

FINANCIAL HARDSHIP STATEMENT

NOTE: HOME OWNERS ARE STILL SUBJECT TO THE LIEN PROCESS

Account #: _____

Customer Name: _____

Service Address: _____

Application Date: _____



Tel: 978-948-3992

Mail: PO Box 355,
Office: 47 Summer St.
Rowley, MA 01969

www.rowleylight.com

Office Hours:
Weekdays 8 AM – 4:30 PM

Chapter 164: Section 124A. Shutting off or failing to restore service during serious illness Section 124A. No gas or electric company shall shut off or fail to restore gas or electric service in any residence during such time as there is a serious illness therein; provided, however, that a registered physician or the local board of health certifies in writing to the company that such serious illness exists; and provided, further, that the customer cannot afford to pay any overdue bill because of a financial hardship. Any such certification by a registered physician or local board of health shall be effective unless and until found invalid, after review, by the department. The department may promulgate such rules and regulations consistent with this section as it deems reasonable and necessary to carry out the provisions of this section.

Chapter 164: Section 124B. Shutting off gas or electric service for failure to pay for appliances; prohibition Section 124B. No gas or electric company shall shut off gas or electric service in any home for the reason that a person has failed to pay for an appliance purchased from such company.

Chapter 164: Section 124C. Nursing homes, homes for the aged, convalescent homes, and hospitals; shutting off gas or electric service Section 124C. No gas or electric utility intending to shut off gas or electricity in any licensed nursing home, home for the aged, convalescent home or hospital, shall do so without first giving fourteen days' notice in writing to the customer and to the department. Such utility may thereafter shut off such service only upon such terms and conditions as may be determined by the department.

Chapter 164: Section 124D. Shutting off gas or electric service to tenants not customer of record Section 124D. No gas or electric company shall shut off gas or electric service to any tenant residing in a dwelling unit who, under a rental arrangement, receives the benefit of gas or electricity or heat, hot water, cooking or lighting, or any combination thereof, but who is not the customer of record of the gas or electric company which supplies such gas or electricity, without first complying with the notice provisions of section one hundred and twenty-four and regulations of the department in compliance with such regulations, and has given notice to each tenant affected thereby. Such notice shall contain the following information:

(a) the amount then due and payable for such gas or electric service;

(b) the date on or after which such service will be shut off, such date to be not less than fifteen nor more than thirty days, as determined by the department, after the day on which such notice is first given;

(c) the date on which said notice is given; and

(d) the right of the occupants of such building to pay the amount due or such portion thereof as is prescribed by regulation of the department and thereby avoid a cessation of service, and to recover the amounts so paid from the person to whom they would otherwise pay their rent.



Any officer or servant of such company as provided in section one hundred and sixteen may, at any reasonable time, enter the common hallways of such building for the purpose of complying with the provisions of this section. Any person who removes, interferes, or tampers with such notice or the provision thereof shall be guilty of a violation of this section and shall be punished by a fine not to exceed twenty-five dollars.

At any time after the date such notice is given any persons who are occupants of the dwelling units within such building may pay such company the amount due or such portion thereof as is mutually agreed upon by the occupants and the company, provided that where no such agreement is reached, the department shall make a final determination of the amount of said portion, in order to avoid cessation of service. If such final determination by the department is not made prior to the date on which service otherwise would have been terminated, such service shall be continued for a period not to exceed fifteen days, during which time the department shall render said final determination. If such amount is received after service has been shut off, service shall be restored by the company as soon as practicable. Any such occupant who has paid all or any portion of said amount may subsequently recover the amount paid to the company either by deducting said amount from any rent or payment on account of taxes or operating expenses then or thereafter due from such occupant to the person to whom he would otherwise pay his rent or by obtaining reimbursement from the person to whom he last paid rent. The company shall, upon receiving any such payment, notify the person liable for gas or electric service as stated in said notice of the amount or amounts paid by any occupant pursuant to the provisions of this section.

Any waiver of the provisions of this section in any lease or rental agreement shall be void and unenforceable. The provisions of section eighteen of chapter one hundred and eighty-six and section two A of chapter two hundred and thirty-nine shall apply to any reprisal against any occupant for exercising his rights pursuant to this section.

Chapter 164: Section 124E. Termination of gas and electric service; households with residents 65 or older Section 124E. No gas or electric company shall shut off gas or electric service to any household in which all residents are sixty-five years of age or older, for failure to pay an outstanding indebtedness for said service without first complying with all rules and regulations of the department related thereto.

Chapter 164: Section 124F. Shutting off service during financial hardship Section 124F. No gas or electric company shall between November fifteenth and March fifteenth shut off gas or electric service to any residential customer who cannot pay an overdue charge because of financial hardship, when such gas or electric service is used to provide heat or to operate the heating system of the customer's unit or building. The department may promulgate such rules and regulations consistent with this section as it deems reasonable and necessary to implement the provision of this section.

Chapter 164: Section 124H. Shutting off service in residence where infant domiciled Section 124H. No gas or electric company shall shut off gas or electric service in any residence in which there is domiciled a person under the age of twelve months provided that the customer cannot afford to pay any overdue bill because of financial hardship. The department may promulgate such rules and regulations consistent with this section as it deems reasonable and necessary to implement the provisions of this section.

A copy of the infant's birth certificate must be provided with this application.



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Please provide the following information:

1) Home Phone #: _____

2) Work Phone #: _____

3) Cell Phone #: _____

4) Social Security #: _____

5) a. Number of people in your household: _____

b. How many household members are over age 65: _____

6) Total Household Income, *before* taxes (amount should include all sources, such as Work, Social Security, AFDC, Welfare, General Public Assistance, Other):

Per month: \$ _____ OR Per year: \$ _____

If you are claiming "Financial Hardship" under Massachusetts General Law Chapter 164 §§ 124A through 124H, please provide the following information and return this form to RMLP within seven (7) days.

MGL Chapter 164 Section 124 pertaining to the Financial Hardship (answer A – H): _____

I, the undersigned, do hereby certify that the information provided is complete and the truth, to the best of my knowledge.

Customer Signature: _____

Date: _____

For Office Use Only: FHS Date Received: _____ Accepted: Rejected: By: _____

Chapter 164: Section 124G. Restoration of service upon payment Section 124G. No gas or electric company which shuts off gas or electric service of a residential customer in compliance with the provisions of this chapter shall, upon receipt of full payment or such partial payment as such company deems satisfactory by such customer, fail to restore full and complete service.



Financial Hardship Rights and Filing Requirements

Rowley Municipal Lighting Plant (RMLP) will not terminate electric service to customers who satisfy us that a financial hardship **AND** one or more of the following conditions exist:

1. A resident of your household has a **SERIOUS ILLNESS**; or
2. An **INFANT** under twelve (12) months of age lives with you and service has not been terminated before the birth of the child; or
3. Electric service is necessary to operate your **HEATING SYSTEM** and service has not been terminated before November 15 (protection valid only between November 15 and March 15); or
4. All residents of your household are **65 YEARS OR OLDER**.

Rights to Electric Service for Residential Customers during Financial Hardship If you cannot pay your electric bill because of a financial hardship and there is a serious illness, or there is an infant under the age of 12 months, or if it is between November 15 and March 15 and you heat your home with electric heat, we will not shut off your electric service. To protect yourself, call us immediately and we will send you a financial hardship statement, which you must complete and return. In addition, you must provide the necessary documentation outlined below within seven (7) days.

Serious Illness and Financial Hardship Initially, your doctor or board of health must call us to let us know of the serious medical condition. Within seven (7) days of the telephone call, you must return the Financial Hardship Statement and written certification of the serious illness. Said certification from your doctor or board of health shall state the name and address of the seriously ill person, the nature of the illness, and the business address and telephone number of the certifying physician or local board of health. The statement must be renewed monthly, or quarterly if the illness is certified to be chronic.

Winter Protection and Financial Hardship If you heat your home with electricity and cannot pay your overdue electric bill between November 15 and March 15 because of financial hardship, we will not shut off your electricity. Contact us by phone immediately and we will have you complete a Financial Hardship Statement.

Infant Under the Age of 12 Months and Financial Hardship To qualify, please contact us by phone immediately. Within seven days of the call, you must return the Financial Hardship Statement and send us the name, address, and birth date of the child and one of the following:

- Birth certificate.
- Official records or letter from a registered physician, local board of health, hospital, or government official.
- Letter from the Department of Transitional Assistance.
- Letter from a clergyman or religious institution.

Notice to Elderly Customers If all residents in your household are 65 or older, we will not shut off your electricity without the permission of the Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities (DPU). Please call RMLP immediately if all residents in your home are 65 years of age or older. If you cannot pay your bill at once, you can work out a payment plan with us. If you have any questions, or want further information, call us at (978) 948-3992. You must provide RMLP with a signed statement indicating the names and dates of birth of each member of your household. In addition, you may appoint a third person to represent you concerning your account with RMLP. We will, upon written request by you, send to this third party all bills, past due notices of termination of service and notice of your right to appeal. The third party will be in no way responsible for payment of your bill.

Payment Plans If you are having difficulty paying your electric bill, a Payment Plan may be arranged. Under this plan a past due balance may be paid in equal installments over a specified period. Current charges will be due in addition to the payments on the past due balance. The length of time that a payment plan extends will vary from a minimum of four (4) months depending on the past due balance and your ability to pay. We also offer Budget Billing, which averages your annual electric costs and spreads them over a 12-month period. Please call RMLP at (978) 948-3992 or visit www.rowleylight.com to find out more about this and other payment plans.

Right to Dispute your Electric Bill If you believe your electric bill is inaccurate or you wish to dispute all or part of your bill, or if you have a service quality problem or dispute, call us at (978) 948-3992 or write us at PO Box 355, Rowley, MA 01969. We will investigate the dispute and tell you what we find. If, after our investigation, you still think the bill is not correct or the service quality problem has not been addressed, you have a right to appeal by contacting the Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities (DPU) Consumer Complaints Division (at the information provided below) or by visiting the DPU's web site at www.mass.gov/dpu. DPU regulations provide that a company may not terminate electric service for failure to pay any portion of a bill when a customer complaint or appeal is pending.

RMLP inquiries: Rowley Municipal Lighting Plant
PO Box 355, Rowley, MA 01969
Phone: (978) 948-3992
Office: 47 Summer St., Rowley, MA 01969
Website: www.rowleylight.com

DPU: MA Dept. of Public Utilities – Consumer Division
1 South Station, Suite 2, Boston, MA 02110
Phone: (617) 737-2836 or toll free (877) 886-5066
Fax: (617) 305-3742
Website: www.mass.gov/dpu