

# STATE OF NEW YORK

47

2023-2024 Regular Sessions

## IN ASSEMBLY

(Prefiled)

January 4, 2023

Introduced by M. of A. SAYEGH, DICKENS, SEAWRIGHT, DeSTEFANO, THIELE, SANTABARBARA, TAGUE, DURSO -- Multi-Sponsored by -- M. of A. MILLER -- read once and referred to the Committee on Corporations, Authorities and Commissions

AN ACT to amend the public service law, the public authorities law and the general business law, in relation to requiring utility companies maintain a toll free number for reporting service outages

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  
2 119-d to read as follows:

3 § 119-d. Toll free number for service outages. 1. Any gas corpo-  
4 ration, electric corporation, gas and electric corporation, water corpo-  
5 ration, steam corporation or a municipality rendering equivalent utility  
6 services is required to establish, provide and maintain a toll free  
7 phone number for consumers of such utility to call for reporting service  
8 outages. Such toll free number shall:

9 a. be attended twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week;

10 b. have the capacity to adequately address a surge in phone call  
11 volume during an emergency situation or extreme weather conditions;

12 c. be posted clearly and conspicuously on the homepage of the utility  
13 company's website; and

14 d. be posted clearly and conspicuously on the first page of each  
15 consumer's billing statement.

16 2. The failure to comply with the provisions in this section shall  
17 subject any gas corporation, electric corporation, gas and electric  
18 corporation, water corporation, steam corporation or a municipality  
19 rendering equivalent utility services to the penalties authorized in  
20 section twenty-five of this chapter.

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

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1 3. Any municipality shall have the opportunity to petition the commis-  
2 sion for an exemption from the requirements of this section if such  
3 municipality can show that such requirements are unduly burdensome.

4 § 2. The public authorities law is amended by adding a new section  
5 1020-mm to read as follows:

6 § 1020-mm. Toll free number for service outages. 1. The service  
7 provider shall be required to establish, provide and maintain a toll  
8 free phone number for consumers of service provided by the service  
9 provider to call for reporting service outages. Such toll free number  
10 shall:

11 (a) be attended twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week;

12 (b) have the capacity to adequately address a surge in phone call  
13 volume during an emergency situation or extreme weather conditions;

14 (c) be posted clearly and conspicuously on the homepage of the author-  
15 ity's website; and

16 (d) be posted clearly and conspicuously on the first page of each  
17 consumer's billing statement.

18 2. The failure to comply with the provisions of this section shall  
19 subject the service provider to the penalties authorized in section  
20 twenty-five of the public service law.

21 § 3. The general business law is amended by adding a new section  
22 399-yyyy to read as follows:

23 § 399-yyyy. Toll free number for cable television and internet service  
24 outages. 1. Any cable television or internet service provider rendering  
25 equivalent utility services is required to establish, provide and main-  
26 tain a toll free phone number for consumers of such utility to call for  
27 reporting service outages. Such toll free number shall:

28 (a) be attended twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week;

29 (b) have the capacity to adequately address a surge in phone call  
30 volume during an emergency situation or extreme weather conditions;

31 (c) be posted clearly and conspicuously on the homepage of the cable  
32 television or internet service provider's website; and

33 (d) be posted clearly and conspicuously on the first page of each  
34 consumer's billing statement.

35 2. The failure to comply with the provisions in this section shall  
36 subject any cable television or internet service provider rendering  
37 equivalent utility services to the penalties authorized in section twen-  
38 ty-five of the public service law.

39 § 4. This act shall take effect on the ninetieth day after it shall  
40 have become a law.