

Suggested citation if referencing the below information: Sanya Carley and David Konisky, 2024, “Utility Disconnections Dashboard,” Energy Justice Lab.



District of Columbia

Last updated: September 17, 2024

Covered utilities: These policies pertain to electricity customers who receive their service from an investor-owned utility, municipal utility, or an electric cooperative in the District of Columbia.

15 DCMR § 300; DC ST § 34-301; DC ST § 34-207

Weather Protections

Customers may not be disconnected from their utility service when National Weather Service (NWS) forecasts are 32 degrees F or below, or 95 degrees F or higher during any time of day based on the NWS wind chill factor and heat index temperature forecasts.

15 DCMR §310

Medical Protections

Disconnections will be delayed for up to 21 days if service discontinuance would be detrimental to the health and safety of a bona fide occupant of the premises. Customers can renew their medical protection one time, for a total postponement period of 42 days. Medical certificates may be issued by a physician or public health official in the District of Columbia.

If customers receive medical condition protections, they must enter into a payment agreement with their utility.

15 DCMR §311

Other Customer Protections

There are no specific protections for households with children, elderly residents, individuals with disabilities, or military personnel.

General Exemptions

Customers and utilities can request an exemption from the rules for reasons of hardship.

15 DCMR § 398

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Notification Requirements

Written notification of at least 15 days is required from a utility before a customer may be disconnected. In-person or telephone notifications is not required, and a utility is not required to delay a disconnection if it is unable to reach a customer by a telephone call or an in-person visit.

15 DCMR §311

Payment Information, Delinquency, and Fee Information

Customers have 20 days to pay their bills before they become past-due.

There are no minimum arrearages before a utility may disconnect a customer.

Customers may be charged fees associated with a disconnection or a reconnection.

Utilities may provide customers with payment plans.

15 DCMR §305; 15 DCMR §315

Landlords and Tenants

When the landlord is the customer of an electric utility, tenants should receive a 21 days notice before a disconnection may take place.

15 DCMR § 402

Availability of Protection Policies

Utilities and public utility commissions are not required to provide information on available sources of financial assistance. Customers can request a consumer rights pamphlet anytime and a copy of the pamphlet will be available at every utility's office under.

15 DCMR §311 and 15 DCMR §321