

ASSEMBLY, No. 4671

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED SEPTEMBER 17, 2020

Sponsored by:

Assemblyman GARY S. SCHAER

District 36 (Bergen and Passaic)

Assemblywoman LISA SWAIN

District 38 (Bergen and Passaic)

Assemblyman P. CHRISTOPHER TULLY

District 38 (Bergen and Passaic)

Co-Sponsored by:

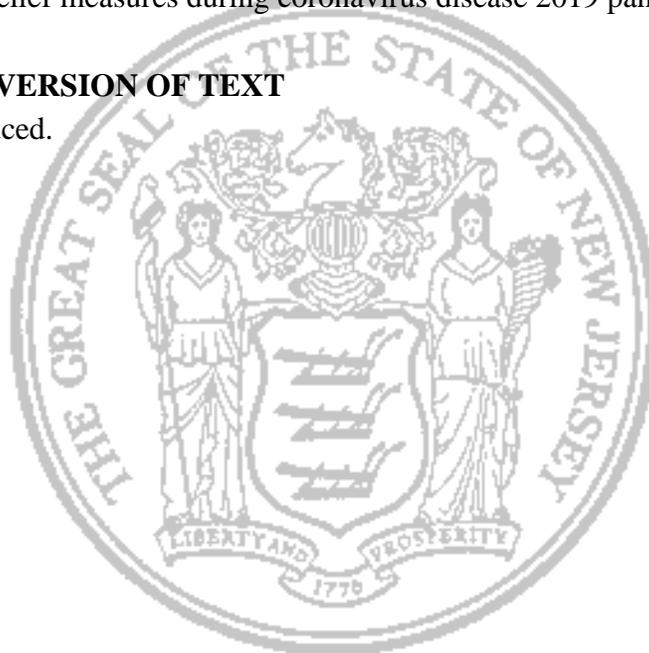
**Assemblywoman Vainieri Huttle, Assemblymen Benson, Conaway,
Assemblywoman McKnight, Assemblymen Freiman, Wimberly,
Assemblywoman Lopez, Assemblyman Verrelli, Assemblywomen Jasey
and Mosquera**

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 introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 10/29/2020)

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

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

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

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

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

18 (2) deferred bill payment agreement program;

19 (3) bill payment assistance program; and

20 (4) arrearage forgiveness program.

21 c. A public utility and local utility shall provide the notification
22 required, pursuant to subsection a. of this section, on a quarterly
23 basis until 18 months after the date of the termination of Executive
24 Order No. 103 of 2020, which authorized the State of Emergency in
25 response to the coronavirus 2019 pandemic.

26 d. The Department of Community Affairs, in consultation with
27 the Board of Public Utilities, shall compile information on State and
28 federal policies and programs concerning public utility and local
29 utility service and bill payment assistance, which shall be made
30 available to each public utility and local utility, and shall be
31 included in the notice required by subsection a. of this section.

32 e. As used in this section:

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

36 "Local utility" means any sewerage authority created pursuant to
37 the "sewerage authorities law," P.L.1946, c.138 (C.40:14A-1 et
38 seq.); any utilities authority created pursuant to the "municipal and
39 county utilities authorities law," P.L.1957, c.183 (C.40:14B-1 et
40 seq.); or any municipal, county, or regional utility, authority,
41 commission, special district, or other corporate entity, not regulated
42 by the Board of Public Utilities, that provides electricity, gas, heat,
43 power, sewer, or water service.

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

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48 2. This act shall take effect immediately.

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STATEMENT

This bill requires a public utility and local utility to 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 utility service and bill payment assistance during the coronavirus 2019 pandemic.

The notices required by the bill would have to contain information on any:

- 1) moratorium in effect on the disconnection, discontinuance, or termination of utility service;
- 2) deferred bill payment agreement program;
- 3) bill payment assistance program; and
- 4) arrearage forgiveness program.

The notices are to be provided on a quarterly basis 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.

The bill also requires the Department of Community Affairs, in consultation with the Board of Public Utilities, to compile information on State and federal policies and programs concerning utility service and bill payment assistance that are to be included in the notices required by the bill and to make that information available to public and local utilities.