

# Emergency Medical Certificate



Do you or someone in your household require ongoing medical care? Are you worried your electric, natural gas or telephone service might be cutoff? If this is you, you need to know Oregon's regulated utilities offer a program to allow you to make special payment arrangements so your telephone, electric and gas service isn't shut off if you fall behind on paying your bills. It is called the Emergency Medical Certificate Program. The program allows customers who are under a doctor's care the option of more lenient plan to pay their bill. This allows the customer to get caught up and allows a utility to collect on the debt.

## *How do customers apply?*



A qualified medical professional submits an Emergency Medical Certificate (EMC) to your utility. These include a licensed physician, nurse-practitioner, or physician's assistant who has authority to diagnose and treat a medical condition without direct supervision by a physician. The physician can call in an oral certificate to the utility, however, it must be confirmed in writing within 14 days. The EMC does not need to be on a "company form" but must include important information regarding how the loss of service will affect the customer. The customer or the medical personnel provides the EMC to his or her utility.

## *How do I qualify?*

To qualify you must be the account holder or live with the customer of the account. You can be a relative (spouse, child, grandparent) or a roommate (friend, fiancé).

## *What must a certificate include?*

*It must include the name of the person the certificate is for and relationship to customer*

- *Complete description of health conditions*
- *Explanation of how person's health will be significantly endangered by terminating service*
- *How long condition is expected to last*
- *Type of service required*
- *Signature of the qualified medical professional*

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## *What does this entitle you to?*

After securing a certificate you become eligible for a flexible time payment arrangement with your utility to begin paying off your past due amounts, and, more importantly avoid having your service discontinued. It is important to understand that having an EMC does NOT excuse a customer from paying their bills.



EMC time payments may provide more lenient repayment terms than ordinary time-payment agreements.

For an energy customer, the Emergency Medical Certificate is good for six months unless your physician states the condition is chronic - then it is good for 12 months. The energy utility company will notify you at least 15 days before your medical certificate is due to expire so you can contact your doctor to have the form completed for renewal.

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For a telephone customer, the Emergency Medical Certificate is good for the duration of the Time Payment Arrangement (TPA). The telephone company will not notify you when your medical certificate is coming up for expiration.

***If you have questions about this program, call the Oregon Public Utility Commission, Consumer Section at:***

**1-800-522-2404 Monday through Friday, or contact your utility company**