



Spotlight On: **COVID-19 Moratorium on Utility and Municipal Shutoffs**

New York State Public Service Law* provides temporary protections for essential utility and municipal services during the COVID-19 pandemic. If you experienced a change of financial circumstances due to the COVID-19 pandemic, utilities and municipalities may not shut off your service for nonpayment, must reconnect your service within 48 hours, and must offer you a deferred payment agreement to pay any balance due.

There are immediate steps you can take to protect your utility service:

❖ **Contact your service provider:**

Your first step is always to contact your utility or municipality. Some utilities and municipalities may require you to self-certify that you've experienced a change in financial circumstances during the COVID-19 pandemic to protect your account from shutoff.

❖ **Ask for a deferred payment agreement:**

A deferred payment agreement allows you to pay your balance due in affordable, installment payments. Until March 31, 2021, utilities and municipalities are required to offer deferred payment agreements with no money down, late fees or penalties. You may be required to submit a financial statement documentation to your service provider. You are still responsible for your utility or municipality bill during and after the moratorium period.

❖ **Pay what you can:**

While your account may be protected from shutoff, you will still be responsible for the charges for service. Paying what you can now will help you avoid a larger bill later.

❖ **Don't wait until it's too late.**

These temporary protections are only available until March 31, 2021. The sooner you contact your utility, the sooner your account will be protected from shutoff.

*Public Service Law §§32, 89-b, 89-l and 91 (Chapter 108 and 126 of the Laws of 2020).