

State of North Carolina
Utilities Commission
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M-100 Sub 158

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STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
UTILITIES COMMISSION
RALEIGH

DOCKET NO. M-100, SUB 158

BEFORE THE NORTH CAROLINA UTILITIES COMMISSION

In the Matter of
Investigation of Necessary and)
Appropriate Responses to the)
Novel Coronavirus COVID-19)
)
) ORDER ACCEPTING NOTICE OF
) EXPIRATION OF EXPANDED WINTER
) MORATORIUM AND PAYMENT
) ARRANGEMENTS FOR VULNERABLE
) CUSTOMERS

BY THE COMMISSION: On March 11, 2022, Duke Energy Progress, LLC (DEP), Duke Energy Carolinas, LLC (DEC), and Piedmont Natural Gas Company, Inc. (Piedmont, and together with DEP and DEC, the Duke Utilities) collectively filed a letter in the above-captioned docket stating that under normal circumstances, pursuant to Commission Rules R12-11(l)(6) and R12-10(h)(6), the Duke Utilities' residential customers in North Carolina qualify for a disconnection moratorium from November 1 to March 31 if they meet all of the following requirements: (1) their household is certified by the local social service office which administers the Energy Crisis Assistance Program or other similar programs as being eligible to receive assistance under such programs (e.g., Low Income Energy Assistance Program eligible) whether those funds are available or not, (2) they are suffering financial hardship that prevents them from being able to afford their bills or a 6-month payment arrangement, and (3) they have a household member who is handicapped or elderly (65 or older) or both (Winter Moratorium).

The Duke Utilities have voluntarily expanded and extended the Winter Moratorium outlined in Commission Rules R12-11 and R12-10 to prevent approximately 114,000 vulnerable customers from disconnection of their respective electric utility service or natural gas utility service for nonpayment. The Duke Utilities' letter outlines four voluntary expansion/extensions by the Duke Utilities of the Winter Moratorium spanning on or about February 11, 2021, through the present. The Duke Utilities also state that all customers enrolled in the moratorium as of October 1, 2021, were sent a letter notifying them that their arrearages may be eligible to be paid by Low-Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP), the Crisis Intervention Program (CIP), or the North Carolina Housing Opportunities and Prevention of Eviction Program (NC HOPE) (including contact information). Further, any newly enrolled customers since October 1, 2021, have received a welcome letter encouraging them to apply for assistance for any arrearages. The Duke Utilities state that the voluntary extensions of the expanded Winter Moratorium have allowed CIP, LIEAP, and NC HOPE-eligible ratepayers time to seek additional assistance and enroll in installment payments arrangements without risk of interruption of their electric or natural gas service since March 2020.