

DATE: December 16, 2015

TO: Subscribers

SUGGESTED DISTRIBUTION: Commissioners, TA Directors, SNAP Directors,
HEAP Coordinators

FROM: Phyllis D. Morris, Deputy Commissioner
Center for Employment and Economic Supports

SUBJECT: Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) and Temporary Assistance (TA)
Implications of the 2015-16 Utility Termination Moratorium Schedule for
New York State Public Service Commission (PSC) Regulated and Municipal
Utility Companies

EFFECTIVE DATE: Immediately

CONTACT PERSON: HEAP Questions: HEAP Bureau at (800)343-8859, ext. 3-0332
TA Program Questions: TA Bureau at (800) 343-8859, ext. 4-9344

Each year, the utility companies are required to suspend terminations of residential gas and electric service for a two week period that encompasses Christmas and New Year's Day. Each utility company establishes their own specific schedule.

2015-2016 Holiday Moratorium Schedule

Central Hudson	December 21, 2015 to January 3, 2016
Con Edison	December 18, 2015 to January 3, 2016
Corning Gas	December 15, 2015 to January 3, 2016
National Fuel Gas	December 21, 2015 to January 3, 2016
National Grid Upstate	December 21, 2015 to January 3, 2016
National Grid Metro	December 21, 2015 to January 3, 2016
National Grid Long Island	December 21, 2015 to January 3, 2016
NYS Electric & Gas	December 21, 2015 to January 3, 2016
Orange & Rockland Utility	December 18, 2015 to January 3, 2016
PSEG	December 18, 2015 to January 4, 2016
RG & E	December 21, 2015 to January 3, 2016
St. Lawrence Gas	December 21, 2015 to January 3, 2016

The moratorium for municipal electric companies will be in effect December 17, 2015 through January 1, 2016. The Long Island Power Authority (LIPA) will follow the same moratorium schedule as PSEG.

HEAP Implications

In order to ensure that the HEAP benefit is used to prevent termination and obtain prospective service during a period of time when actual service termination can occur, HEAP certifiers may not issue HEAP benefit guarantees for the Regular benefit during the period when the holiday moratorium is in effect for that utility company. In addition, use of ten day holds is not necessary during the moratorium period.

In order to ensure that both districts and utility companies have sufficient time to process HEAP guarantees once the moratorium period ends, certifiers may resume issuing HEAP guarantees of payment and/or holds for households scheduled for termination beginning on December 28, 2015, however, the effective date of the guarantee must be no earlier than the first day that terminations may occur for the customer's utility company.

Certifiers must continue to accept Regular benefit applications and process eligibility determinations during the moratorium period. Certifiers should remember to use this moratorium period when authorizing a Regular HEAP benefits to maximize the 30 days of prospective service provided by the HEAP payment.

The moratorium does not affect procedures for households whose service is currently terminated. A guarantee of payment for eligible households whose service is terminated must continue to be made in order to get service restored.

TA Implications

When a TA applicant or recipient requests assistance to restore or continue utility service, the Social Services District (SSD) must determine the date of termination or scheduled termination. This date will determine the SSD's course of action as prescribed below.

- If terminated or scheduled for termination during the moratorium period, the SSD must refer the TA applicant or recipient to HEAP. If HEAP cannot resolve the emergency, the SSD must contact the utility provider to restore service or reschedule termination in accordance with the PSC's moratorium policy (16 NYCRR § 11.4(a)(4)(ii)).
- If not terminated or scheduled for termination during the moratorium period, SSDs must follow routine emergency assistance procedures, including referral to HEAP.