

USING A MEDICAL CERTIFICATE TO AVOID GAS/ELECTRICITY SHUTOFF

These rules apply to public utilities. Check if your provider is a public utility on the Illinois Commerce Commission website: icc.illinois.gov

WHAT IS A MEDICAL CERTIFICATE?

A medical certificate is a form filled out by a doctor or health department stating disconnecting the utility will worsen or create a medical emergency for a resident of the household. It prevents utility service shutoff or restores it quickly after shutoff. It also entitles you to a medical payment arrangement (MPA).

HOW DO I SUBMIT A MEDICAL CERTIFICATE?

You can submit a Medical Certificate by fax, mail or email. Each utility has a simple form. The form must include utility customer information and be signed by a physician or board of health.

Initially, certification can be done by telephone (your doctor's office can call the utility), but a written certificate must follow within five days.

WHAT HAPPENS IF MY MEDICAL CERTIFICATE IS ACCEPTED?

If accepted, the Medical Certificate will:

- Prevent utility shutoff for 60 days. If accepted before shutoff, the utility cannot disconnect service for 60 days. If a valid medical certificate is received within 14 days after shutoff, service must be restored as soon as possible. The 60-day period begins when service is restored.
- Automatically enroll the account in a medical payment arrangement (MPA), starting 30 days after the certificate is accepted. You must pay the amount due under the MPA ***in addition to*** your current bill.

Making MPA payments prevents service shutoff after the 60 days. Failing to make the required payments may result in service disconnection.



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MEDICAL PAYMENT ARRANGEMENT (MPA) RULES

The MPA will be more affordable if the certificate is submitted before shutoff. You will be assigned one of two payment arrangement schedules:

- If the certificate was submitted before shutoff:
First MPA payment: 1/12 of total owed
Remaining balance: 11 equal installments on future bills

OR

- If the certificate was submitted after shutoff:
First MPA payment: 1/4 of total owed
Remaining balance: 9 equal installments on future bills

WHAT ELSE SHOULD I KNOW?

You can only use one medical certificate every 12 months unless the total account balance is paid off. After 12 months, a new certificate and medical payment arrangement may be obtained.

A Medical Certificate is not the only way to enter into a payment arrangement or avoid disconnection. You can also:

- Apply for LIHEAP (financial assistance for utilities). To find your LIHEAP agency, contact the Help Illinois Families call center at 833-711-0374;
- Learn more about LIHEAP and utilities by going to the Illinois Commerce Commission website: icc.illinois.gov;
- Contact your utility company to ask about other options;
- If you can't resolve the issue with your utility, contact the Illinois Commerce Commission's Consumer Services Division at 800-524-0795 (TTY 800-858-9277)

The complete language of the rules governing utility shutoffs are available at:
<https://ilga.gov/agencies/JCAR/EntirePart?titlepart=08300280>

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**PRAIRIE STATE
LEGAL SERVICES**

Administrative Office
303 North Main Street
Suite 600
Rockford, IL 61101
815-965-2134
info@pslegal.org
pslegal.org

