

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



South Carolina

Last updated: October 30, 2023

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

S.C. Code of Regulations R. 103-301

Weather Protections

Between Dec. 1 and Mar. 31, there shall be no termination for 30 days if a customer supplies a medical certificate stating that termination of electric service would be especially dangerous to a household member's health. (The certificate can be renewed up to three times). The customer must be unable to pay in installments.

In addition, the rules specify that each electrical utility must establish written procedures for termination of service due to nonpayment for all residential customers during weather conditions marked by extremely cold or hot temperatures. Each electrical utility must submit its procedures to the Office of Regulatory Staff.

S.C. Code of Regulations R. 103-352, Code 1976 § 58-27-2520

Medical Protections

Medical protections are only available in South Carolina during the winter (Dec. 1 to March 31) if termination of electric service would be especially dangerous to a household member's health. Additionally, medical protections apply to residents that suffer from Alzheimer's disease or dementia. Customers must provide a medical certificate from a licensed medical doctor, physician's assistant, nurse practitioner, or advanced-practice registered nurse. Termination will be delayed for 30 days. A medical certificate can be renewed up to three times, for a total maximum shutoff delay of 120 days.

S.C. Code of Regulations R. 103-352, Code 1976 § 58-27-2510

Other Customer Protections

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

General Exemptions

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In any case where compliance with any of these rules and regulations introduces unusual difficulty or where circumstances indicate that a waiver of one or more rules or regulations is otherwise appropriate, such rule or regulation may be waived by the commission upon a finding by the commission that such waiver is not contrary to the public interest.

S.C. Code of Regulations R. 103-301

Notification Requirements

Customers must be given at least 10 days of written notice before their disconnection. Notice by telephone or in-person visit is not required.

S.C. Code of Regulations R. 103-352

Payment Information, Delinquency, and Fee Information

The statutory code and administrative code do not specify how long customers have to pay their bills, nor at what point those bills become late.

There is no minimum arrearage requirement before disconnection.

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

Payment plans are available to customers.

S.C. Code of Regulations R. 103-339, R. 103-340

Landlords and Tenants

The statutory and administrative code does not specify whether tenants, if the landlord is listed as the customer, receive different treatment from utilities than other customers.

Availability of Protection Policies

Customers are notified of customer protections at the time of disconnection notice. Utilities are not required to provide information to customers on available sources of financial assistance.

Code 1976 § 58-27-2520