

2 Referral process – social service agencies to provide updated contact and process information

- Parties agreed to send updated contact information to regulatorypolicy@auc.ab.ca by Friday, October 14, 2016. AUC staff will then circulate an updated contact list to the working group.

ACTION: Parties to send updated contact information to regulatorypolicy@auc.ab.ca by Friday, October 14, 2016. AUC staff will then circulate an updated contact list to the working group.

- Similar to previous years, any changes in contact information during the year are to be sent to regulatorypolicy@auc.ab.ca. AUC staff will then circulate these changes to the working group.

3 UCA process – group to discuss timelines and other changes to process for 2016/2017

- Parties were advised that Tanya Johnstone would be the main point of contact from the UCA for this year's winter disconnection project.
- During the June 13, 2016, Consultation on Disconnection and Reconnection Practices – Phase One meeting, the following action item was put forward: "Closer to the start of the upcoming winter moratorium cycle, UCA staff to forward to regulatorypolicy@auc.ab.ca the Excel spreadsheet (with examples of the type of information that should be provided) to be used by retailers when forwarding customer information to UCA staff. AUC staff will circulate this Excel spreadsheet to all retailers involved with the vulnerable customers initiative."
 - Regarding the Excel spreadsheet which was circulated to the group in advance of the meeting, UCA staff asked parties whether they had any questions or concerns, to which parties replied no.

Timeline and process:

- Retailers confirmed that they would begin running their lists of customers cut-off for nonpayment (CONP) since the last winter moratorium that remain disconnected and in arrears. Throughout the month of October, retailers will focus their efforts on contacting customers by letter and/or by phone.
 - UCA staff reminded the group that last year, the UCA experienced a high volume of mail return due to inaccurate customer information. As such, UCA staff re-emphasized the importance of having parties provide accurate mailing addresses and information.
 - Retailers noted that they do try their best to clean up their lists as much as possible before sending them to the UCA, and will remain cognisant of the fact that it is important to send accurate customer information to the UCA.
- For this year's process, the group agreed that retailers would submit to the UCA by Monday, October 31, 2016, their lists of customers which have been disconnected for nonpayment since the last winter moratorium and that remain disconnected and in arrears.

ACTION: Retailers to submit to the UCA by Monday, October 31, 2016, their lists of customers which have been disconnected for nonpayment since the last winter moratorium and that remain disconnected and in arrears.

- AUC staff reminded the group that during the last working group meeting held on June 13, 2016, it was agreed that UCA staff would continue contacting customers owing less than \$50 or less and obtain reasons, where possible, why customers remain disconnected despite owing such a small amount. UCA staff will provide the group with its findings in the spring and the group will discuss whether there are any process changes that should be made for the next winter moratorium cycle for how to deal with customers that owe \$50 or less.

ACTION: UCA staff to continue contacting customers owing less than \$50 or less for the upcoming cycle and obtain reasons why customers remain disconnected despite owing such a small amount. UCA staff to provide the group with its findings in the spring.

4 Distributor site visit process and timelines

- It was agreed that retailers would provide to distributors by Monday, October 31, 2016, their lists of customers that remain disconnected for nonpayment and are not in arrears.

ACTION: Retailers to provide to distributors by Monday, October 31, 2016, their lists of customers that remain disconnected for nonpayment and are not in arrears.

5 Process improvements to try and decrease the amount of repeat customers

- During the last working group meeting held on June 13, 2016, discussion ensued regarding whether there were any process improvements that could be made to help decrease the amount of repeat vulnerable customers. Since the group did not immediately determine any process changes for the upcoming cycle, it was agreed that discussion would continue at the next scheduled working group meeting.
- Retailers advised that they do try their best to contact vulnerable customers by phone and mail, and will make multiple attempts to get in touch with these customers prior to the start of the winter moratorium period.
- As part of an additional contact attempt, AltaGas Utilities noted that it will be sending out an additional letter to its vulnerable customers (in advance of the standard letter that is sent out as part of this process) notifying customers that they have been cut-off for nonpayment since the last winter moratorium and remain disconnected and in arrears. AltaGas Utilities advised that it would inform the UCA offline regarding whether this additional contact attempt was helpful.
- As the 2016/2017 process has started, it was agreed that discussion regarding whether there were any process improvements that could be made to help decrease the amount of repeat customers will continue at the next scheduled working group meeting.

6 Other issues and next steps

- A number of parties choose to include on their website and in their letters to vulnerable customers, additional messaging referring customers to Alberta Supports should they have any questions or require additional information. As such, parties asked whether they could continue to use the following paragraph, which was previously approved and provided by Human Services Communications:

“We understand these are challenging economic times for many Albertans. The Government of Alberta helps people meet their basic needs, find jobs and upgrade their skills to get better jobs. For more information, call 780-644-9992 (1-877-644-9992 toll-free outside Edmonton) or visit www.albertasupports.ca.”

- UCA staff advised that it would confirm with its Communications department, whether there were any changes that need to be made to the paragraph. It was confirmed shortly after the meeting that the same paragraph could be used this year. AUC staff re-circulated the paragraph to the working group for their reference.
- AUC staff thanked all parties for their participation and continued hard work on this initiative. AUC staff advised that the next working group meeting will be scheduled for spring 2017.