[First Reprint]

SENATE, No. 3326

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED JANUARY 7, 2021

Sponsored by:
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District 29 (Essex)
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SYNOPSIS

Requires public and local utilities to provide notice to residential customers of available relief measures during coronavirus disease 2019 pandemic.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As reported by the Senate Economic Growth Committee on January 14, 2021, with amendments.

(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 1/14/2021)

AN ACT requiring public and local utilities to provide notice of certain relief measures during the coronavirus disease 2019 pandemic.

BE IT ENACTED *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:*

1. a. A public utility and local utility shall notify, in a form and manner determined by the public utility and local utility, respectively, each of its residential customers of information and resources available to residential customers concerning public utility and local utility service and bill payment assistance during the coronavirus 2019 pandemic.

b. The notification shall include, but not be limited to, information concerning any:

(1) moratorium in effect on the disconnection, discontinuance, or termination of public utility or local utility service;

(2) deferred bill payment agreement program;

(3) bill payment assistance program; [1]**[**and**]**[1]

(4) arrearage forgiveness program [1]; and

(5) moratorium in effect on rate increases or on the imposition of late fees, interest, or liens for late payments[1].

c. A public utility and local utility shall provide the notification required, pursuant to subsection a. of this section, [1]**[**on a quarterly**]** basis**]** in the same manner and frequency that the customer receives a regular bill,[1] until 18 months after the date of the termination of Executive Order No. 103 of 2020, which authorized the State of Emergency in response to the coronavirus 2019 pandemic. [1]A public utility and local utility shall publish the required information prominently on its website.[1]

d. [1]**[**The Department of Community Affairs, in consultation with the Board of Public Utilities, shall compile information on State and federal policies and programs concerning public utility and local utility service and bill payment assistance, which shall be made available to each public utility and local utility, and shall be included in the notice required by subsection a. of this section.**]** Nothing in this section shall be construed to permit a local utility to establish or administer a bill payment assistance program not authorized by law.[1]

e. As used in this section:

"Coronavirus 2019" means the coronavirus disease 2019, as announced by the World Health Organization on February 11, 2020, and first identified in Wuhan, China.

"Local utility" means any sewerage authority created pursuant to the "sewerage authorities law," P.L.1946, c.138 (C.40:14A-1 et seq.); any utilities authority created pursuant to the "municipal and county

EXPLANATION – Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets [thus] in the above bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined thus is new matter.
Matter enclosed in superscript numerals has been adopted as follows:
[1]Senate SEG committee amendments adopted January 14, 2021.

utilities authorities law," P.L.1957, c.183 (C.40:14B-1 et seq.); or any municipal, county, or regional utility, authority, commission, special district, or other corporate entity, not regulated by the Board of Public Utilities, that provides electricity, gas, heat, power, sewer, or water service.

"Public utility" means a public utility, defined pursuant to R.S.48:2-13, providing electric, gas, sewer, or water service to residential customers.

2. This act shall take effect immediately.