The Henry Shelton Act

FOR LOW-INCOME UTILITY CONSUMERS
60% FORGIVEN ON TOTAL BALANCE OWED

The Henry Shelton Act was signed into Rhode Island law in 2011. It is named after Henry Shelton, founder of the George Wiley Center, a grassroots group that for decades has advocated for the rights of low-income utility consumers and fought for the basic necessity of affordable utility service.

The Henry Shelton Act mandates a debt forgiveness program to allow 60% forgiveness on the total balance owed for LIHEAP eligible (Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program) utility consumers. If your utility service (gas or electric) has been or is scheduled to be terminated and you have a high total balance owed, you may qualify for the Henry Shelton Arrears Forgiveness Payment Plan. Contact your local Community Action Agency to find out if you qualify for LIHEAP and the Henry Shelton Plan.

- Allows 10% down payment of total utility bill owed, to enroll in program.
- Offers 60% forgiveness of total outstanding utility bill, upon completion of 3 year payment program.
- One time offer (once for gas, once for electric), with requirements for payments, to stay enrolled in the program. Monthly payments must be made on time (including current usage), and only 2 payments in a row and 3 payments total may be missed over the 3 year enrollment period (missed payments must be re-paid). If more than 3 payments are missed, you will be un-enrolled and ineligible to re-enroll.

Although this is the best payment/forgiveness plan available, it is important to be aware of the above details, since the Henry Shelton Plan may only be used one time per utility account. Check with National Grid for your account information.

Henry Shelton Plan WORKSHEET (check with National Grid for changes):

Total Utility Bill Owed $__________ x .10 (multiply by ten percent)
   = $__________ Down Payment

Total Utility Bill Owed $__________ - (subtract) Down Payment $_______
   = $__________ Remaining Balance

Remaining Balance $__________ x .40 (multiply by forty percent)
   = $__________ Total Due Obligation

Total Due Obligation $_______ ÷ 36 (divide by 36 months)
   = $_______ total monthly, for 36 months (+ current bill)

Details of the Henry Shelton Forgiveness Payment Plan:

- Available to LIHEAP eligible households (Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program) in Rhode Island. Contact your local Community Energy Agency to find out if you qualify for LIHEAP and the Henry Shelton Plan.
- If you are shut off or facing shut-off, get restored or maintain gas and electric service by using this program.
- Offers 60% forgiveness of total outstanding utility bill, upon completion of 3 year payment program.
- One time offer (once for gas, once for electric), with requirements for payments, to stay enrolled in the program. Monthly payments must be made on time (including current usage), and only 2 payments in a row and 3 payments total may be missed over the 3 year enrollment period (missed payments must be re-paid). If more than 3 payments are missed, you will be un-enrolled and ineligible to re-enroll.

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For more information and ways to get involved in our efforts to improve utility access in Rhode Island, please contact the George Wiley Center:
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