

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



Louisiana

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 Louisiana. Customers that receive service from a municipal utility or an electric cooperative are not covered by these policies.

LSA-R.S. 12:426; LSA-R.S. 45:1163; LSA-R.S. 45:1161

Weather Protections

Customers may not be disconnected from their utility service when the temperature falls below 32 degrees F on the previous day and in the next 24-hour period. Disconnections shall not occur within a customer's parish if the National Weather Service issues a heat advisory within that parish.

General Order (R-29706) from October 5, 2007; La. R.S. § 45:1221; La. R.S. § 45:1222

Medical Protections

Disconnections will be delayed for up to 60 days if the termination of service will cause some person residing at that residence to become seriously ill or more seriously ill. Medical certificates can be issued by the customer's attending physician. Customers receiving medical protection must enter into a payment agreement.

For individuals 65 or older with incomes at or below 150% of the poverty level, individuals that rely on social security for their sole income, and individuals that receive food stamps or TANF, utilities must have a deferred billing program for energy emergencies. These programs shall also apply to those persons who need life-sustaining, electrically operated equipment, or life-sustaining medical treatment that requires electricity in order to live. Billing may be delayed for up to 12 months.

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

Louisiana Bulletin Sept. 22, 2006, DOCKET NO. R-29706 Part G; La. R.S. § 45:1221; La. R.S. § 45:1222

Other Customer Protections

For individuals 65 or older with incomes at or below 150% of the poverty level, individuals that rely on social security for their sole income, and individuals that receive food stamps or TANF,

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utilities must have a deferred billing program for energy emergencies. Energy emergencies are declared by the commission when there are inordinately high utility bills. The high bills may be caused by unusually inclement weather which necessitates extensive use of utilities, high fuels costs, or any other circumstances as determined by the commission. Billing may be delayed for up to 12 months.

For military personnel, no provider of electricity shall cease to provide electricity to the residential premises of any residential consumer who is on active duty for nonpayment of electricity provided to the premises. Upon return of a residential consumer from active duty, the provider shall offer the consumer a period equal to at least the period of service on active duty to pay any arrearages incurred during the period of service. The provider shall inform the consumer that, if the period the provider offers presents a hardship to the consumer, the consumer may request a longer period to pay the arrearages.

There are no additional protections for households with children, elderly residents, or individuals with disabilities.

La. R.S. § 29:318; La. R.S. § 45:1221; La. R.S. § 45:1222

General Exemptions

Customers and utilities cannot request an exemption from the rules for reasons of hardship.

Notification Requirements

Written notification of at least 5 days is required from a utility before a customer may be disconnected. In-person or telephone notifications are 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.

Louisiana Bulletin Sept. 22, 2006, DOCKET NO. R-29706 Part L

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.

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

Utilities may provide customers with payment plans.

General Order 7/12/76; General Order 2/20/73; La. R.S. § 45:1222; La. R.S. § 45:1221

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Landlords and Tenants

Tenants, where the landlord is the customer, shall receive the same protections as other customers.

Louisiana Bulletin Sept. 22, 2006, DOCKET NO. R-29706 Part J and K

Availability of Protection Policies

Utilities and public utility commissions are required to provide information on available sources of financial assistance. Additionally, ways to avoid disconnection will be provided with all disconnection notices. For the deferred billing program, biannual inserts in all customers' billing statements or any other means the commission requires shall be provided.

La. R.S. § 45:1221 and 45:1222, Louisiana Bulletin Sept. 22, 2006, DOCKET NO. R-29706 Part L