

DUKE ENERGY OHIO
SERVICE REGULATIONS

SUPPLEMENT A

RULES AND REGULATIONS
GOVERNING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF
CREDIT FOR RESIDENTIAL UTILITY SERVICE

Rule 4901:1-17 of the Ohio Administrative Code as
Adopted by The Public Utilities Commission of Ohio
in Case No. 03-888-AU-ORD

4901:1-17-01 DEFINITIONS

4901:1-17-02 WRITTEN CREDIT PROCEDURES REQUIRED

4901:1-17-03 ESTABLISHMENT OF CREDIT

4901:1-17-03 APPENDIX: GUARANTOR AGREEMENT

4901:1-17-04 DEPOSIT TO REESTABLISH CREDITWORTHINESS

4901:1-17-05 DEPOSIT ADMINISTRATION PROVISIONS

4901:1-17-06 REFUND OF DEPOSIT AND RELEASE OF GUARANTOR

4901:1-17-07 RECORD OF DEPOSIT

4901:1-17-08 APPLICANT AND/OR CUSTOMER RIGHTS

4901:1-17-09 WAIVER REQUESTS

4901:1-17-01 Definitions.

As used in this chapter:

- (A) "Commercial mobile radio service (CMRS)" includes and is specifically limited to mobile telephone, mobile cellular telephone, paging, personal communication services, and specialized mobile radio service providers when serving as a common carrier in Ohio, consistent with rule 4901:1-6-01 of the Administrative Code. Fixed wireless is not considered as CMRS, consistent with rule 4901:1-6-01 of the Administrative Code.
- (B) "Regulated service" means a service offering regulated by the commission.
- (C) "Utility" or "public utility" means all persons, firms, or corporations engaged in the business of providing natural gas, telecommunications (excluding commercial mobile radio service), water or sewage disposal service to consumers as defined in division (G) of section 4929.01 of the Revised Code and divisions (A)(2), (A)(8) and (A)(14) of section 4905.03 of the Revised Code, respectively. Rules for the establishment of credit for electric distribution utilities are included in Chapter 4901:1-10 of the Administrative Code.

4901:1-17-02 Written credit procedures required.

Each public utility shall establish written credit procedures consistent with these rules that allow an applicant for residential service to establish, or an existing residential customer to reestablish, credit with the utility. The procedures should be equitable and administered in a nondiscriminatory manner. The utility, without regard to race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, handicap, or disability, shall base its credit procedures upon the credit risk of the individual as determined by the utility without regard to the collective credit reputation of the area in which the residential applicant or customer lives.

4901:1-17-03 Establishment of credit.

- (A) Each utility may require an applicant for residential service to satisfactorily establish financial responsibility. If the applicant has previously been a customer of that utility, the utility may require the residential applicant to establish financial responsibility pursuant to paragraph (C) of rule 4901:1-17-04 of the Administrative Code. An applicant's financial responsibility will be deemed established if the applicant meets one of the following criteria:
 - (1) The applicant is the owner of the premises to be served or of other real estate within the territory served by the utility and has demonstrated financial responsibility.
 - (2) The applicant demonstrates that he/she is a satisfactory credit risk by means that may be quickly and inexpensively checked by the utility. In determining whether the applicant is a financially responsible person, the public utility may request from the applicant and shall consider information including, but not limited to, the following: name of employer, place of employment, position held, length of service, letters of reference, and names of credit cards possessed by the applicant.

- (3) The applicant demonstrates that he/she has had the same class and a similar type of utility service within a period of twenty-four consecutive months preceding the date of application, unless utility records indicate that the applicant's service was disconnected for nonpayment during the last twelve consecutive months of service, or the applicant had received two consecutive bills with past due balances during that twelve-month period and provided further that the financial responsibility of the applicant is not otherwise impaired.

When an applicant requests a copy of his/her payment history to satisfy paragraph (A)(3) of this rule, each utility shall provide a customer, at his/her request, written information reflecting the customer's payment history. The utility shall provide this information within five business days of this request.

- (4) The applicant makes a cash deposit to secure payment of bills for the utility's service as prescribed in rule 4901:1-17-05 of the Administrative Code.
- (5) The applicant furnishes a creditworthy guarantor to secure payment of bills in an amount sufficient for a sixty-day supply for the service requested. If a third party agrees to be a guarantor for a utility customer, he or she shall meet the criteria as defined in paragraph (A) of this rule or otherwise be creditworthy.
- (a) Telecommunications service providers shall further comply with the provisions set forth in rule 4901:1-5-14 of the Administrative Code.
 - (b) For all utilities, including telecommunications service providers, the guarantor shall sign a written guarantor agreement that shall include, at a minimum, the information shown in the appendix to this rule. The company shall provide the guarantor with a copy of the signed agreement and shall keep the original on file during the term of the guaranty.
 - (c) For all utilities, including telecommunications providers, the company shall send all disconnection notifications for the guaranteed customer also to the guarantor, unless the guarantor affirmatively waives that right.
 - (d) For all utilities, including telecommunication providers, the company shall send a notice to the guarantor when the guaranteed customer requests a transfer of service to a new location. The transfer of service notice shall display all of the following information:
 - (i) The name of the guaranteed customer.
 - (ii) The address of the current guaranteed customer service location.
 - (iii) A statement that the transfer of service to the new location may affect the guarantor's liability.
 - (iv) A statement that, if the guarantor does not want to continue the guaranty at the new service location, the guarantor must provide thirty days' written notice to the company to end the guaranty.
- (B) The establishment of credit under the provisions of these rules, or the reestablishment of credit under the provisions of rule 4901:1-17-04 of the Administrative Code, shall not relieve the applicant or customer from compliance with the regulations of the utility

regarding advance payments and payment of bills by the due date, and shall not modify any regulations of the utility as to the discontinuance of service for nonpayment.

- (C) Upon default by a customer who has furnished a guarantor as provided in paragraph (A)(5) of this rule, the utility may pursue collection actions against the defaulting customer and the guarantor in the appropriate court, or if the guarantor is a customer of the same utility, that utility may transfer the defaulting customer's bill to the guarantor's. The defaulted amount transferred to the guarantor's bill shall not be greater than the amount billed to the customer for sixty days of service or two monthly bills. After thirty days from the transfer, the utility may make the guarantor subject to disconnection procedures, if the amount transferred still remains unpaid.
- (D) An applicant who owes an unpaid bill for previous residential service, whether the bill is owed as a result of service provided to that applicant or is owed under a guarantor agreement, shall not have satisfactorily established or reestablished his/her financial responsibility as long as the bill remains unpaid.

Rule 4901:1-17-03-Appendix: Guarantor Agreement

Guarantor Agreement

I, (name of guarantor), agree to be the guarantor for the (utility type) service provided by (name of utility company) for (customer's name) at the service address of (location).

As the guarantor for (customer's name), I agree to be obligated for charges for the (type of utility) services provided to the guaranteed customer, (customer's name), through the date of termination of the guaranty.

I understand that the company will send a notice to me when the customer requests to transfer service to a new location.

I understand that the company will also send to me all disconnection notifications sent to (name of customer), unless I affirmatively waive that right.

If (customer's name) defaults on the account, I will be held legally responsible for and agree to pay the defaulted amount. As guarantor, I understand that the defaulted amount may be transferred to my account and that my service may be subject to disconnection, if the transferred amount remains unpaid for thirty days. I understand that this amount will not be more than the amount of the bill for sixty days of service.

I understand that I may terminate this guarantor agreement upon thirty days' written notice to (name of company). I also understand that, if I terminate this guarantor agreement, (customer's name) may be required to reestablish creditworthiness when I terminate the guaranty.

I understand that the company shall annually review the account history of each customer who has provided a guarantor. Once (customer's name) satisfies the requirements for the release of a guarantor, as stated in Rule 4901:1-17-06, of the Ohio Administrative Code, (name of company) shall, within thirty days, notify me in writing that I am released from all further responsibility for the account.

I agree to be a guarantor for (customer's name).

(signature of guarantor)

I waive the right to receive all disconnection notices regarding (customer's name) guaranteed service.

(signature of guarantor)

4901:1-17-04 Deposit to reestablish creditworthiness.

- (A) A utility may require a customer to make a deposit or an additional deposit on an account, as set forth in this rule and pursuant to rules 4901:1-17-03 and 4901:1-17-05 of the Administrative Code, to reestablish creditworthiness for tariffed service based on the customer's credit history on that account with that company. After considering the totality of the circumstances, the utility may require a customer whose service has been disconnected to pay a deposit, the delinquent bill, and the reconnection charges prior to restoring service.
- (B) A utility may require a deposit if the customer account meets one of the following criteria:
 - (1) The customer has not made full payment or payment arrangements by the due date for two consecutive bills during the preceding twelve months.
 - (2) The customer has been issued a disconnection notice for nonpayment on two or more occasions during the preceding twelve months.
- (C) A utility may require a deposit if the applicant for service was a customer of that utility, during the preceding twelve months, and had service disconnected for nonpayment, a fraudulent practice, tampering, or unauthorized reconnection.

4901:1-17-05 Deposit administration provisions.

- (A) No public utility, as defined in this chapter, except telecommunications providers, shall require a cash deposit to establish or reestablish credit in an amount in excess of one-twelfth of the estimated charge for regulated service(s) provided by that distribution utility for the ensuing twelve months, plus thirty per cent of the monthly estimated charge. No telecommunications provider shall require a cash deposit to establish or reestablish credit in an amount in excess of that prescribed in rule 4901:1-5-13 of the Administrative Code. Each utility, upon request, shall furnish a copy of these rules to the applicant/customer from whom a deposit is required. If a copy of the rule is provided to a customer/applicant, the utility shall also provide the name, address, website address, and telephone number of the public utilities commission of Ohio.
- (B) Upon receiving a cash deposit, the utility shall furnish to the applicant/customer a receipt that displays all of the following information:

- (1) The name of the applicant/customer.
 - (2) The address of the premises to be served.
 - (3) The billing address for the service.
 - (4) The amount of the deposit and a statement that the rate of interest to be paid on the deposit will be not less than three per cent per annum if the deposit is held for one hundred eighty days or longer.
- (C) Each utility shall accrue interest at a rate of at least three per cent per annum per deposit held for one hundred eighty days or longer. Interest shall be paid to the customer when the deposit is refunded or deducted from the customer's final bill. A utility shall not be required to pay interest on a deposit it holds for less than one hundred eighty days. No utility shall be required to pay additional interest on a deposit after discontinuance of service, if the utility has made a reasonable effort to refund the deposit. A utility shall dispose of any unclaimed deposit, plus accrued interest, in conformity with Chapter 169. of the Revised Code.

4901:1-17-06 Refund of deposit and release of guarantor.

- (A) After discontinuing service, the utility shall promptly apply the customer's deposit, including any accrued interest, to the final bill. The utility shall promptly refund to the customer any deposit, plus any accrued interest, remaining. A transfer of service from one customer location to another within the service area of the utility does not prompt a refund of the deposit or a release of the guarantor.
- (B) The utility shall review each account holding a deposit or a guarantor agreement every twelve months and promptly refund the deposit, plus any accrued interest, or release the guarantor, if the account meets the following criteria:
- (1) The customer has paid his/her bills for service for twelve consecutive months without having had service disconnected for nonpayment.
 - (2) The customer has not had more than two occasions on which his/her bill was not paid by the due date.
 - (3) The customer is not then delinquent in the payment of his/her bills.
- (C) The utility shall promptly return the deposit, plus any accrued interest, upon the customer's request at any time the customer's credit has been otherwise established or reestablished, in accordance with this chapter of the Administrative Code.
- (D) Once the customer satisfies the requirements for release of the guarantor, pursuant to paragraph (B) of this rule, the utility shall notify the guarantor in writing, within thirty days, that the guarantor is released from all further responsibility for the account.

4901:1-17-07 Record of deposit.

Until the deposit is refunded or otherwise disposed of in accordance with applicable law, each utility holding a cash deposit shall maintain a record that displays all of the following information:

- (A) The name and current or last known billing address of each depositor.
- (B) The amount and date of the deposit.
- (C) Each transaction concerning the deposit.

4901:1-17-08 Applicant and/or customer rights.

- (A) Each public utility that requires a cash deposit shall notify the applicant/customer of all options available to establish credit as listed in paragraph (A) of rule 4901:1-17-03 of the Administrative Code.
- (B) If a public utility requires a cash deposit to establish or reestablish service and the customer expresses dissatisfaction with the utility's decision, the company shall inform the customer of the following:
 - (1) The reason(s) for its decision.
 - (2) How to contest the utility's decision and show creditworthiness.
 - (3) The right to have the utility's decision reviewed by an appropriate utility supervisor.
 - (4) The right to have the utility's decision reviewed by the commission staff, and provide the applicant/customer the local or toll-free numbers and/or TDD/TTY numbers, address, and the website address of the commission as stated below:

The public utilities commission of Ohio (PUCO) toll-free at 1-800-686-7826 or 1-614-466-3292, or for TDD/TTY toll-free at 1-800-686-1570 or 1-614-466-8180, from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. weekdays, or the PUCO website at www.PUCO.ohio.gov.

- (C) Each public utility, upon request, shall provide in writing to the applicant/customer the information required by paragraph (B) of this rule.

4901:1-17-09 Waiver requests.

The public utilities commission of Ohio may waive any rule or any part of a rule contained in this chapter of the Administrative Code for good cause upon its own motion or upon application by a company.

The application for a waiver shall include the specific rule(s) requested to be waived. If the request is to waive only a part or parts of a rule, then the application should identify the appropriate paragraphs, sections, or subsections to be waived. The waiver request shall provide sufficient explanation by rule, including advantages and possible disadvantages, to allow the commission to thoroughly evaluate the waiver request.