

Important Information Regarding Termination of Utility Service in Rhode Island

The Rhode Island Public Utilities Commission and Division of Public Utilities and Carriers have established rules relating to the termination of residential gas and electric service. These rules provide a series of options for customers with an outstanding balance and for customers whose service has been terminated.

There are two sets of payment plans available to customers, based on whether a customer is a “standard” customer or a “protected” customer. A “standard” customer is a customer not classified in one of the protected categories. A “protected” customer is a residential customer whom the utility has evidence of one or more of the following:

- ▶ Unemployed/receiving unemployment compensation;
- ▶ Elderly (all members of household must be 62 or older) or disabled (an affidavit stating one disability – verified by a physician – is required);
- ▶ Receiving assistance via the LIHEAP program;
- ▶ Seriously ill – illness that is life threatening or may become life threatening, or a disability;
- ▶ Households with a child under 24 months of age – provided there is a financial hardship.

These regulations prevent gas and electric utilities from terminating residential service during the utility termination moratorium period (November 1st through April 15th) for nonpayment of a delinquent account if the customer is a “protected” customer (see above).

For both “standard” and “protected” customers, there are specific steps to the payment plan process requiring the customer to meet certain commitments.

The rules also contain an Arrearage Forgiveness Payment Plan for “very low income” customers who qualify.

The terms of each Step of the Standard Customer Payment Plans are as follows:

Step 1A Standard Customer Payment Plan Pre-Termination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No down payment required. • Must pay each month the sum of (1/12 of the estimated prospective annual utility cost) + (1/6 of the customer's unpaid balance for the first six months of the plan). • Not available to customers after termination of service or after disenrollment from a previous Step 1A or Step 1B Plan.
Step 1B Standard Customer Payment Plan Pre-Termination Six Month Option	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No down payment required. • Must pay each month the sum of (1/6 of the unpaid balance + the amount due for current usage). • Not available to customers after termination of service or after disenrollment from a previous Step 1A or Step 1B Plan.
Step 2 Standard Customer Payment Plan Pre-Termination Re-negotiation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No down payment required. • Must pay each month the sum of (1/12 of the estimated prospective average annual utility cost) + (1/6 of the customer's unpaid balance for the first six months of the plan). • Not available to customers after termination of service.
Step 3 Standard Customer Payment Plan Post-Termination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial down payment of 60% of the customer's unpaid balance required. • Must pay each month the sum of (1/12 of the estimated prospective annual utility cost) + (1/3 of the customer's unpaid balance for the first three months of the plan).
Step 4 Post-Termination 100% may be required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A customer may be required to pay up to 100% of the customer's unpaid balance to restore service.

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The terms of each Step of the Protected Customer Payment Plans are as follows:

Step 1A Protected Customer Payment Plan Pre-Termination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No down payment required. Must pay each month for 12 months the sum of (1/12 of the unpaid balance + the balance due for current usage) or (1/12 of the unpaid balance + 1/12 of the prospective usage after reducing the amount due by any public energy assistance funds received or promised). Not available after disenrollment from a previous Step 1A, Step 1B, Step 1C or Step 2 Protected Customer Payment Plan.
Step 1B Protected Customer Payment Plan Post-Termination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial down payment of 25% required. Must pay each month for 12 months the sum of (1/12 of the unpaid balance + the balance due for current usage) or (1/12 of the unpaid balance + 1/12 of the prospective usage after reducing the amount due by any public energy assistance funds received or promised). Not available to a customer who has become disenrolled from a Step 1A Payment Plan.
Step 1C Protected Customer Payment Plan Six Month Option	<p>Pre-Termination</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No down payment required. Must pay each month for six months the sum of (1/6 of the unpaid balance + the amount due for current usage). <p>Post-Termination</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 25% down payment required. Must pay each month for six months the sum of (1/6 of the unpaid balance + the amount due for current usage).
Step 2 Protected Customer Payment Plan Pre-Termination Re-negotiation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No down payment required. Must pay each month for 12 months the sum of (1/12 of the unpaid balance + the balance due for current usage) or (1/12 of the unpaid balance + 1/12 of the prospective usage after reducing the amount due by any public energy assistance funds received or promised). LIHEAP recipients may renegotiate one additional time upon receipt of a LIHEAP promissory note or at the time when the utility receives the LIHEAP grant, whichever is first. Customer must pay each month for 12 months the sum of (1/12 of the unpaid balance + 1/12 of the prospective use after reducing the amount due by the amount of the LIHEAP grant/promise). Only available prior to termination of service.
Step 3 Protected Customer Payment Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial down payment of 25% of the customer's unpaid balance required. Must pay each month for 12 months the sum of (1/12 of the estimated prospective average annual utility cost less the estimated annual payment from the public energy assistance programs) + (1/12 of the customer's unpaid balance).
Step 4 Protected Customer Payment Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial down payment of 35% of the customer's unpaid balance required. Must pay each month for 12 months the sum of (1/12 of the estimated prospective average annual utility cost less the estimated annual payment from the public energy assistance programs) + (1/12 of the customer's unpaid balance).
Step 5 Protected Customer Payment Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial down payment of 50% of the customer's unpaid balance required. Must pay each month for 12 months the sum of (1/12 of the estimated prospective average annual utility cost less the estimated annual payment from the public energy assistance programs) + (1/12 of the customer's unpaid balance).
Reasonable Payment Plan Based on Individual Case-By-Case Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customer and company may establish a reasonable payment plan with a negotiated down payment of at least 50%. When establishing a reasonable payment plan, the company shall consider the income schedule of the customer, if offered by the customer, the customer's payment history, the size of the unpaid balance and current bill, the amount of time and reason for the outstanding bill and whether the delinquency was caused by unforeseen circumstances.

RULES AND REGULATIONS

A copy of the Rules and Regulations Governing Termination of Residential Electric, Gas and Water Utility Service is available for review at the office of the Division of Public Utilities and Carriers located at 89 Jefferson Boulevard, Warwick, Rhode Island, Monday through Friday, 8:30 AM to 3:30 PM. A copy of the Rules and Regulations may also be obtained via the Internet at www.ripuc.org/rulesregs/commrules/termination.pdf

Avoid Service Disconnection

If you or someone you know is without natural gas or electric service, or behind on payments, call National Grid. The company works with customers individually to establish payment plans, and can also provide customers with a list of energy assistance sources. After a mutually acceptable customer payment is made, a payment plan will be established and utility service can be restored.

Electric Inquiries: **(888) 211-1313**
 Electric Outage: **(800) 465-1212**

Gas Inquiries: **(800) 870-1664**
 Gas Leak Emergency: **(800) 640-1595**

Hearing and Speech Impaired: Dial 711

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