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| Utility Shut-off Letter |

Congratulations {{ users }}! You have finished all the forms you need for the Utility Shut-off Letter. The rest of the pages in this packet are your letter to {{ other\_parties }}.

## Next steps

1. Deliver a copy of this letter to the utility company within 7 days of the initial phone contact.
2. **Keep a copy for yourself.**
3. Note the protection period (90 days for serious illness, 180 days for chronic illness).

## To send your letter

1. Look over the forms one more time. Make sure everything is correct.
2. Deliver a copy of this letter by regular first-class mail.
3. You can request proof of delivery from the post office, but it is not required.
4. Keep proof of delivery in case the utility disputes receipt.

## What happens after I send the letter?

Once received, the utility company must not shut off service for a set period:

Serious illness: 90 days of protection

Chronic illness: 180 days of protection

*These protections apply even if the patient has outstanding bills. The patient’s bill will still accrue during this time.*

Before the protection period ends, the person who submitted the original form must submit a renewal certification if the illness is ongoing.

During the winter months, electric and gas companies must call the patient or notify them in person before shutting off their heat-related services.

## What do I do if {{ other\_parties }} ignores my letter?

If {{ other\_parties }} does not respond to your letter within 30 days and the utility services are shut off, contact the Department of Public Utilities at (617) 737-2836 or 1-877-886-5066 (toll-free) or complete their [online complaint form](https://www.mass.gov/forms/massachusetts-department-of-public-utilities-consumer-complaint-form).

The certification will remain valid unless and until the DPU determines it to be invalid.

## What happens if {{ other\_parties }} agrees with me?

If {{ other\_parties }} agrees with you, {{ other\_parties }} will not shut off service for the set period listed above.

The utility company may offer or require a payment plan for arrears.

You must renew the medical certification before the expiration period ends.

**Read** the response as soon as you get it. If you have questions, [ Your local legal aid] may be able to help you more.

## Learn more

1. [Massachusetts Utility Shutoff Protections](https://www.mass.gov/info-details/when-am-i-protected-from-having-my-utilities-shut-off?utm_source=chatgpt.com).
2. [Tenants’ Rights in Massachusetts (2025)](https://www.masslegalhelp.org/sites/default/files/documents/housing/lt1-chapter-6-utilities.pdf).
3. [Relevant Statute](https://www.mass.gov/law-library/220-cmr).