CHICAGO MEDICAL-LEGAL PARTNERSHIP FOR CHILDREN
UTILITIES ASSISTANCE CHART

Service	Contact	Conditions and Benefits
Certificate of Illness	**Physician, hospital or board of health to fax certification to utility company.**	• **Certification must name the illness, be on office letterhead, and be signed by a physician.** • **Certification must be received and accepted by the utility company.** • Prohibits the disconnection of heat-related gas or electric service for 30-60 days. (Cooking gas accounts are NOT eligible.) • Mandates reconnection of heat-related utility service within 14 days of a disconnection. • May be used once every 12 or 24 months, and may require a 30 day renewal, depending on utility company policy. Policy should be located on the back of the red disconnection notice. • Customer must enter into a payment plan at the end of the certification period.
LIHEAP (Low-Income Energy Assistance Program)	Statewide Hotline: (877) 411-9276	• **Requires proof of household income and most recent utility bill.** • One-time payment (per season) to gas or to electric utility companies. • Cash benefit directly to household if utilities are included in rent. • No discontinuation of service from December 1 through March 31 for accounts that received LIHEAP funds. • Percentage of Income Payment Plan (PIPP) option - provides a monthly utility stipend instead of an annual block grant, and includes unlimited arrearage reduction component—highly recommended, but availability varies by location.
ComEd Residential Special Hardship Fund **ComEd CARE**: (888) 806-2273	In Cook County: **CEDA** (800) 571-2332 In Will County: **WCCC** (815) 722-0722 In DuPage County: **DHS**: (630) 407-6500 In Lake County: **Community Action Partnership**: (847) 249-4330;	• **Requires proof of hardship including but not limited to: medical hardship, military deployment, disabili**ty, financial constraints due to being a senior citizen (contact agency for complete details). Grant of $500 to $1500 on Com Ed bill depending on the time of year. May apply once every two years.
ComEd Helps Activated Military Personnel (CHAMP)	**ComEd CARE hotline**: (888) 806-2273	• **US Military, National Guard, and Reserves who have been called to active duty.** • **Veterans who were honorably discharged** Grant up to $1,000, deferred payment/installment plan, extended due dates, cancellation of late charges, deposit reduction, and budget payment plan.
Peoples Gas (PG) Share the Warmth **Nicor Gas (NG) Sharing Program**	Peoples Gas customers: **CEDA** (800) 571-2332 Nicor Gas customers: **Local Salvation Army** or 1-800-SAL-ARMY	• **Customers must make payment within 14 days of application approval.** • Customers that qualify for LIHEAP may also qualify for this grant • Matching grants up to $200 for PG customers; up to $450 for NG customers. Available during heating season.
Illinois Homeless Prevention Program	In Chicago: Call 311 — Ask for **"Homelessness Prevention Call Center"** In Suburban Cook County: (877) 426-6515	• **Must be able to demonstrate ability to pay future bills after grant based on current or anticipated income.** • Provides assistance for rent, gas or electric utilities.
Citizens Utility Board (CUB)	**Illinois Consumer Hotline:** (800) 669-5556 Monday-Friday	• **Attempted resolution with utility first; have not contacted ICC** • Advocates for consumer rights - complaints and disputes, payment negotiations, and assistance with getting a certificate of illness processed. • Information and advocacy regarding alternative gas and electric charges on utility bills • Money saving tips, speakers and events, such as utility bill clinics for clients and in depth workshops for service providers. • Clients may call hotline or service providers may contact Aimee Gendusa English directly at (312) 263-4282 x 113.
Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC)	**ICC**: (800) 524-0795 8:30 am-5 pm Mon-Fri	• **Attempted resolution with the utility first** • Regulates and enforces state utility regulation. Consumer services division assists consumers with utility questions and disputes.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING MEDICAL CERTIFICATION LETTER REQUESTS

Dear Parent or Guardian:

You recently asked for a medical certification letter to be sent to your utility company.

1. **You will need to call your utility company and ask them if they accepted the letter and its start date.**
    - If this letter is accepted by the utility company, it will stop the disconnection of the service for 30 days.
    - If your letter is accepted, you will need to work out a payment plan to pay off your bill.

2. **You may ask for another letter from us within 30 days of the last letter's start date. This will give you an extra 30 days for a total of 60 days before service is disconnected if no payment plan has been worked out.**

3. **You can only have a medical certification letter sent to your utility company once every 12-24 months, depending on the utility company. Please call your utility company for more information.**
    - If you have received a grant from the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), gas and electric companies cannot disconnect your service from December 1 through March 31. (Please keep in mind that receipt of an application number is not the same as receipt of the LIHEAP grant.) During this time, you should continue paying whatever you can afford each month toward your bill. After March 31 you will have to enter into a formal deferred payment arrangement (DPA) with the utility company to be protected from disconnection.

    - We have included information (see attached) for other programs that may be able to help you. These programs may help with financial assistance, billing questions and complaints or understanding your rights as a utility customer.

    - If you would like help with any of these services, please contact a hospital or clinic social worker.

4. **The Chicago Medical-Legal Partnership for Children provides free legal services to families at their hospital and clinic partnership sites. You can receive a referral through your doctor or social worker.**