well as exhibits properly entered into evidence. An Applicant shall prepare and update a draft exhibit list identifying all exhibits filed in the proceeding, including a brief description of each exhibit and the date on which it was filed. The Applicant shall prepare a final exhibit list upon request of the Presiding Officer.

(3) Motions.

(a) Any party may request that the Presiding Officer take any action by filing a motion which clearly states the order or action sought and the grounds therefor. Such a motion may either be made during a hearing or timely filed in writing. The Presiding Officer may require any oral motion made to be reduced to writing. A copy of all motions made in writing or reduced to writing shall be served upon all parties in accordance with 980 CMR 1.03(3).

(b) Unless the Presiding Officer directs otherwise, a party may file a written response to a written motion with the Presiding Officer within seven days after such motion is filed. The moving party may then file a written reply within seven days after such response is filed. Additional filings will be permitted at the discretion of the Presiding Officer only.

(c) A party may request a hearing on the motion at the time the motion is filed or with a response or reply filed timely in accordance with 980 CMR 1.06(3)(b). It is within the Presiding Officer's discretion to determine whether a hearing on the motion is necessary.

(d) Motions, except motions seeking intervention, responses to motions and replies to motions may be filed only by parties.

(4) Evidence; Privileges.

(a) All parties shall have the right to introduce both oral and documentary evidence. All witnesses shall testify under an oath or affirmation administered by the Presiding Officer and shall be subject to cross-examination.

(b) Evidence shall be submitted in accordance with the schedule established by the Presiding Officer. Generally, parties will be required to submit documentary evidence, including exhibits and written direct testimony, in advance of evidentiary hearing.

(c) The Presiding Officer shall be guided by, but need not observe, the rules of evidence observed by Massachusetts state courts.

(d) The Board shall observe the rules of privilege recognized by law.

(5) Discovery. Discovery is allowed at the discretion of the Presiding Officer.

(a) Purpose. The purpose of discovery is to facilitate the hearing process by permitting the parties and the Board to gain access to all relevant information in an efficient and timely manner. Discovery is intended to reduce hearing time, narrow the scope of issues, protect the rights of the parties, and ensure that a complete and accurate record is compiled.

(b) Rules Governing Discovery. In exercising their discretion, the Presiding Officer may be guided by the principles and the procedures underlying the Massachusetts Rules of Civil Procedure, Rule 26 *et seq.* Massachusetts Rules of Civil Procedure, Rule 26 *et seq.*, however, shall be instructive, rather than controlling.

1.06: continued

(c) Information Requests. After the commencement of an adjudicatory proceeding, a party may serve written information requests, as permitted by the Presiding Officer, for the purpose of discovering relevant information. A party may serve information requests only during the time specified by the Presiding Officer. The Presiding Officer may, at their discretion, serve written information requests on any party to the proceeding.

(d) Responses to Information Requests. Each information request shall be separately and fully answered under the penalties of perjury by the witness(es) who can testify during hearings regarding the content of the response, unless an objection to the information request with supporting reason is stated in *lieu* of a response. A response shall be served within 14 days of service of the information request, or within such other time as the Presiding Officer may specify. Responses shall be filed in the form specified by the Presiding Officer.

(e) Motions to Compel Discovery. A party may move for an order to compel compliance with its discovery request. Unless otherwise permitted by the Presiding Officer for good cause shown, such motion shall be made no later than seven days after the deadline for responding to the request. If the Presiding Officer finds that a party has failed to comply in a reasonable manner with a legitimate discovery request without good cause, the Presiding Officer may, after issuance of an order compelling discovery, order whatever sanctions are deemed to be appropriate, including, but not limited to, suspending proceedings until the party has complied with the order or other appropriate sanctions listed in the Massachusetts Rules of Civil Procedure, Rule 37. Massachusetts Rules of Civil Procedure, Rule 37, however, shall be instructive, rather than controlling. A party's failure to file a motion to compel discovery in a timely manner, absent a showing of good cause, may result in a waiver of its right to compel the response.

(f) Protective Orders. A request for a protective order shall be made by motion and shall include

1. a redacted version of the document to be filed with the service list; and
2. an unredacted version of the document filed separately with the Presiding Officer.

Upon a request for protective treatment of documents and a showing that a protective order is necessary, the Presiding Officer may make an order to protect any such document(s). The Presiding Officer may be guided by the principles and the procedures underlying the Massachusetts Rules of Civil Procedure, Rule 26 *et seq.* Massachusetts Rules of Civil Procedure, Rule 26 *et seq.*, however, shall be instructive, rather than controlling. Information that is protected by a statute shall automatically be protected from disclosure upon filing of a request.

(g) Authentication. Unless otherwise directed by the Presiding Officer, prepared written testimony and discovery responses shall be authenticated by an affidavit of the witness at the time of filing. The Presiding Officer may allow prepared direct testimony or discovery responses of any witness to be offered as an exhibit and may omit oral presentation of the testimony. Copies of such proposed exhibit shall be served upon all Persons on the service list for the proceeding, at least seven days in advance of the session of the hearing at which such exhibit is to be offered.

(h) Continuing Obligation to Supplement Answers. Each Party has a continuing obligation to supplement its information request responses and record request responses during the course of the proceeding if the Party later receives or generates new material information that also is responsive to the request and shall file a supplemental response containing that information. This obligation continues until the Board issues a final decision in the proceeding.

(i) Incorporation by Reference. Any matter contained in any records, investigations, reports, and documents in the possession of the Board of which a Party or the Board desires to avail itself as evidence in making a decision, shall be offered and made a part of the record in the proceeding. Such records and other documents need not be produced or marked for identification, but may be offered in evidence by specifying the report, document, or other file containing the matter so offered.

(6) Evidentiary Hearings.

(a) Purpose. Evidentiary hearings will be held when required by law or at the discretion of the Presiding Officer in order to allow Board staff and parties to examine witnesses with respect to the content of their pre-filed testimony and any responses to relevant information requests.

1.06: continued

(b) Hearing Schedule. Prior to commencement of evidentiary hearings, the Presiding Officer shall notify all parties and limited participants, and any persons whose petitions to intervene or participate are pending, of the hearing schedule. The hearing schedule shall include the times, dates, place, and nature of the hearings. There may be multiple hearing dates and times during the course of a proceeding. Hearing dates and times may change. It is the responsibility of each party and limited participant to keep abreast of all changes to the hearing schedule.

(c) Rescheduling. The Presiding Officer may grant a request to reschedule a hearing. A request for rescheduling should be made timely and in writing so as not to burden or delay the proceedings.

(d) Location. The Presiding Officer may establish that evidentiary hearings are conducted virtually. Evidentiary hearings conducted in person shall be held at the Boston offices of the Board, unless a different location is designated by the Board or the Presiding Officer or a different location is required by statute.

(e) Public Access. All evidentiary hearings of the Board shall be open to the public and the press to the extent required by law.

(f) Off the Record Discussions. The Presiding Officer may go off the transcribed record during the course of any hearing for consultation among the parties if the Presiding Officer deems that such consultation would facilitate the conduct of the hearing. In the absence of a stipulation to the contrary, statements made by any Person during such consultation shall not be considered as evidence in the proceeding or any subsequent proceeding.

(g) Record Requests. During the course of evidentiary hearings, the Presiding Officer or parties may ask witnesses to provide documents or written responses to questions asked at the hearing. Responses to record requests are written substitutes to oral answers where fault of memory, complexity of subject or lack of immediate access to documentation precludes a responsive answer by the witness in the hearing. Upon proper filing, responses to record requests become part of the record and the evidence, unless challenged as unresponsive and expunged in whole or part. Record requests shall not be used as a substitute for discovery. The ordinary time for response will be seven calendar days following the day on which the request is made. Objections to record requests shall be made at the time the request is made, and in no event later than the end of the next business day. Objections to the response given to a record request shall be made within seven days unless otherwise allowed by the Presiding Officer.

(h) Transcript.

1. The Presiding Officer shall arrange for the hearing to be reported by a court reporter. The transcript shall be included in the evidentiary record of the proceeding. The Board will post a copy of the hearing transcript on its website as soon as practicable after the hearing. The Presiding Officer has discretion to order expedited preparation of transcripts as the needs of the case may warrant.

2. Any objections regarding the accuracy of the transcripts shall be brought to the attention of the Presiding Officer. Objections not raised within 30 days after the transcript is made available to the Parties shall be deemed to be waived. If the accuracy of the reporting of witness testimony is in question, the Presiding Officer may require an affidavit of the witness who gave such testimony or may require further inquiry. The cost of the transcript preparation shall be the responsibility of the Applicant, unless otherwise assumed by the Board. The cost of copies of the transcript shall be the responsibility of the Person requesting the copies..

(7) Matters for Official Notice.

(a) Official notice may be taken in such matters as might be judicially noticed by the courts of the United States or of Massachusetts. The Presiding Officer also may take notice of general, technical, or scientific facts within the Board's specialized knowledge, provided that parties are afforded an opportunity to contest the matters of which official notice is to be taken.

(b) Official notice also may be taken of any facts found in any other Board proceeding. In all circumstances where such notice is taken, the parties shall be afforded an opportunity to contest the matter of which official notice is to be taken.

(c) Any party requesting that any fact be officially noticed must supply every party with a copy of the fact they are requesting to be noticed.

980 CMR: ENERGY FACILITIES SITING BOARD

1.07: Post-hearing

- (1) Briefs. The Presiding Officer may set a schedule for the filing of briefs to be submitted by parties and limited participants. The purpose of briefs is to allow parties and limited participants to provide written argument based on the evidence properly entered into the record. Briefs also may be used to address specific briefing questions posed by the Presiding Officer. Briefs may not be used to submit new evidence.
- (2) Oral Arguments. Oral argument at the close of a hearing may, upon motion, be allowed at the discretion of the Presiding Officer.
- (3) Other Post Hearing Filings. No post-hearing filings other than those allowed for in 980 CMR 1.07(1) may be made without the permission of the Presiding Officer.

1.08: Rendering of Decisions in Adjudicatory Proceedings

- (1) Form of Decisions. Every tentative and final decision shall be in writing and shall contain a statement of the reasons therefor, including a determination of issues of fact or law necessary to the decision.
- (2) Tentative Decisions.
 - (a) A written tentative decision shall be issued on each matter adjudicated by the Board unless a quorum of the Board has heard the matter or has read the evidence.
 - (b) A copy of any tentative decision shall be sent to each party and limited participant in the proceeding. The Presiding Officer shall designate a comment period, extending at least seven days from the issuance of the tentative decision, during which parties and limited participants may file written comments regarding the tentative decision.
 - (c) Comments submitted regarding the tentative decision, whether made at Board meetings or in writing, do not constitute evidence and are not part of the evidentiary record in the proceeding.
- (3) Final Decisions.
 - (a) Every final decision of the Board in an adjudicatory proceeding shall be issued following a vote taken at a meeting of the Board conducted pursuant to 980 CMR 2.04.
 - (b) If a tentative decision was issued in a matter, the Board shall meet following the comment period to vote on the tentative decision. At such meeting, parties and limited participants may be afforded an opportunity to present oral comments under such conditions as the Board may provide. The Board shall render a final decision after considering the tentative decision, all timely-filed written comments and any oral comments permitted. The Board need not consider written comments received after the close of the comment period.
 - (c) If a quorum of the Board has heard a matter, the Board may at its discretion render a final decision without first issuing a tentative decision pursuant to 980 CMR 1.08(2).
- (4) Judicial Review. By the terms of M.G.L. c. 25, § 5, as made applicable to the Board by M.G.L. c. 164, § 69P, a party may seek judicial review of a final Board decision, or a final decision of the Director in a *De Novo* Adjudication.

1.09: Supplemental Procedures

- (1) Re-opening Hearings. A party may, at any time before the Board renders a final decision, move that the hearing be reopened for the purpose of receiving new evidence. The motion should clearly show good cause for re-opening the hearing, state the nature and relevance of the evidence to be offered, and explain why the evidence was unavailable at the time of the hearing.
- (2) Consolidation. The Presiding Officer may consolidate proceedings involving a common question of law or fact for hearing or decision on any or all of the matters at issue in such proceedings.
- (3) Referral by the Department. Acting under the provisions of M.G.L. c. 25, § 4, in order to promote efficiency in administration, the Chair of the Department of Public Utilities may refer matters to the Board for review and approval or rejection of petitions pursuant to M.G.L. c. 164, § 69H(2).

1.09: continued

(4) Stipulations. At the discretion of the Presiding Officer, the parties may agree upon any fact or issue pertinent to the proceeding, either by filing a written stipulation at any point in the proceeding, or by making an oral stipulation at the hearing. In making findings, the Board need not be bound by any such stipulation.

(5) Technical Sessions. A technical session is a meeting during which experts may provide detailed oral or written information in order to facilitate understanding of complex technical issues. The Presiding Officer may convene a technical session if they deem that such session would facilitate the efficient conduct of the proceeding. The Presiding Officer shall permit representatives of the Applicant, Parties and Limited Participants to attend a technical session and shall make a reasonable effort to schedule and notice the time and place of any such session to permit attendance. Unless otherwise required by the Presiding Officer, technical sessions shall not be transcribed and statements made by any Person during a technical session shall not be referred to or considered as evidence in the proceeding or in any subsequent proceeding. Information from the technical session may become part of the evidentiary record through discovery or testimony. Board Members, staff and Parties may ask questions during a technical session.

(6) Subpoenas. The Presiding Officer may issue, vacate or modify subpoenas, in accordance with the provisions of M.G.L. c. 30A, § 12.

(7) Depositions. The Presiding Officer may at their discretion allow a deposition to be taken upon a showing that the Person to be deposed cannot make an appearance at the hearing without substantial hardship and that the testimony being sought is significant, not privileged and not discoverable by an alternative means. If the Presiding Officer allows the taking of a deposition, they shall specify the rules and procedures that will govern said deposition.

(8) Reconsideration. Any Party may file a written motion requesting the Presiding Officer reconsider a ruling as long as the motion is received within five days of the issuance of the ruling.

(9) Offers of Proof. Any offer of proof made in connection with an evidentiary ruling shall consist of a statement, which may be in writing, of the substance of the evidence the party making the offer contends would be adduced by such testimony. If the offer of proof consists of documentary evidence, a copy of the document shall be marked for identification and shall constitute the offer of proof.

(10) Site Visit of a Proposed Facility. The Board and Board staff may visit a proposed CEIF or facility site and any alternative site in order to facilitate an understanding of the pending matter. The Presiding Officer may determine whether to allow additional attendees on the site visit. A site visit is for informational purposes only and shall not be considered as evidence in the proceeding.

(11) Production or View of Objects. Of their own accord, or upon the motion of a party, the Presiding Officer may order the production or view of any object which relates to the subject matter of a proceeding.

(12) Compliance Filing Procedures. The Applicant shall identify compliance with each condition in the final decision issued by the Board. Compliance filings shall be made with the Board and sent to the service list for the proceeding. Parties and Limited Participants on the service list may file any comments on the compliance filing within ten business days of the compliance filing. The Applicant may file a response to comments within five business days of the filing of the comments. The Presiding Officer shall promptly determine whether additional information or process required.

1.09: continued

(13) Project Changes.

(a) Obligation. The Applicant shall construct and operate a CEIF or Facility in conformance with all aspects of its proposal as presented to the Board. The Applicant, or its successors in interest, shall notify the Board of any changes other than minor variations to the proposal so that the Board may decide whether to inquire further into a particular issue.

(b) Process. The Applicant shall file any notice of project change with the Board and the service list of the proceeding. Parties and Limited Participants on the service list may file any comments on the notice of project change within ten business days of the filing of the notice of project change. The Applicant may file a response to comments within five business days of the filing of the comments. The Presiding Officer shall determine within 15 business days whether additional information or process is required.

1.10: Decommissioning and Site Restoration Plan

An Applicant for a petition to construct or an application for a Consolidated Permit shall file with its application a decommissioning and site restoration plan for the Facility or CEIF, respectively. Prior to filing the plan with the Siting Board, the Applicant shall consult with the community in which the CEIF or Facility is proposed to be located, about the plan. The plan shall include:

- (a) identification of materials to be removed and how the Applicant plans to recycle or dispose of materials;
- (b) a schedule for removal;
- (c) an estimate of decommissioning and restoration costs;
- (d) a description of any financial instrument to ensure decommissioning and restoration activities are funded; and
- (e) a description of site restoration activities.

Additional requirements that may apply to an application for a Consolidated Permit are in 980 CMR 13.00: *Consolidated Permits for Clean Energy Infrastructure Facilities*. The application of this rule to LCTDIF and SCTDIF shall be determined on a case-by-case basis.

REGULATORY AUTHORITY

980 CMR 1.00: M.G.L. c. 30A and c. 164, §§ 69G, 69H.