

STATE OF NEW YORK

8946

IN SENATE

January 20, 2026

Introduced by Sen. OBERACKER -- 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 requiring gas and electric corporations provide in-person customer service representatives and maintain a publicly accessible outage and emergency tracking website

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

1 Section 1. Paragraph (a) of subdivision 13 of section 65 of the public
2 service law, as amended by chapter 107 of the laws of 2025, is amended
3 to read as follows:
4 (a) Every gas corporation or electric corporation furnishing utility
5 services shall provide the following call center customer assistance
6 receiving inquiries by phone or in writing on: customer financial
7 responsibility; receiving requests to initiate or terminate service;
8 receiving requests for emergency services; providing information on
9 outages and emergencies; shared metering; determining deposit required
10 or billing rate; receiving meter and service orders and access to meter
11 requests; explaining company rates, regulations, policies, procedures,
12 and common practices; initiating trouble order forms and high bill
13 investigations; inbound and/or outbound handling of payment and other
14 credit arrangements such as obtaining deposits, financial statements and
15 payment plans; collection assistance inquiries and referring customers
16 to social service agencies and other assistance programs. Such call
17 center shall always have available in-person customer service represen-
18 tatives to receive and respond to inquiries by phone. This paragraph
19 shall not apply to communications between departments to resolve a
20 customer inquiry. For purposes of this section, "collection assistance
21 inquiries" shall not include calls or activities related to the
22 collection of debts that are referred to third-party collection agencies
23 or those involving the direct pursuit of financial recovery on delin-
24 quent accounts.

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

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1 § 2. Section 66 of the public service law is amended by adding a new
2 subdivision 21-a to read as follows:

3 21-a. Every gas corporation, electric corporation or municipality
4 furnishing utility services shall maintain a public facing website which
5 shall include real-time information on outages and emergencies, the
6 nature of such outages and emergencies, and estimates on when the
7 outages and emergencies will be resolved.

8 § 3. This act shall take effect one year after it shall have become a
9 law. Effective immediately, the addition, amendment and/or repeal of any
10 rule or regulation necessary for the implementation of this act on its
11 effective date are authorized to be made and completed on or before such
12 effective date.