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### **AUC supports government-directed optional utility bill payment deferral**

Today the Alberta government directed that consumers be given the option to defer payment of their utility accounts in light of the financial pressures arising from the COVID-19 pandemic.

The initial deferred payment period will last for 90 days with the potential for further extensions. The AUC supports this initiative.

This direction will result in deferred collection of accounts by utilities, together with associated carrying costs.

The AUC recognizes that the legal and regulatory framework will have to be clarified and adjusted.

The AUC will lead and coordinate the overall approach to the payment deferral policy and will be bringing together utility and consumer representatives to provide recommendations to the AUC on the regulatory treatment of the deferred account balances and carrying costs arising from the deferred collection of accounts.

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