

# Keeping Utilities On During the COVID-19 crisis

(Updated 12/16/2020)



## I can't afford my gas, electric, and/or water bills because of COVID-19. Will my service be shut off?

The Winter Moratorium is now in effect. During this time, utilities, including water departments, will not be disconnecting utilities. This covers all residential customers in Illinois.

## How long will I be protected from shutoffs?

Because of the Winter Moratorium, utility providers cannot disconnect your utilities from **December 1 to March 31, 2021.**

Call your utility companies to set up payment plans, if needed.

## Does this mean I never have to pay these utilities?

**No.** Please remember that, even though bills may not be due until later, all of your usage will be recorded and you will eventually need to pay in full for all utilities used during this time. It's best to call your utility companies to set up payment plans to make sure your utilities stay on once the Winter Moratorium ends.

## What should I do if my service is already off or I cannot pay?

If your utilities are already off, call your utility companies to set up payment plans to get utilities turned back on. **Right now, the electric and gas companies will turn your service back on if you can pay 20% of what you owe. LIHEAP's Reconnection Assistance can help you pay that amount.** For more information about Reconnection Assistance, visit [www.cedaorg.net](http://www.cedaorg.net) or call **1-800-571-2332**. Please note that **unless the water department is a public utility, they are not required to reconnect for 20%.** Most water providers will reconnect you in the winter for one-third of what you owe, but no state law requires it.

**ComEd** will work with you to turn electricity back on in households and will not disconnect it again until March 31, 2021. Call ComEd at **800-334-7661** or visit [ComEd.com/DPA](http://ComEd.com/DPA).

**Peoples Gas** is allowing for payment plans and later due dates. Call **877-832-6747** or visit their website [www.peoplesgas.com](http://www.peoplesgas.com).

**Nicor Gas** has budget plans available, as well as some select grants. Call **888-642-6748** or email [customercare@nicorgas.com](mailto:customercare@nicorgas.com).

### Low Income Home Energy Assistance program (LIHEAP)

LIHEAP is a federally-funded energy assistance program which helps low- and fixed-income families meet their energy needs during the winter heating season. The program runs from July 27, 2020 to June 30, 2021, or until funds run out.

For more information, call **877-411-9276** or visit [liheapillinois.com](http://liheapillinois.com).

**City of Chicago Department of Water** offers payment plans and has a Utility Billing Relief program (UBR). To apply, contact the Community and Economic Development Association of Cook County (CEDA) at **1-800-571-2332** or check online at [www.cedaorg.net](http://www.cedaorg.net).



Call

**312.341.1070**

Monday to Friday  
between 8 AM and 4:30 PM

OR



**Apply Online**

[www.legalaidchicago.org](http://www.legalaidchicago.org)

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## Are there other programs available to help me keep up with my utility bills during COVID-19?

Yes! Below are three financial assistance program for utilities:

- Bill Payment Assistance – one-time grant of up to \$500 from ComEd, Peoples Gas, Ameren, and Nicor Gas. **You need to apply by December 26, 2020 by calling ComEd, Peoples Gas, Nicor and other participating utility companies.**
  - More information on assistance for Peoples Gas:  
[www.wecenergygroup.com/home/message/pgl-covid-payment-relief.htm](http://www.wecenergygroup.com/home/message/pgl-covid-payment-relief.htm)
  - More information on Nicor Gas' assistance:  
[www.nicorgas.com/residential/billingandpaymentoptions/energy-assistance-programs.html](http://www.nicorgas.com/residential/billingandpaymentoptions/energy-assistance-programs.html)
- ComEd's Residential Special Hardship – up to \$500 for people experiencing a hardship or more in these special cases:
  - CHAMP – up to \$1,000 for military personnel (deployed members, national guard, reserves, and honorably discharged veterans).
  - Small Business Assistance – up to \$1,000
  - Non-Profit Special Hardship – up to \$2,000 For more information, go to [www.comed.com/MyAccount/CustomerSupport/Pages/BillPaymentAssistance.aspx](http://www.comed.com/MyAccount/CustomerSupport/Pages/BillPaymentAssistance.aspx)
  - More information on ComEd's program here:  
[www.comed.com/MyAccount/CustomerSupport/Pages/ResidentialHardship.aspx](http://www.comed.com/MyAccount/CustomerSupport/Pages/ResidentialHardship.aspx)
- ComEd's "The Helping Hand Program," which must be requested for financial hardships for up to \$300 on past due ComEd bills.
  - More information here:  
<https://www.comed.com/MyAccount/CustomerSupport/Pages/HelpingHand.aspx>

You should contact your utility provider directly to apply for bill payment assistance and for payment plans.

- ComEd- 1-800-334-7661
- Peoples Gas - 866-556-6001
- Nicor Gas - 888.642.6748
- City of Chicago Department of Water - 312.744.4420



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