

## Temporary Utility Rules

June 2021

The Public Service Commission (PSC) has put some temporary rules in place that the gas/electric, landline telephone, and private water utilities must follow. These temporary rules may be useful for you or your clients.

- 1) The utility must send a turn-off notice 45 days in advance of the turn-off date.
- 2) Utility companies must offer you at least a 12-month payment plan with \$0 down payment. If you are approved to participate in the Office of Home Energy Programs, you are eligible for a 24-month payment plan with \$0 down payment.
- 3) The utility cannot refuse a payment plan because the customer failed to meet the terms of an alternative payment plan during the past 18 months.
- 4) The utility cannot shut you off for non-payment until the latter, November 1<sup>st</sup> or 30 days after the distribution of RELIEF Act funds if you are a part of either one of the groups I list below.
  - a. You have a medical needs form on file with the utility before June 30, 2021.
  - b. You have been approved by OHEP to receive grants from their office in the past four years. You will still receive turn-off and collection notices. To be certain, call your utility to confirm.

If you run into any issue or have questions, please feel free to contact us Monday-Friday, 8AM-4:30PM at 410-767-8150 or email through [opc@maryland.gov](mailto:opc@maryland.gov).