

## **Utility, Phone and Internet Reconnections During the Maryland State of Emergency**

Governor Hogan declared a State of Emergency for Maryland on March 5, 2020. On March 16, he announced an Executive Order prohibiting the termination of public services. These include electric, gas, water, as well as phone, cable, and internet services. **Many utility companies have made a voluntary commitment to work with currently off-service customers to reconnect service. The Office of People's Counsel (OPC) is trying to keep track of any problems customers may experience with a reconnection request. If you or your agency experience or hear about such problems, please send an email to [DLInfo OPC@maryland.gov](mailto:DLInfo OPC@maryland.gov) with the name of the utility, a description of the reasons given for the denial, and contact information.**

If electric, gas, private water or landline (wired phone) services are currently off due to non-payment:

- 1) Contact the provider to try and negotiate an immediate reconnection and payment plan for the past due bill on the account. Utilities will not reconnect if the termination was due to a hazardous situation or safety concern.
- 2) If the provider will not negotiate an immediate reconnection, contact OPC at [DLInfo opc@maryland.gov](mailto:DLInfo opc@maryland.gov). In the email please include the name of the utility company, a description of the reasons given for the denial, and contact information. OPC is currently collecting this information to present collective issues on behalf of utility customers.

If cable television, internet, wireless cell phone, or residential water/gas/electric (when the utility is in the landlord's name) services are currently off due to non-payment:

- 1) Contact the provider to try and negotiate an immediate reconnection and a payment plan for the past due bill on the account.
- 2) If the provider will not negotiate an immediate reconnection contact the Office of the Attorney General Consumer Protection Division Hotline at 410-528-8662/888-743-0023. You could also make a complaint online to the Office of the Attorney General at <http://www.marylandattorneygeneral.gov/Pages/CPD/Complaint.aspx>

**If you have received reports from clients or the community of problems with utility reconnections during the State of Emergency please contact either OPC or the Office of the Attorney General.**