

Governor Phil Murphy

Governor Murphy Signs Executive Order Ending Moratorium on Utility Shutoffs, Establishes Six-Month Grace Period for All Customers

06/14/2021

Governor Phil Murphy today signed Executive Order No. 246, ending the moratorium on utility shutoffs as of July 1, 2021, that was put in place due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

TRENTON – Governor Phil Murphy today signed Executive Order No. 246, ending the moratorium on utility shutoffs as of July 1, 2021, that was put in place due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Executive Order also establishes a sixth-month grace period in which strong customer protections that were put in place through the moratorium will continue through December 31, 2021, giving customers facing utility arrearages the opportunity to sign up for payment assistance plans. The grace period also enables the state to consider how it could leverage federal funding to expand eligibility criteria so more customers could apply for assistance plans. During the grace period, no residential customers will face disconnection of their gas, electric, or water, services before the end of the grace period on December 31. Additionally, households with residential internet service accounts currently in effect that are being used by school-aged children for educational purposes will also be protected from disconnection. The grace period will terminate on December 31, 2021, for all customers. The annual Winter Termination program will remain in effect and preclude electric or gas shutoffs for certain households, including some seniors and low-income families, through March 15, 2022.

“Many of our impacted New Jersey families are just now getting their financial feet back under them after a very tough year,” **said Governor Murphy**. “Everyone deserves the opportunity to work with their utility provider and enroll in a fair and equitable payment option to ensure that vital, and in some cases life-preserving, services are maintained. Let me be clear, even with this step today, no one will face disconnection of their gas, electric, or water services before the end of the grace period on December 31 and we fully expect every utility provider to work with their customers in good faith.”

“NJBPU has tremendous empathy for the economic difficulties many of our fellow New Jerseyans have faced as a result of the pandemic,” **said New Jersey Board of Public Utilities President Joseph L. Fiordaliso**. “As we begin to return to a sense of normalcy, NJBPU and Governor Murphy continue to focus on helping anyone who has fallen behind on paying their utility bills. During the grace period following the end of the moratorium, we urge anyone who has struggled to pay their bills to apply for our assistance programs and to contact their utility to make payment arrangements.”

“Even though the moratorium on utility shutoffs is coming to an end, we won’t be abandoning our commitment to helping New Jerseyans get through this public health crisis,” **said Lt. Governor Sheila Oliver, who serves as Commissioner of the Department of Community Affairs**. “Now that the restrictions are being lifted and people who have been out of work are reentering employment this 6-month grace period will allow people time to apply for assistance and get the help they need now. We encourage people to apply for help with their utility bills and arrears by visiting nj.gov/dca/dcaid/.”

For the full text of Executive Order No. 246, please click here (<https://www.nj.gov/infobank/eo/056murphy/pdf/EO-246.pdf>).

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