



## Public Utility Commission of Texas

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### News Release

February 21, 2021

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### **PUC EMERGENCY ACTIONS TO PROTECT TEXAS ELECTRICITY CUSTOMERS**

*Commission suspends Disconnects for Non-Payment and Continues COVID19-based requirement for Deferred Payment Plans; Pauses ERCOT financial deadlines*

**Austin, TX** – In an emergency [open meeting](#), timed to prevent possible disconnections for non-payment on Monday, the Public Utility Commission of Texas today issued a series of orders intended to protect Texas electricity customers while leaders in the state consider solutions for the financial aftershocks of the winter storm grid event.

The orders addressed the following:

- An immediate suspension of disconnections for non-payment until further notice, including ordering utilities not to process disconnection.
- Continuation of the COVID-19 measure under which REPs are required to offer deferred payment plans to customers when requested.

The orders are applicable to customers of investor owned utilities (IOUs) across the state that fall under the PUC’s jurisdiction (namely Oncor, AEP, CenterPoint, and TNMP). (Note: these provisions do not apply to municipally owned utilities or electric cooperatives that are not within the PUC’s jurisdiction in this area.)

In the meeting deliberations, the Commission strongly urged retail electric providers to delay invoicing for residential and small commercial electricity customers, including invoices with estimated meter reads

“Our absolute top priority as a commission and a state is protecting electricity customers from the devastating effects of a storm that already affected their delivery of power,” said Chairman DeAnn Walker. “The order and directives are intended to be temporary, likely through the end of this week, to address the potential financial impacts that are especially challenging during this extremely difficult time.”

The meeting’s second order was directed at the Electric Reliability Council of Texas, calling on it to exercise the discretion under ERCOT protocols to deviate from protocol deadlines and timing related to settlements, collateral obligations, and invoice payments (which could lead to further market instability) while leaders in the state consider solutions to the financial challenges caused by the grid event.

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### **About the Public Utility Commission**

Our mission is to serve Texans by regulating the state’s electric, telecommunication, and water and sewer utilities, implementing respective legislation, and offering customer assistance in resolving consumer complaints. Since its founding in 1975, the Commission has a long and proud history of service to Texas, protecting customers, fostering competition, and promoting high quality infrastructure. To learn more, please visit <http://www.puc.texas.gov> and follow the PUC on social media: [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Instagram](#)