



## **Utility Protection for All Vulnerable Consumers: Covid-19 Order Summary of Interim Public Utility Regulatory Authority Order**

### **March 12, 2020**

- Attorney General Tong filed a Motion to cease termination of electricity, heat and water
- Granted by Public Utility Regulatory Authority (PURA) for "duration of Public Health and Civil Preparedness Emergency." (no current end date to Emergency; therefore termination of utility service is still prohibited)

### **March 17, 2020**

- Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) petitioned PURA to consider other issues "to provide support to ratepayer and the public during the course of COVID -19 emergencies and any period of economic recovery."
  - PURA expanded the scope of the order to non residential customers and prohibited the companies from requiring security deposits or payments to get service reinstated if service had been previously terminated.

### **April 29, 2020**

- PURA ordered COVID-19 PAYMENT PROGRAM. Goal: "... provide options for all customers to pay what they can, when they can, during this time of uncertainty."

#### **Terms of COVID 19 Payment Program**

##### **Utility companies MUST:**

- Make Program available to any customers requesting financial assistance without requiring determination of financial eligibility or need – i.e. eligibility does not have to be determined by the community action agencies and no documentation has to be provided
- Not require initial down payment
- Offer program for up to 24 months
- Waive any fees or interest in the calculation of the monthly payment amount
- Contact any customer (residential, commercial or industrial) after customer's first missed payment and tell them about the Payment Program
- Include information about Payment Program on their website home page, their bill payment portal and in their automated recordings.

##### **Utility companies MAY:**

- Waive any fees or interest based on late payments from the time the Public Emergency was declared (March 12, 2020) until the end of the payment plan
- Defer the first payment until July 1, 2020 for unemployed residents or businesses that were shut down