

STATE OF NEW YORK

8492

IN SENATE

March 7, 2022

Introduced by Sen. PARKER -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Energy and Telecommunications

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

34 2. For the purposes of this section:

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

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

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

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

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

17 2. For the purposes of this section:

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

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

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

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

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

1 cable television company. The availability and amount of such discount
2 shall also be conspicuously advertised on the accessibility page of the
3 website of such telephone corporation or cable television company.

4 2. For the purposes of this section:

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

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

26 § 5. This act shall take effect immediately.