

State of Illinois



ILLINOIS COMMERCE COMMISSION

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March 13, 2020

**VIA E-Mail**

To: Regulatory Representatives of Illinois Public Utilities

Re: Termination of Utility Service and Tracking of Costs during Public Health Emergency

I write to you to urge your company to take immediate steps to cease disconnections for non-payment, and to suspend the imposition of late payment fees or penalties, until May 1, 2020.

As you are no doubt aware, on March 12, 2020, Governor JB Pritzker issued a Declaration under Sections 4 and 7 of the Illinois Emergency Management Agency Act (IEMA Act), finding that recent worldwide outbreaks of COVID-19, with cases now reported or under investigation in Illinois, constitutes a public health emergency in the State of Illinois within the meaning of Section 4 of the IEMA Act. Governor Pritzker declared all 102 counties within the State to be disaster areas within the meaning of Section 7 of the IEMA Act. Governor Pritzker further directed the Illinois Department of Public Health to cooperate with the Governor and other State agencies in the development of strategies and plans to protect the public health in connection with the present public health emergency. Governor Pritzker stated that "we are continuing our efforts to prepare for any eventuality given that this is a novel illness and given the known health risks it poses for the elderly and those with serious chronic medical conditions[.]"

It is likely that disconnection of vital utility service for non-payment may disproportionately affect the elderly, persons with medical conditions and other vulnerable persons. In addition, it is also likely that the public health crisis will affect economic well-being of many Illinoisans. The Commission is in the process of determining what formal steps should be taken regarding termination of utility service to customers during the public health emergency declared by Governor Pritzker and will likely issue one or more Orders regarding this and related matters at its March 18, 2020 Regular Open Meeting. In the interim, however, I again urge you to take immediate steps to cease disconnections for non-payment, and to suspend the imposition of late payment fees or penalties, until May 1, 2020.

Finally, please keep track of all spending as a result of actions and costs incurred due to the response to the COVID-19 pandemic. While you should take all necessary steps to ensure the health, welfare, and safety of consumers, your staff, and the public in

general, the Commission is required, under the Public Utilities Act to review the reasonableness and prudence of all expenditures.

Should you have questions regarding this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me. Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized 'J' followed by a 'Z' and a long horizontal flourish.

Jim Zolnierek  
Acting Executive Director  
Illinois Commerce Commission  
527 E. Capitol Ave.  
Springfield, IL 62701  
217-785-5278  
Jim.Zolnierek@illinois.gov