Mississippi Ratepayer Bill of Rights

The following Rights are available to all residential utility customers in the State of Mississippi.

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. (See Service Rule 8)

RIGHT 2

Ratepayers shall have the right to avoid disconnection for nonpayment when the company receives written notice from a licensed health care provider certifying that discontinuance of service would create a medical emergency for the customer or any member of the customer's household. (See Service Rule 8)

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. (See Service Rule 8)

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. (See Service Rule 8)

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. (See Service Rule 8)

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. (See Service Rule 7.F.1)

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. (See Service Rule 6)

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. (See Service Rule 8)

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. (See Service Rule 8)

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. (See Service Rule 10.B)

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. (See Service Rule 9)

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. (See Service Rule 8)

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. (See Service Rule 8)

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. (See Service Rule 8)

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. (See Service Rule 8)

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. (See Service Rule 7)

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. (See Service Rule 10)

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. (See Procedural Rule 11)

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. (See Service Rule 6)

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. (See Procedural Rule 6.121)

RIGHT 21

Ratepayers shall have the right to register their residential telephone number on the Mississippi No Call Registry at no charge. (See Procedural Rule 28)

RIGHT 22

Ratepayers shall have the right to file a complaint against telemarketers who violate the Mississippi No Call Law. (See Procedural Rule 28)

RIGHT 23

Ratepayers shall have the right to view or listen to Mississippi Public Service Commission hearings and docket calls via the Internet. (See Procedural Rule 15)