**Section 280.160 Medical Certification**

a) Intent: The purpose of this Section is to temporarily prohibit disconnection of utility service to a residential customer for at least 60 days in cases of certified medical necessity; and to provide an opportunity for the customer to retire past due amounts by periodic installments under an automatic medical payment arrangement commencing after 30 days.

b) Certifying Parties: Certification may be made by either a licensed physician or a local board of health.

c) Method of Certification:

1) Initial certification by phone call is allowed.

2) Written (may be mailed, faxed or delivered electronically) certification must be provided within 7 days after an initial certification by phone call.

d) Certificate Content:

1) Name and contact information for the certifying party;

2) Service address and name of patient;

3) A statement that the patient resides at the premises in question; and

4) A statement that the disconnection of utility service will aggravate an existing medical emergency or create a medical emergency for the patient.

e) Certificate Timing:

1) Certificate presentation prior to disconnection entitles a customer to receive a medical payment arrangement term, as described under subsection (i)(1).

2) The certificate may be presented up to 14 days after disconnection, with utility discretion as to whether it shall accept a certificate more than 14 days after disconnection have passed. Certification presented after disconnection entitles a customer to receive a medical payment arrangement term, as described under subsection (i)(2).

f) Restoration:

1) When a valid medical certification is provided to the utility up to 14 days after disconnection, service shall be restored within one day after the provision of certification.

2) The utility shall not treat the disconnected customer as an applicant for service for purposes of restoration under a medical certificate.

g) Duration of Certificate: The certificate shall protect the account from disconnection for 60 days after the date of certification. If the customer was disconnected prior to certification, the 60 day period shall not begin until the utility restores the customer's service.

h) Data Collection and Maintenance: The utility shall collect the following data on a monthly basis and maintain the data for two years following its collection. The utility shall make the data available to Commission Staff within 30 days after a request from Staff:

1) The total number medical certificates requested and, in instances in which a utility declines to issue a medical certificate, the reason for denial;

2) The total number of medical certificates issued by the utility;

3) The duration, including start and end dates, of the medical certification period (whether the end date is based on payment by the customer or expiration of the 60-day period).

i) Medical Payment Arrangement:

1) If valid medical certification is received prior to disconnection, the first bill statement that will be due after 30 days after the certification date shall indicate:

A) An amount to pay that is equal to 1/12th of the total amount owing for utility services by the customer;

B) The remaining balance owing for utility services;

C) That the customer is on a medical payment arrangement; and

D) 11 remaining installments of equal amounts to be paid on future bills.

2) If valid medical certification is received after disconnection, the first bill statement that will be due after 30 days after the certification date shall indicate:

A) An amount to pay that is equal to ¼th of the total amount owing for utility services by the customer;

B) The remaining balance owing for utility services;

C) That the customer is on a medical payment arrangement; and

D) Nine remaining installments of equal amounts to be paid on future bills.

3) Valid medical certification shall entitle a customer to an MPA, regardless of the success or failure of previous payment plans of any sort.

j) New Certification of Previously Certified Accounts: Accounts that received a prior valid medical certificate shall be eligible for new certification any time after either:

1) The total account balance has been brought current; or

2) 12 months from the beginning date of the prior certification has passed.