



Jim Justice
Governor of West Virginia

September 30, 2020

Dear West Virginia Utility Company:

As your Governor, I said from the very beginning of this pandemic that I was going to do everything in my power to help West Virginia get through this difficult time. That is why I have allocated \$25 million of CARES Act funds to provide much needed relief to West Virginians who are struggling to pay their utility bills. The CARES Act provides that payments may be made on behalf of customers who have suffered economic hardships caused by COVID-19 to allow them to pay their accumulated unpaid bill(s). I have determined to make CARES Act funding available to such customers to pay utility bills for service provided on or after March 1, 2020 (the “Eligible Period”).

You are receiving this letter because you are an eligible utility service provider in West Virginia, with West Virginia residential customers who have likely been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Enclosed is a form letter that you may send to your residential customers with unpaid amounts accumulated for bill(s) issued during the Eligible Period (the “Eligible Balance”). Note that past due balances for services delivered before the Eligible Period are not eligible for payment through this grant process.

For residential customers who certify that their Eligible Balances during the Eligible Period resulted from economic hardship and/or uncertainty resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, the State of West Virginia will pay such Eligible Balance on their behalf.

To receive payments on behalf of customers with Eligible Balances during the Eligible Period, the following steps must be followed:

1. Send a notice to your customers (with the subject or title of “Notice of COVID-19 Utility Services Grant Funding Availability”) with Eligible Balances incurred during the Eligible Period, providing them with the following:
 - a. What your records show to be their Eligible Balance;
 - b. The enclosed form letter and application for customers to complete and return to you.
2. The residential customers will then complete the application and return them to your company, by such means as you instruct.
3. Once you have received completed applications from eligible residential customers, you will then apply for grant funding through the grants.wv.gov portal, submitting the following:
 - a. The total amount certified to be Eligible Balances incurred during the Eligible Period due to economic hardship and/or uncertainty resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic;

- b. An itemized accounting showing a summary of customer names, account numbers, and the amount such residential customers certified as the Eligible Balances resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic; and
 - c. Certifications regarding the process used to collect residential certifications and the utility company's use of any funds received, among other certifications. See, Certifications Page on Grant Portal.
4. Note that the utility service provider must be a registered vendor with the State of West Virginia in order to access the grants.wv.gov portal and to then receive payments. If the utility service provider is not yet a registered vendor, they can apply by visiting <https://www.wvoasis.gov/>, and clicking "VSS." During the registration process a W-9 will be required.
 5. Note also that registering for EFT (electronic funds transfer), if not already registered, will allow the utility company's request for payment to be processed more quickly. You can register for EFT at <https://www.wvsao.gov/ElectronicPayments/Default>.

Note that you must maintain records relating to the application for, receipt of, and payment toward the accounts of your customers (including without limitation records indicating the Eligible Balance for the Eligible Period and completed applications from residential customers) for a period of five years from the date of receipt of State funds to pay past due balances on behalf of affected residential customers. The State of West Virginia has the right to audit the utility service provider regarding this grant and the State and/or the federal government may pursue recovery of grant amounts and/or civil or criminal charges if the funds are knowingly used for unauthorized purposes.

Assistance for utility service providers applying through this grant process will be provided by the applicable Regional Planning and Development Council for the particular geographic region in which your utility company operates, by the WV Rural Water Association, and representatives within the WV Public Service Commission.

In these uncertain times, it is my hope that these grant funds will provide some peace of mind and security to your customers in knowing that they will continue to receive the essential services your company provides to them.

Sincerely,



Jim Justice
Governor

Certifications Page on Grants Portal (Sample)

On behalf of [Utility Company] (the "Utility"), I, [Name of Authorized Representative], an authorized representative of the Utility, hereby certify to the following in order to receive grant funds from the State of West Virginia on behalf of residential customers of the Utility that have certified that they have a unpaid amounts accumulated for bill(s) issued during the period of March 1 through July 31, 2020 (the "Eligible Period") as a result of economic hardship and/or uncertainty caused by the COVID-19 pandemic:

- I certify that the Utility has complied with the terms of the letter from the Governor of the State of West Virginia to the Utility dated [XXXXX, 2020], regarding the process by which the Utility needed to inform eligible Utility customers of this program and have such eligible customers make certifications as to the amount of their unpaid amounts accumulated for bill(s) issued during the Eligible Period (the "Eligible Balance") that resulted from economic hardship and/or uncertainty caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- I certify that the amounts claimed by each eligible Utility residential customer under this application for grant funds Eligible Balances , and that no amounts due from the customer to the Utility before or after the Eligible Period are included in this request for funds.
- I certify that the funds that may be received from the State, based on this application for grant funds, will be paid toward the accounts of the residential Utility customers for Eligible Balances, as listed in the itemized accounting provided with and made a part of this application for grant funds, and that no funds received from the State will be used for any purpose other than paying the Eligible Balances listed in such itemized accounting on behalf of such customers.
- I certify that if the total amount of funds received from the State differ in any way from the total amount requested under this application for grant funds, the Utility will contact the State to determine any necessary changes to how payments will be applied, prior to expending any funds received under this application for grant funds.
- I certify that if inaccuracies in information the Utility supplied are identified at any time resulting in a reduction in the amount that should be considered Eligible Balances, then the Utility will be responsible for paying back to the State the difference between what was received and what should have been deemed Eligible Balances and transferred from the State to the Utility on behalf of eligible residential customers.
- I certify that Utility must maintain records relating to the application for, receipt of, and payment toward the accounts of Utility customers (including without limitation records indicating the Eligible Balances and the completed applications with certifications from residential customers) for a period of five years from the date of receipt of State funds

under this application for grant funds, and must deliver any such information that may be requested by the State during such period.

- I acknowledge that the State of West Virginia has the right to audit Utility regarding this grant and the expenditure of any funds received from the State and that the State and/or the federal government may pursue recovery of grant amounts and/or civil or criminal charges if the funds are knowingly used for unauthorized purposes.

- I certify that the information contained in this application for grant funds is true and correct and may be relied upon by the State of West Virginia.

Authorized Representative of Utility

Title

Date



Jim Justice
Governor of West Virginia

September 30, 2020

Dear West Virginia Residential Utility Customer:

As your Governor, I said from the very beginning of this pandemic that I was going to do everything in my power to help every West Virginian affected during this difficult time. That is why I have allocated \$25 million of CARES Act funding to provide much needed relief to West Virginians who are struggling to pay their utility bills due to economic hardships caused by COVID-19.

You are receiving this letter because your utility service provider's records show that you have a past due balance for a utility bill for services provided on or after March 1, 2020. The grant funds I am providing for you will pay some, or all, of your utility bills and help you continue receiving these essential services if your unpaid bills are due to COVID-19.

Anyone with eligible unpaid utility bills resulting from financial hardships caused by the COVID-19 pandemic is eligible for this grant. By completing the application form attached, and by signing and returning it to the utility company from which you received this letter, **you may be eligible for some or all of your outstanding utility debt related to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic to be paid on your behalf.**

I pray that these funds give you some peace of mind. I know West Virginians are some of the most resilient people on earth, and I know that we will all get through this pandemic if we stay together and stay West Virginia Strong.

Sincerely,

Jim Justice
Governor

RESIDENTIAL UTILITY GRANT APPLICATION AND CERTIFICATION (Sample)

Utility Company: _____

Name of customer of record: _____

Account Number: _____

Customer Billing Address: _____

Telephone number: _____

Email: _____

COVID-19 Related Past Due Balance: _____

Note: As used below, “economic hardship and/or uncertainty resulting from the COVID-19 public health emergency” includes hardship that has actually been incurred such as losing a job or working less hours, as well as uncertainty and a desire to put off some payments and save money for necessary food or medicine in case of job loss or other negative economic impacts reasonably expected to result from the COVID-19 public health emergency.

The “Eligible Period” is March 1 through July 31, 2020.

The “Eligible Balance” is the unpaid amount accumulated for bill(s) for utility services provided during the Eligible Period.

Please review the following certifications, check each box that is true for you, and return this Application to the utility for which you are applying for CARES Act grant funds to pay the Eligible Balance resulting from the COVID-19 public health emergency. **Please check each box or circle that applies to you in order to receive this assistance.**

- I certify that I have experienced economic hardship and/or uncertainty resulting from the COVID-19 public health emergency.

- I certify that the amount of the Eligible Balance associated with my utility account, as stated in the Notice of COVID-19 Utility Services Grant Funding Availability sent to me by the utility company referenced above, is a result of economic hardship and/or uncertainty caused by the COVID-19 public health emergency:
 - The full amount of the Eligible Balance during this period is due to economic hardship and/or uncertainty resulting from the COVID-19 public health emergency.
 - OR-**
 - If less than the full amount, _____% (e.g., 25%, 50%, 75%) of the Eligible Balance during this period is due to economic hardship and/or uncertainty resulting from the COVID-19 public health emergency.

- I give my consent for the utility company referenced above to give data about my account and usage to any State representative or contractor administering this program. I understand that my account information will only be used for purposes of administering the grant funding.

- I acknowledge that the State of West Virginia may pay, on my behalf, the amount certified above of the Eligible Balance on my utility account resulting from the impact of the COVID 19 public health emergency.

- By signing below, I certify that I am a citizen of the United States.

- By signing below, I certify that the information contained in this application is true and correct, and that I will be required to repay any assistance that may be given based upon any false or fraudulent information contained herein.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Please anticipate instructions from your utility company for **submitting this form back to the Utility directly** through the U.S. Mail, through email, or their website, if those options are available to the Utility.