

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.

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

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

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

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

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

2. For the purposes of this section:

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

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

§ 3. The public service law is amended by adding a new section 91-b to 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.