Rule 71 - Mississippi Ratepayer Bill of Rights

The following Rights are available to all residential utility customers in the State of Mississippi.
To the extent Rights 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16 and 19 add to and/or conflict with an existing service rule, the right shall have priority over the existing service rule.

RIGHT 1

Ratepayers shall have the right to avoid disconnection for nonpayment on any Friday, Saturday, Sunday, legal holiday, or the day before a legal holiday.

RIGHT 2

Ratepayers shall have the right to avoid disconnection for nonpayment when the company receives written notice from a licensed healthcare provider certifying that discontinuance of service would create a medical emergency for the customer or any member of the customer's household.

RIGHT 3

Ratepayers shall have the right to be given a written notice from the utility company of pending disconnection at least 5 days prior to disconnection of service. This notice must include a summary of your rights and responsibilities to avoid disconnection as well as the specific date of disconnection.

RIGHT 4

Ratepayers shall have the right to negotiate with any electric or natural gas company a deferred payment plan to avoid disconnection of service for a delinquent account.

RIGHT 5

Ratepayers shall have the right to avoid disconnection of service for failure to pay any amount charged for non-utility services or products.

RIGHT 6

Ratepayers shall have the right to avoid disconnection or refusal of service because a former occupant, not of the same household, failed to pay prior bill.

RIGHT 7

Ratepayers, 65 years of age or older, shall have the right to designate another person to receive all notices regarding past due bills and disconnection of service.

RIGHT 8

Ratepayers shall have the right to avoid disconnection of their electric or gas service between December 1 and April 1 as described in the Rules and Regulations Governing Public Utility Service.

RIGHT 9

Ratepayers shall have the right to avoid disconnection of electric or natural gas service for nonpayment, if the ratepayer has been approved for Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) benefits and the notice of the approval has been given to the utility provider.

RIGHT 10

Ratepayers shall have the right to avoid disconnection for failure to pay a portion of any bill that is in formal dispute, provided that payments are made for amounts not in dispute. Formal dispute shall mean that written notice has been provided to the utility company and the Commission.

RIGHT 11

Ratepayers shall have the right to negotiate monthly installments for initial service deposits in excess of One Hundred Dollars ($100.00) provided that the entire amount of the deposit is paid within 60 days.

RIGHT 12

Ratepayers shall have the right to avoid disconnection of electric or natural gas service if, on the scheduled disconnection day, a hard freeze watch or warning has been issued by the National Weather Service for the county of the scheduled disconnection.

RIGHT 13

Ratepayers shall have the right to avoid disconnection of electric or natural gas service if, on the scheduled disconnection day, a Heat Advisory or Excessive Heat Warning has been issued by the National Weather Service or the Department of Health for the county of the scheduled disconnection.

RIGHT 14

Ratepayers shall have the right to avoid disconnection for nonpayment during a declared state of emergency, if the county in which the ratepayer resides is under the declared state of emergency, and upon request, the utility must offer the ratepayer a deferred payment plan for bills due during the emergency.

RIGHT 15

Ratepayers that have been disconnected for non-payment, shall have the right to be reconnected in a prompt and efficient manner, not to exceed a maximum of 24 hours, after the balance due is paid.

RIGHT 16

Ratepayers shall have the right to request a written explanation if the utility company refuses to initially serve a consumer. The explanation must be provided within seven (7) business days and shall include the reason service is being refused and what the consumer must do to correct the situation.

RIGHT 17

Ratepayers shall be given unbiased, accurate, and understandable information concerning the price and terms of service. Customer's bills will be rendered in an easy to understand format.

RIGHT 18

Ratepayers shall have access to an independent administrative process that provides a simple, quick, and effective means of resolving complaints about service and bills from all electric, gas, water, and telecommunications service providers through the Mississippi Public Service Commission without fear of retribution from the utility provider.

RIGHT 19

Ratepayers shall have the option to speak with a live company representative, during the company's normal business hours, rather than using the automated system.

RIGHT 20

Ratepayers shall have the right to intervene in any case before the Mississippi Public Service Commission affecting their rates or their utility service.

RIGHT 21

Ratepayers shall have the right to register their residential telephone number on the Mississippi No Call Registry at no charge.

RIGHT 22

Ratepayers shall have the right to file a complaint against telemarketers who violate the Mississippi No Call Law.

RIGHT 23

Ratepayers shall have the right to view or listen to Mississippi Public Service Commission hearings and docket calls via the Internet.