

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



Delaware

Last updated: October 8, 2023

Covered utilities: These policies pertain to electricity customers who receive their service from an investor-owned utility and some electric cooperatives in the State of Delaware. Customers that receive service from a municipal utility are not covered by these policies, and some cooperatives may apply to exempt themselves from the Commission’s rules and regulations.

26 Del. C. § 201; 26 Del. C. § 102; 26 Del. Admin. Code 3002-1.0; 26 Del. Admin. Code 3002-2.0

Weather Protections

Customers may not be disconnected from their utility service when temperatures at 8:00am on the date of disconnection falls below 32 degrees F from November 15th - March 31st. Similarly, customers will not be disconnected when temperatures rise above 105 degrees F according to the National Weather Service Heat Index between June 1st – September 30th.

26 Del. Admin. Code 3002-3.0 and 26 Del. Admin. Code 3002-2.0

Medical Protections

Customers with medical conditions will have disconnections delayed for up to 120 days if any occupant of any dwelling unit shall be so ill that the termination of such sale or service shall adversely affect his or her health or recovery. A medical certificate can be provided by a physician assistant or advanced nurse practitioner.

26 Del. Admin. Code 3002-3.0

Other Customer Protections

For military personnel, customers may apply for protections from disconnection of electric utility services by notifying the Service Provider that they need assistance caused by a reduction in household income because of a household member’s call to active-duty status in the military reserves or National Guard. Disconnections will be delayed if their active-duty status lasts and for up to 30 days after that status has ended.

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

26 Del. C. § 118

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General Exemptions

Cooperatives that choose to exempt themselves from the Delaware Public Service Commission’s control must still give customers a minimum of 3 days of notice before disconnection, and they must offer customers the same medical protections as all customers under the Commission’s regulations.

26 Del. C. § 202 and 26 Del. C. § 118

Notification Requirements

Written notification of at least 3 days is required from a utility before a customer may be disconnected. In-person notifications are not required, but utilities should try to contact customers by telephone. 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.

26 Del. Admin. Code 3002-3.0

Payment Information, Delinquency, and Fee Information

The period for customers to pay their bill is not specified. There is no minimum delinquency before a disconnection can take place.

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.

26 Del. Admin. Code 3002-3.0

Landlords and Tenants

Tenants do not receive the same protection as other customers during the heating and cooling seasons, as they only receive 10 days notice before a disconnection can take place.

26 Del. Admin. Code 3002-5.0

Availability of Protection Policies

During the heating and cooling seasons, customers must be told about medical protections in their disconnection notice. The utility must also provide information on available sources of financial assistance.

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26 Del. Admin. Code 3002-3.0