

1 VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY — CHAPTER

2 *An Act to amend and reenact § 56-245.1:4 of the Code of Virginia, relating to certain utilities; notice*
 3 *procedures for nonpayment.*

4 [H 1002]

5 Approved

6 **Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**7 **1. That § 56-245.1:4 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:**8 **§ 56-245.1:4. Notice procedures for nonpayment; disconnecting utility service.**9 ~~A. Each utility subject to the provisions of~~ *As used in this section, "utility" has the same meaning as*
 10 *provided in § 56-245.1:3.*11 *B. Each utility shall provide to each of its residential customers a copy of its disconnection for*
 12 *nonpayment policy (i) at any time a new residential account is established, (ii) when any disconnection for*
 13 *nonpayment of bills or fees is scheduled by including a copy of the policy with such notice, or (iii) by*
 14 *publishing the disconnection policy on the utility's website. Each such utility shall provide all required*
 15 ~~notices in~~ *notices required under this subsection in English and, Spanish, and, for customers residing in a*
 16 *locality that is required to provide voting or election materials in another language pursuant to § 24.2-128,*
 17 *in any such other language. Such required notices shall include information regarding payment plans and*
 18 *state, federal, or utility energy assistance programs.*19 ~~B. C. Each utility subject to the provisions of this section shall deliver notice of nonpayment of bills or~~
 20 ~~fees to its residential customers prior to disconnection by using at least two of the following methods: (i)~~
 21 ~~mail, (ii) email, (iii) text message, (iv) phone call, or (v) door hanger.~~22 ~~C. Utility disconnections~~ *D. No utility shall disconnect a residential customer due to the nonpayment of*
 23 *bills or fees are prohibited for residential customers until the customer's account is 60 days in arrears and the*
 24 *utility has made reasonable efforts to offer bill payment assistance, arrange a payment plan, or provide*
 25 *information to the customer for other bill payment assistance or energy savings programs. After each missed*
 26 *payment, the utility shall provide notice pursuant to subsection B C and make contact with the customer and*
 27 *offer bill payment assistance, arrange a payment plan, or provide information to the customer for other bill*
 28 *payment assistance or energy savings programs.*29 ~~D. E. No electric or gas utility shall require a deposit of more than 25 percent of the arrearage amount for~~
 30 ~~service, exclusive of nonpayment fees, penalties, or interest, in order to restore service to any residential~~
 31 ~~customer where such utility received funding from the Department of Social Services for such customer~~
 32 ~~through the Home Energy Assistance Program pursuant to § 63.2-805 within the last 12 months. A customer~~
 33 ~~is eligible for this provision once every three years.~~34 **2. That no later than September 1, 2026, the Department of Elections shall post on its website a list of**
 35 **the localities designated as a covered locality pursuant to § 24.2-128 of the Code of Virginia and the**
 36 **minority languages in which each such locality is required to provide voting or election materials. The**
 37 **Department of Elections shall update such list as necessary to maintain accuracy.**

ENROLLED

HB1002ER