STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

ALL PUBLIC UTILITIES
AND
NEW HAMPSHIRE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

Order Implementing Governor's Emergency Order #3
Pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04

O R D E R N O. 26,343

March 31, 2020

On March 13, 2020, Governor Christopher T. Sununu issued Executive Order 2020-04 declaring a state of emergency due to Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) and invoking his emergency powers under Part II, Article 41 of the New Hampshire Constitution and RSA 4:45 and RSA 4:47. Paragraph 18 of that Executive Order stated that "additional temporary orders, directives, rules and regulations may be issued either by the Governor or by designated State officials with written approval of the Governor."

On March 17, 2020, the Governor issued Emergency Order #3 pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04 (Emergency Order #3), which imposed temporary prohibitions on disconnection or discontinuance of certain essential services. Under Emergency Order #3, all providers of electric, gas, water, telephone, cable, voice over internet protocol (VoIP), internet service, and deliverable fuels (including propane, fuel oil, and heating oil) in the State of New Hampshire are prohibited from disconnecting or discontinuing service for non-payment for the duration of the state of emergency declared based on the novel coronavirus.

At the end of the state of emergency, customers having arrearages accrued during the state of emergency must be provided the opportunity to make a reasonable payment arrangement over no less than a six-month period and shall not be charged any fees for late payment for

arrearages accrued during the state of emergency; however, customers are not relieved of their obligation to pay bills for receipt of any service covered by Emergency Order #3.

Under Emergency Order #3, the Commission is directed to provide assistance and guidance to public utilities in implementing the provisions of that order. In addition, the Commission and the Attorney General "shall have the authority to enforce the provisions of [Emergency Order #3] through any methods provided by current law."

The Commission issues this order to provide guidance and direction to public utilities, as defined in RSA Chapter 362, regarding implementation of the provisions of Emergency Order #3. The Commission has broad regulatory and enforcement authority over public utilities' service, facilities, equipment, operations, rates, service terms and conditions, customer relations, and customer complaints, under Title XXXIV of the New Hampshire Revised Statutes Annotated, including, without limitation, RSA 374:1 and 3 and RSA 365 and 378, and the Commission's rules adopted pursuant to its general and specific rulemaking authority and in compliance with RSA 541-A. In addition, the Commission has jurisdiction under RSA 362:2, II, RSA 363-B, and the Commission's rules over termination of service by the New Hampshire Electric Cooperative, Inc., a rural electric cooperative with a certificate of deregulation on file pursuant to RSA 301:57.

Based upon the foregoing, it is hereby

ORDERED, that public utilities, as defined in RSA 362, and the New Hampshire Electric Cooperative, Inc., shall not disconnect or discontinue service for non-payment for the duration of the state of emergency declared in Executive Order 2020-04; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that public utilities, as defined in RSA 362, and the New Hampshire Electric Cooperative, Inc., shall not charge any customer any fees for late payment

for arrearages accrued during the state of emergency declared in Executive Order 2020-04; and it is

FURTHER ORDERED, that, at the end of the state of emergency declared in Executive Order 2020-04, each public utility, as defined in RSA Chapter 362, and the New Hampshire Electric Cooperative, Inc., shall provide the opportunity for its customers having arrearages accrued during the period of such state of emergency to make a reasonable payment arrangement providing for payments over no less than a six-month period.

By order of the Public Utilities Commission of New Hampshire this thirty-first day of March, 2020.

Dianne Martin	Kathryn M. Bailey	Michael S. Giaimo
Chairwoman	Commissioner	Commissioner

Attested by:

Debra A. Howland
Executive Director