

Utility Assistance, Public Service Commission

\$30.0 Million (C90G00.01)

Purpose: Recovery Now Funding

The Public Service Commission shall distribute funds authorized as grants to utility companies to assist households with utility arrearages by reducing those arrearages. Allocations shall be made, first, to eliminate all arrearages for households who have qualified for Office of Home Energy Program Energy Assistance benefits in the past 4 years. Second priority is given to eliminate all arrearages for residential special needs customers and, third, to eliminate the oldest arrearages.

June 30 - Program Highlights and Plans to Allocate Remaining Balance:

- PSC Order No. 89745 issued on February 24, 2021 directed the investor-owned, municipal, and cooperative electric and gas utilities, in consultation with OHEP, to submit data to the Commission by April 9, 2021 regarding residential customer arrearages that may be reduced or eliminated under the Relief Act. Specifically, utilities are to identify -- where applicable -- the following data, accurate as of March 31, 2021: (1) the number of active accounts with unpaid arrearages and total dollar amounts of unpaid arrearages for residential customers that received or were qualified for OHEP benefits at any time subsequent to February 15, 2017 broken out by year and then by county; (2) the number of active accounts with unpaid arrearages and total dollar amounts of unpaid arrearages for residential customers that were special needs customers (as defined in footnote 4 above) within the last 12 months, broken out by county, if possible; (3) the total number of active accounts with unpaid arrearages and total dollar amounts of unpaid arrearages (i.e., 30 days or greater) for residential customers not included in the previous section, broken out by county, and further summed and broken out by the month and year in which the arrearage was accrued; and (4) the utility's total residential load in the State of Maryland, given in MWh and/or Mcf, as applicable.

After review of the above data, the Commission will issue guidance regarding the distribution of funds to the Utilities and the manner in which the Utilities will allocate the funds to its customers with eligible arrearages. The Commission will also establish reporting requirements to verify how the funds were applied.

- The majority of Maryland Utilities responded on April 9, 2021 with the requested information. In addition, some Maryland Utilities provided recommendations on how to allocate the available RELIEF Act funds. This Commission has communicated with those parties who failed to respond timely and all utilities have provided the requested information as of April 16, 2021.
- On April 15, 2021, the Commission issued a notice directing any parties interested in providing recommendations or comments on the allocation and dispersal of the RELIEF Act funds to file comments by May 3, 2021. Furthermore, the Commission provided notice that it will conduct a legislative-style hearing on May 12, 2021.
- The Commission held its legislative-style hearing on May 12, 2021. Based on testimony provided at the hearing, the Commission directed the Maryland Utilities to provide updated arrearage information by May 24, 2021. The Commission Staff was also directed to compile

all updated category data by May 27, 2021 for the utilities to confirm its accuracy no later than June 1, 2021.

- All data has been compiled and verified. The Commission will issue an order and disburse funds to the utilities prior to July 1, 2021.
- On June 15, 2021, the Commission issued Order No. 89856 directing the distribution of \$83 million of Relief Act Funds to 20 Maryland utilities for the purpose of arrearage reduction. (See attached Order).
- On June 23, 2021 the Commission's Fiscal Division processed via transmittal to the General Accounting Division of the Comptrollers office, payments totaling \$83 Million to twenty Maryland utilities pursuant to Order No. 89856. Appendix A of the order lists the dollar amount that was distributed to each utility.

June 30 - Programmatic and/or Implementation Issues:

- None identified.

June 30 - Distribution of Funds:

- A total of \$83 Million was processed via transmittal to the Comptrollers office on June 23, 2021, for payment to 20 utilities in Maryland, including the \$30 million from Recovery Now.
- Order No. 89856, which includes in Appendix A the dollar amounts distributed to each utility, is available in a separate document.

Source: Public Service Commission, Department of Budget and Management