



Order Instituting Rulemaking to Consider New Approaches to Disconnections and Reconnections to Improve Energy Access and Contain Costs.

(R.18-07-005)

What is this proceeding about?

This proceeding was initiated in 2018 in response to direction from the Legislature contained in Senate Bill 598 ordering the Commission to develop “policies, rules, or regulations with a goal of reducing...the statewide level of gas and electric customer service disconnections for nonpayment by residential customers.” At the beginning of this process, the Commission observed “the ramifications of disconnection for customers can be far-reaching and compounding” and indicated that the goal of the proceeding would be both to “implement specific requirements in SB 598 while also seeking to broadly analyze the current disconnection paradigm to determine if more effective policies can be adopted to reduce disconnections, reduce costs, and improve the reconnection process.”

In the course of this proceeding, the Commission has put in place several measures to reduce the number of disconnections and mitigate their impacts on affected customers. These include:

- The Commission set caps on the percentage of customers that the large energy utilities can disconnect per year, and these caps have remained in place.
- The Commission created the Arrearage Management Plan Program (AMP), which allows eligible customers that make 12 on-time bill payments to have up to \$8,000 of outstanding balances forgiven.
- The Commission created the Percentage of Income Payment Plan Pilot Program (PIPP), which is a smaller pilot program that provides eligible low-income customers with a stable monthly bill tied to their household income rather than their energy usage. The goal of this approach is to make bills more affordable and predictable.
- The Commission established the Community-Based Organizations Arrears Case Management Pilot (CBO Pilot), which tests whether having community organizations work with customers repeatedly over time can help eliminate their arrearages or establish a concrete plan to pay them down.



How could the Commission use my input?

The Commission is currently reviewing the effectiveness and impact of the four measures described above (disconnection caps, AMP, PIPP, and the CBO Pilot). Example questions the Commission is considering are:

- Should the Commission make any changes to the disconnection caps or other customer protections against disconnection? If so, what contingency plans should the Commission put in place in case those changes result in an unacceptable impact on customers?
- Should the Commission extend the AMP program beyond its current scheduled end date in October 2026? If so, should the Commission order any changes to the AMP program?
- Should the Commission extend PIPP beyond its scheduled end date in February 2027? If so, should the Commission order any changes to PIPP?
- Considering that the Commission does not have detailed information about the impact and success level of the CBO Pilot, should the Commission order make procedural or substantial changes to the CBO Pilot before closing its current proceeding?

To view the proceeding and all formal filings, including the proposed decision **when issued**, go to apps.cpuc.ca.gov/p/R1807005 and select the “Documents” tab at the top of the page.

How can your voice be heard?

Public Participation Hearings- Please visit www.cpuc.ca.gov/PPH/ for more information on how to participate. These hearings will also be archived for further viewing.

Remote:

- Call-in number: 1-800-897-1917
- Passcode: 1673482#
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Submit electronic public comments: Customers can submit electronic public comments specific to this proceeding and review other public comments submitted by going to: apps.cpuc.ca.gov/c/R1807005

The Public Advisor's Office

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- E-mail: public.advisor@cpuc.ca.gov
- Phone: 1-866-849-8390 or 1-415-703-2074
- Mail: CPUC Public Advisor's Office, 505 Van Ness Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94102

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