



NEWS RELEASE

MISSISSIPPI PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION *NORTHERN, CENTRAL AND SOUTHERN DISTRICTS*

For Immediate Release:
March 15, 2020

PSC Temporarily Suspends Disconnection of Utility Services in Response to COVID-19

Restriction is in place for 60 days; does not eliminate the requirement that utility customers continue to pay bills

(Jackson, MS) – In a special meeting on Sunday, March 15, the Mississippi Public Service Commission voted to temporarily suspended disconnections of certain utility services. The restriction will be in place for 60 days and apply to all water, sewer, electricity and gas services.

This action is in response to Governor Tate Reeves’s Declaration of a State of Emergency on March 14, 2020 regarding the spread of COVID-19. In the Declaration, direction was given to examine any statutes, rules or regulations that may be temporarily suspended or modified if those regulations would hinder or delay action necessary to cope with the outbreak.

The PSC coordinated with Mississippi State Department of Health (MSDH) and Mississippi Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) throughout the weekend to implement protocols that ensure all Mississippians have access to essential utility services during the spread of COVID-19.

This is a temporary suspension of disconnection. Utility customers should continue to pay outstanding bills and pay for services provided during the 60 days.

“We are trying to be as proactive as we can and do our part to not only help prevent the spread of the virus, but to not put any additional stress on utility customers and our workforce,” Chairman Dane Maxwell said. “It’s very important to us at the PSC to keep our customers and utility partners’ welfare a top priority during this time.”

“This emergency order will keep vital services connected for our people and protect public health and welfare,” Commissioner Brandon Presley for the Northern District said. “We’ve taken this action at the recommendation of the Health Department and MEMA and we will continue to coordinate any further action with them.”

“As we enter uncharted waters, we must sometimes take extraordinary steps to protect consumers, especially our most vulnerable ones, continue commerce and serve the public interest,” Commissioner Brent Bailey for the Central District said. “We don’t take the execution of today’s action lightly, but the Commission felt that it needed to issue this Order to protect public health and welfare.”



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The PSC will continue to monitor the outbreak of COVID-19 and encourages the public to participate in the measures The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention¹ and the Mississippi Department of Health² have outlined in order to prevent transmission of this virus like frequent hand-washing, sanitizing commonly touched surfaces, and the ability to remain at home should symptoms develop.

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¹ See <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html>.

² See https://msdh.ms.gov/msdhsite/_static/14,0,420.html#prevention.
