



SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS

FILED
INDEX DEPARTMENT
APR 23 2021
IN THE OFFICE OF
SECRETARY OF STATE

April 22, 2021

CORRECTED
Executive Order 2021-07

EXECUTIVE ORDER 2021-07
(COVID-19 EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 77)

WHEREAS, since early March 2020, Illinois has faced a pandemic that has caused significant illness and loss of life, and created extraordinary challenges for the State and our residents; and,

WHEREAS, as Illinois adapts and responds to the public health disaster caused by COVID-19, the burden on residents, healthcare providers, first responders, and governments throughout the State is unprecedented; and,

WHEREAS, at all times but especially during a public health crisis, protecting the health and safety of Illinoisans is among the most important functions of state government; and,

WHEREAS, as COVID-19 has spread throughout Illinois for over a year, the circumstances causing a disaster throughout the State have continued to evolve; and,

WHEREAS, in addition to causing the tragic loss of so many lives and wreaking havoc on the physical health of tens of thousands more, COVID-19 has caused extensive economic harm and continues to threaten the financial welfare of a significant number of individuals, especially those earning lower incomes, across the nation and the State; and,

WHEREAS, the disruption caused by the pandemic has had a profound effect on households' ability to pay their bills due to illness, widespread unemployment, reduction in work hours, or other related setbacks; and,

WHEREAS, many families have been forced to make difficult financial decisions and to miss required payments, including payments for gas and electricity services, creating a significant risk of losing service as a result of disconnection; and,

WHEREAS, the moratorium on utility shut-off for gas and electric services ended on March 31, 2021, and families and individuals who continue to struggle with the economic realities of the pandemic will be subject to disconnection for non-payment of utility charges, creating significant additional hardship for them; and,

WHEREAS, considering the ongoing health and economic impacts of COVID-19 that residents will continue to experience over the coming months, disconnection of vital utility service for non-payment adds an untenable burden on low-income households and will have a disproportionate impact on the State's most vulnerable citizens; and,

WHEREAS, continued access to utility service will help slow the spread of the disease and protect the public health and safety; and,

WHEREAS, the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) has worked to address the pandemic's impact on the lower income families and individuals by focusing on creating new procedures for utility bill assistance to help prevent disconnections through the Supplemental Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Fund, 305 ILCS 20/13; and,

WHEREAS, pursuant to the Illinois Energy Assistance Act (the Act), 305 ILCS 20/13, DCEO shall use moneys from the Supplemental Low-Income Energy Assistance Fund for payments to electric or gas public utilities, municipal electric or gas utilities, and electric cooperatives on behalf of their customers who are participants in the program authorized by the Act, for the provision of weatherization services, and for administration of the Supplemental Low-Income Energy Assistance Fund; and,

WHEREAS, pursuant to the Act, 305 ILCS 20/6(a), DCEO must set an annual income threshold for eligibility for assistance under the Act; and,

WHEREAS, the Act also provides at 305 ILCS 20/13 that the money remitted by each utility shall be used to provide assistance to that utility's customers only; and,

WHEREAS, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting public health emergency, I find it necessary to issue this Executive Order to temporarily suspend certain requirements of the Act, 305 ILCS 20/1 *et seq.*, so that the State may provide utility payment assistance to a greater number of eligible residents who are experiencing severe economic hardship to ensure uninterrupted access to gas and electric utility services;


THEREFORE, by the powers vested in me as the Governor of the State of Illinois, pursuant to the Illinois Constitution and Sections 7(1),7(2), 7(3), 7(8), and 7(12) of the Illinois Emergency Management Agency Act, 20 ILCS 3305, and consistent with the powers in public health laws, I hereby order the following, effective April 22, 2021:

Section 1: The following provisions of the Energy Assistance Act, 305 ILCS 20/1 *et seq.*, are suspended until June 30, 2021, or until the termination of the Gubernatorial Disaster Proclamations, whichever is sooner:

1. The annual household income threshold required to apply for assistance under the Energy Assistance Act, 305 ILCS 20/6(a); and
2. The requirement that the amounts remitted by each utility into the Supplemental Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Fund shall be used to provide assistance only to that utility's customers, 305 ILCS 20/13(g).

Section 2. If any provision of this Executive Order or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid by any court of competent jurisdiction, this invalidity does not affect any other provision or application of this Executive Order, which can be given effect without the invalid provision or application. To achieve this purpose, the provisions of this Executive Order are declared to be severable.

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JB Pritzker, Governor

Issued by the Governor April 22, 2021
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