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## **Press Release**

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**Media Contact:** Kellie Didigu, 202-626-5124, [kdidigu@psc.gov](mailto:kdidigu@psc.gov)

### **DCPSC expands consumer protections for District ratepayers impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic** *Utility discount programs and payment plans are available to help customers avoid service shutoffs*

**(WASHINGTON, D.C.)** – The Public Service Commission of the District of Columbia (Commission) took action to ensure assistance is still available to consumers after the Mayor’s Public Health Emergency Order is lifted ([Formal Case No. 1164, Order No. 20707](#)). The Commission adopted emergency rules requiring Pepco and WGL to provide at least 45 days’ notice to residential customers before disconnecting service. Pepco and WGL must also provide payment plans of at least 12 months to eligible residential customers after the public health emergency ends. The Commission is also directing Pepco and WGL to temporarily increase the income threshold from 60% to 75% of the state median income level to increase participation in utility discount programs. Both utilities must file a report within 90 days describing the impact of this increase. WGL must also file a proposal and implementation plan for an Arrearage Management Program within 45 days.

“Many District residents are finding it difficult to pay their bills during the COVID-19 pandemic. We want to do our part to help minimize some of that financial burden,” stated DCPSC Chairman Willie L. Phillips. “Our priority is to ensure that District residents remain connected to utility services during – and after – the pandemic. We’re encouraging consumers to take advantage of assistance programs now. If you are behind on your bill, it is urgent that you set up a payment plan now. Don’t wait.”

Customers facing a shutoff should first contact their utility to ask about deferred payments plans, budget billing or other programs to avoid service termination. The Commission will convene a technical conference within 45 days of the date of the lifting of the public health emergency to discuss how utilities can continue to support ratepayers as the District recovers from the impact of COVID-19.

District consumers in need of assistance should contact the Commission’s Office of Consumer Services at 202-626-5120. District consumers can also find assistance programs by visiting [#Here2HelpDC](#).

*The Public Service Commission of the District of Columbia is an independent agency established by Congress in 1913 to regulate electric, natural gas, and telecommunications companies in the District of Columbia.*

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