

Q: Is the City of Hamilton ready and prepared to deliver reliable utilities during the COVID-19 outbreak?

A: We're prepared, and our teams continue to monitor the situation and reassess our plans as needed. As a part of your community, and as a provider of an essential service, we are determined to continue delivering the reliable utilities you need while helping to protect the health and safety of our employees, neighbors and everyone around us.

Q: How is the City of Hamilton protecting its employees?

A: We're implementing preventive measures to help keep our employees as safe as possible. All those who are able to perform their work without being in an office or facility are working remotely. Employees who interact with customers for programs may cancel or reschedule nonurgent appointments and services. When employees must be on-site, they have been directed to not shake hands, remain at least 6 feet away from other individuals, or to use virtual forms of communication where possible.

Q: What is the City of Hamilton doing for people who can't work/can't pay their bills?

A: Because we understand that many customers may be facing unusual financial hardships, we are suspending disconnections for nonpayment effective immediately. This applies to all home and business accounts.

We know this is a difficult time, and we are committed to serving you and our community. If you are having trouble paying your bill, please contact us so we can work with you to develop a plan.

Q: What does "suspending disconnections for nonpayment" mean exactly?

A: It means that we're allowing you extra time to pay if you need it. If you are in an unusual situation and need assistance, we'll work with you on an extension. We will continue to read meters and send bills, so it's best to pay what you can to avoid building up a large balance that will be harder to pay off later.

It also means that we won't disconnect customers' utilities service right now even if they haven't paid bills that are overdue. But again, we encourage everyone to stay as up to date with their payments as possible to avoid building up a large balance for later.

Q: How does this affect late fees?

A: Late fees will still apply. That's why we encourage everyone to stay as up to date with their payments as possible. We understand that this is an unusual time, so we will work with you on an extension and we are not disconnecting utilities service if payments are overdue.

Q: What if I need to reach Customer Service?

A: We may have to work with reduced call center staff when employees need to take care of loved ones, including in the event of school closures. You may find it easier and more efficient to visit our website or email us at [customerserviceweb@hamilton-oh.gov](mailto:customerserviceweb@hamilton-oh.gov). These tools are also

good ways to stay up to date with the latest information from our company as this situation unfolds.

Q: What assistance is available for customers having difficulty paying bills?

A: In an effort to help Ohioans with additional utility bill assistance, The Ohio Development Services Agency has extended application deadlines for the following programs:

The Winter Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) has been extended until June 1st. Please contact HEAP at 1-800-282-0880 or [www.energyhelp.ohio.gov](http://www.energyhelp.ohio.gov).

Supports to Encourage Low-Income Families (SELF) Winter Crisis program has been extended until May 1st. Please contact SELF for details at 513-868-9300.

Additionally, customers may contact the City's customer service team at 513-785-7100 for help applying for these programs.

Other organizations offer utility assistance including Salvation Army (513-863-1445) and Butler County Veterans (513-887-3600).