

Suggested citation if referencing the below information: Sanya Carley and David Konisky, 2023, “Utility Disconnections Dashboard,” Energy Justice Lab.



Iowa

Last updated: December 18, 2023

Covered utilities: These policies pertain to electricity customers who receive their service from an investor-owned utility in the State of Iowa. Customers that receive service from a municipal utility or an electric cooperative are not covered by these policies.

I.C.A. § 476.1A; I.C.A. § 476.1B

Weather Protections

For homes where electricity provides the only source of heat, customers may not be disconnected from their utility service when the forecasted temperature falls below 20 degrees F in the next 24 hours.

For residents that are eligible (or may be eligible) for the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program or the Weatherization Assistance Program, customers may not be disconnected from their utility service from November 1 to April 1.

There are no similar protections that limit disconnections during times of hot weather.

199 IAC 20.4

Medical Protections

Disconnections will be delayed for up to 30 days if service discontinuance would pose an especially dangerous situation for the health of someone in the household. Medical certificates may be issued by a doctor or health official who can provide written verification of a customer’s health danger, and that the affected person is a resident at the premise, as well as information on the nature of the health danger, and the expected length of the health danger.

“Especially dangerous to health” means that a person appears to be seriously impaired. They may be unable, because of mental or physical problems, to manage their own resources, carry out normal daily living activities, or be protected from hazardous situations without the assistance of other people. Indicators of an especial health danger include, but are not limited to, age, infirmity, mental incapacitation, serious illness, physical disability, blindness, and limited mobility.

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

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199 IAC 20.4

Other Customer Protections

Customers may not be disconnected from their utility service if one of the heads of household is a service member deployed for military service. Disconnections will not occur during the deployment, nor in the 90 days following the end of the deployment. The customer must notify the utility of the deployment before disconnection.

There are no specific protections for households with children.

199 IAC 20.4

General Exemptions

Customers can request an exemption from the rules for reasons of hardship, while utilities cannot.

199 IAC 1.3, 199 IAC 20.1

Notification Requirements

Written notification of at least 12 days is required from a utility before a customer may be disconnected. In-person or telephone notifications are required as well. A utility is not required to delay a disconnection if it is unable to reach a customer by telephone or an in-person visit.

199 IAC 20.4

Payment Information, Delinquency, and Fee Information

Customers have 20 days to pay their bills before they become past-due. However, residential customers consuming less than 3,000 kWh per month can change their date of delinquency for cause, but the utility shall never be required to delay that date more than 30 days beyond the date of preparation of the previous bill.

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

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

Utilities may provide customers with payment plans.

199 IAC 20.4

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Landlords and Tenants

Tenants, where the landlord is the customer, only receive 2 days of notice before a disconnection takes place.

199 IAC 20.4

Availability of Protection Policies

Utilities and public utility commissions are required to provide information on available sources of financial assistance. Additionally, a summary of customer rights and protections will be included with disconnection notices.

199 IAC 20.4