

# STATE OF NEW YORK

9796

## IN ASSEMBLY

April 8, 2022

Introduced by M. of A. LUCAS -- read once and referred to the Committee on Corporations, Authorities and Commissions

AN ACT to amend the public service law, in relation to establishing discount programs for low-income senior citizens and individuals with a disability

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

1 Section 1. The public service law is amended by adding a new section  
2 66-s to read as follows:

3 § 66-s. Utility discount program. 1. (a) Notwithstanding any other  
4 provision of law, the commission is authorized and directed to require a  
5 gas corporation, electric corporation or municipality to establish a  
6 discount program for low-income senior citizens and individuals with a  
7 disability no later than ninety days after the effective date of this  
8 section. Such program shall offer a yearly benefit to low-income senior  
9 citizens and individuals with a disability in the form of a ten percent  
10 discount on utility bills. The fiscal impact of such program shall not  
11 be borne by customers and shall not be added to bills rendered by a gas  
12 corporation, electric corporation or municipality to customers.

13 (b) A gas corporation, electric corporation or municipality which  
14 offers such discount program shall conspicuously advertise the avail-  
15 ability and amount of such discount on the website of such gas corpo-  
16 ration, electric corporation or municipality. The availability and  
17 amount of such discount shall also be conspicuously advertised on the  
18 accessibility page of the website of such gas corporation, electric  
19 corporation or municipality.

20 2. For the purposes of this section:

21 (a) "individuals with a disability" shall mean a person (i) with a  
22 disability, as defined in subdivision twenty-one of section two hundred  
23 ninety-two of the executive law; and (ii) who is currently receiving (A)  
24 social security disability insurance (SSDI), (B) supplemental security  
25 income (SSI) benefits under the federal social security act, (C) disa-  
26 bility pension or disability compensation benefits provided by the  
27 United States department of veterans affairs, (D) disability pension or

EXPLANATION--Matter in italics (underscored) is new; matter in brackets  
[-] is old law to be omitted.

LBD14944-01-2

1 disability compensation benefits provided by the United States Postal  
2 Service, or (E) those previously eligible by virtue of receiving disa-  
3 bility benefits under the supplemental security income program or the  
4 social security disability program and currently receiving medical  
5 assistance benefits based on determination of disability as provided in  
6 section three hundred sixty-six of the social services law; and

7 (b) "low-income senior citizen" shall mean a person who (i) is at  
8 least sixty-five years of age; and (ii) either (A) has had a total  
9 household income of less than fifty thousand dollars for two consecutive  
10 income tax years beginning in two thousand nineteen, as verified by the  
11 department of taxation and finance; or (B) is annually eligible to  
12 receive assistance under the emergency rental assistance program (ERAP),  
13 home energy assistance program (HEAP) or other federal and state assist-  
14 ance programs.

15 § 2. The public service law is amended by adding a new section 89-q to  
16 read as follows:

17 § 89-q. Water discount program. 1. (a) Notwithstanding any other  
18 provision of law, the commission is authorized and directed to require  
19 waterworks corporations and municipal water systems to establish a  
20 discount program for low-income senior citizens and individuals with a  
21 disability no later than ninety days after the effective date of this  
22 section. Such program shall offer a yearly benefit to low-income senior  
23 citizens and individuals with a disability in the form of a ten percent  
24 discount on water utility bills. The fiscal impact of such program shall  
25 not be borne by customers and shall not be added to bills rendered by a  
26 waterworks corporation or municipal water system to customers.

27 (b) A waterworks corporation or municipal water system which offers  
28 such discount program shall conspicuously advertise the availability and  
29 amount of such discount on the website of such waterworks corporations  
30 or municipal water system. The availability and amount of such discount  
31 shall also be conspicuously advertised on the accessibility page of the  
32 website of such waterworks corporation or municipal water system.

33 2. For the purposes of this section:

34 (a) "individuals with a disability" shall mean a person (i) with a  
35 disability, as defined in subdivision twenty-one of section two hundred  
36 ninety-two of the executive law; and (ii) who is currently receiving (A)  
37 social security disability insurance (SSDI), (B) supplemental security  
38 income (SSI) benefits under the federal social security act, (C) disa-  
39 bility pension or disability compensation benefits provided by the  
40 United States department of veterans affairs, (D) disability pension or  
41 disability compensation benefits provided by the United States Postal  
42 Service, or (E) those previously eligible by virtue of receiving disa-  
43 bility benefits under the supplemental security income program or the  
44 social security disability program and currently receiving medical  
45 assistance benefits based on determination of disability as provided in  
46 section three hundred sixty-six of the social services law; and

47 (b) "low-income senior citizen" shall mean a person who (i) is at  
48 least sixty-five years of age; and (ii) either (A) has had a total  
49 household income of less than fifty thousand dollars for two consecutive  
50 income tax years beginning in two thousand nineteen, as verified by the  
51 department of taxation and finance; or (B) is annually eligible to  
52 receive assistance under the emergency rental assistance program (ERAP),  
53 home energy assistance program (HEAP) or other federal and state assist-  
54 ance programs.

55 § 3. The public service law is amended by adding a new section 91-b to  
56 read as follows:

1 § 91-b. Telephone discount program. 1. (a) Notwithstanding any other  
2 provision of law, the commission is authorized and directed to require a  
3 telephone corporation to establish a discount program for low-income  
4 senior citizens and individuals with a disability no later than ninety  
5 days after the effective date of this section. Such program shall offer  
6 a yearly benefit to low-income senior citizens and individuals with a  
7 disability in the form of a ten percent discount on telephone bills. The  
8 fiscal impact of such program shall not be borne by customers and shall  
9 not be added to bills rendered by a telephone corporation to customers.

10 (b) A telephone corporation which offers such discount program shall  
11 conspicuously advertise the availability and amount of such discount on  
12 the website of such telephone corporation. The availability and amount  
13 of such discount shall also be conspicuously advertised on the accessi-  
14 bility page of the website of such telephone corporation.

15 2. For the purposes of this section:

16 (a) "individuals with a disability" shall mean a person (i) with a  
17 disability, as defined in subdivision twenty-one of section two hundred  
18 ninety-two of the executive law; and (ii) who is currently receiving (A)  
19 social security disability insurance (SSDI), (B) supplemental security  
20 income (SSI) benefits under the federal social security act, (C) disa-  
21 bility pension or disability compensation benefits provided by the  
22 United States department of veterans affairs, (D) disability pension or  
23 disability compensation benefits provided by the United States Postal  
24 Service, or (E) those previously eligible by virtue of receiving disa-  
25 bility benefits under the supplemental security income program or the  
26 social security disability program and currently receiving medical  
27 assistance benefits based on determination of disability as provided in  
28 section three hundred sixty-six of the social services law; and

29 (b) "low-income senior citizen" shall mean a person who (i) is at  
30 least sixty-five years of age; and (ii) either (A) has had a total  
31 household income of less than fifty thousand dollars for two consecutive  
32 income tax years beginning in two thousand nineteen, as verified by the  
33 department of taxation and finance; or (B) is annually eligible to  
34 receive assistance under the emergency rental assistance program (ERAP),  
35 home energy assistance program (HEAP) or other federal and state assist-  
36 ance programs.

37 § 4. The public service law is amended by adding a new section 224-d  
38 to read as follows:

39 § 224-d. Cable discount program. 1. (a) Notwithstanding any other  
40 provision of law, the commission is authorized and directed to require a  
41 telephone corporation, as defined in subdivision seventeen of section  
42 two of this chapter, and a cable television company, as defined in  
43 section two hundred twelve of this article, that provides cable service  
44 to customers in New York, to establish a discount program for low-income  
45 senior citizens and individuals with a disability no later than ninety  
46 days after the effective date of this section. Such program shall offer  
47 a yearly benefit to low-income senior citizens and individuals with a  
48 disability in the form of a ten percent discount on cable bills. The  
49 fiscal impact of such program shall not be borne by customers and shall  
50 not be added to bills rendered by a telephone corporation or cable tele-  
51 vision company to customers.

52 (b) A telephone corporation or cable television company which offers  
53 such discount program shall conspicuously advertise the availability and  
54 amount of such discount on the website of such telephone corporation or  
55 cable television company. The availability and amount of such discount

1 shall also be conspicuously advertised on the accessibility page of the  
2 website of such telephone corporation or cable television company.

3 2. For the purposes of this section:

4 (a) "individuals with a disability" shall mean a person (i) with a  
5 disability, as defined in subdivision twenty-one of section two hundred  
6 ninety-two of the executive law; and (ii) who is currently receiving (A)  
7 social security disability insurance (SSDI), (B) supplemental security  
8 income (SSI) benefits under the federal social security act, (C) disa-  
9 bility pension or disability compensation benefits provided by the  
10 United States department of veterans affairs, (D) disability pension or  
11 disability compensation benefits provided by the United States Postal  
12 Service, or (E) those previously eligible by virtue of receiving disa-  
13 bility benefits under the supplemental security income program or the  
14 social security disability program and currently receiving medical  
15 assistance benefits based on determination of disability as provided in  
16 section three hundred sixty-six of the social services law; and

17 (b) "low-income senior citizen" shall mean a person who (i) is at  
18 least sixty-five years of age; and (ii) either (A) has had a total  
19 household income of less than fifty thousand dollars for two consecutive  
20 income tax years beginning in two thousand nineteen, as verified by the  
21 department of taxation and finance; or (B) is annually eligible to  
22 receive assistance under the emergency rental assistance program (ERAP),  
23 home energy assistance program (HEAP) or other federal and state assist-  
24 ance programs.

25 § 5. This act shall take effect immediately.