

Philip D. Murphy
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Sheila Y. Oliver
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State of New Jersey

BOARD OF PUBLIC UTILITIES
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Joseph L. Fiordaliso
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June 2, 2022

Dear Program Partner:

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, many of our residents struggled to pay their utility bills. As you know, the State's grace period on utility shut-offs expired on December 31, 2021. Many residents are now in danger of shut off for non-payment. The **good news** is there are many utility assistance programs available to provide residents the financial relief they need. **Recent legislation provides additional shut off protections and payment plans for utility customers who apply for a State-sponsored utility assistance program by June 14, 2022.** Also, if a customer experiences utility disconnection, they can be reconnected if they apply for a utility assistance program. I am happy to say several of the State's utility assistance programs have significantly increased their income limits so that more households can access these benefits. To raise awareness of these valuable resources, the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (NJBPU) is coordinating "**Utility Assistance Week**" **June 6 – June 10th**.

NJBPU along with our State partners and the utilities will be *amplifying* our existing collective outreach efforts to help spread the word about available assistance programs, namely:

- [American Rescue Plan-Utility Relief Program](#) (ARP-Utility Relief)
- [Low Income Household Water Assistance Program](#) (LIHWAP)
- [Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program](#) (LIHEAP)
- [Universal Service Fund](#) and [Fresh Start](#) (USF)
- [Payment Assistance for Gas and Electric](#) (PAGE)
- Payment Arrangements through the utility companies
- The [Utility Customer's Bill of Rights](#)
- [2-1-1](#) as a 24/7 referral source for utility assistance as well as other helpful programs

For your convenience, we have created a [Utility Assistance Week Communications Toolkit](#) that includes brochures, messaging, hashtags, and graphics for your use. Please feel free to share these resources across your municipal websites, newsletters, local access TV, robo-calls, and social media. Contact Geraldine.Quintero@bpu.nj.gov (609-610-6324) should you have any questions.

I appreciate anything you can do to help get the word out to your constituents that if they are behind on their bills, they should not wait to reach out for help.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joe Fiordaliso".

Joseph L. Fiordaliso
NJBPU President