

19.7 SPECIAL REDUCED RESIDENTIAL SERVICE RATE (20% UTILITY DISCOUNT PROGRAM)

A. GAS AND ELECTRIC COMPANIES

1. Introduction

During the months of November through March, recipients of SSI, WV WORKS, and recipients of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits who are age 60 or older are eligible for a 20% discount from their gas and electric companies. The Department's role is to send application packets to recipients of the qualifying benefits and to supply the utility companies with lists of customers who have become ineligible for the discounts because they are no longer eligible for the qualifying benefits.

2. Operation

In October, application packets are mailed to recipients of SSI, WV WORKS, and recipients of SNAP benefits who are age 60 or older.

During the program months of November through March, application packets are mailed to new and reopened AGs that are approved for the qualifying benefits.

In addition, an application will be mailed to an individual upon request if he is a recipient of a qualifying benefit and has lost or failed to receive his original application packet. If he is not a recipient of a qualifying benefit, he will receive a notice from DFA explaining why he is not eligible for the discount.

The client completes the application and submits it to the utility company. The utility company determines eligibility for the discount and applies the reduced rate to the eligible client's account. Approved applications are sent by the utility company to DFA.

Each month, DFA sends to each participating utility company a list of its customers who have become ineligible for the discount because they are no longer receiving the qualifying benefits. The company removes the discount from those accounts.

Dependent upon the company, all discounts are removed by the end of March or April.

Emergency And Special Assistance Programs

3. Application

When the application is received by the recipient, it contains the name and birth date of all eligible persons in the assistance group (AG), effective date, case number, address, the Social Security Number for the primary person and a date by which the application should be returned to the utility company. In addition, a waiver on the reverse side must be signed by the payee to allow the Department to verify eligibility of the AG for gas and electric utility company.

4. Role Of The Local Office

The local office must:

- Refer inquiries about the program from utility companies to DFA.
- Send DFA the name, address, case number and Social Security Number of persons claiming to be qualified for the discount who reported they did not receive an application packet or whose original packet was lost or destroyed.

NOTE: If the recipient claims the original application has been lost or stolen and does not report a new address, the Worker must issue a duplicate form from Client Notices in eRAPIDS. If a new address is reported by the recipient, then the new address, along with the case name, number, and Social Security Number must be forwarded to DFA, so the address can be updated on the form. A duplicate is issued by DFA.

B. WEST VIRGINIA AMERICAN WATER (WVAW)

1. Operation

The 20% Utility Discount Program for West Virginia American Water operates the same as the Gas and Electric Programs with the exception that the WVAW Program will operate on a year round basis.

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