

# HOUSTON COUNTY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

## Prepaid Meter Policy

### I. PURPOSE

To prescribe the conditions and policy under which members of the Cooperative may elect to participate in prepaid metering and to establish a uniform policy for pre-paying of a consumer's electricity usage.

### II. POLICY

A. It shall be the policy of Houston County Electric Cooperative to allow residential, seasonal and small commercial members to participate in a prepaid program subject to the following terms and conditions:

1. The member shall purchase electric energy from the Cooperative in accordance with the present and any future tariff and rate schedule of the Cooperative on a pre-pay basis.
2. The terms and conditions set forth in the member's application for membership and/or electric service shall continue to apply in addition to the terms and conditions of the prepaid program.
3. The member shall pay any connect and/or applicable fees as required by the Cooperative's governing documents and rules and regulations set by the Board of Directors.
4. Any deposit fee previously paid by the member to the Cooperative may be applied to the member's outstanding balance at the commencement of participation in the prepaid program, and any credit remaining after application of the deposit fee shall be applied to the member's prepaid account balance.
5. The member will not be mailed a monthly statement for electric usage or other applicable fees or charges.
6. It is the member's responsibility to regularly monitor the balance on the prepaid account. The member will be subject to disconnection once the balance of the account reaches zero (**\$0.00**) without any written notification from the Cooperative to the member, regardless of weather conditions, date, weekends and holidays.
7. Any member payments shall first be applied to any returned check fees, service fees and other applicable fees before any payments are applied to the prepaid account.
8. Critical Care Accounts are not eligible for the prepaid program. The medical and health conditions of any person located at the address where electric service is furnished by the Cooperative that is not registered as a Critical Care Account will not postpone disconnection of electric service.
9. Prepaid accounts shall not be eligible for payment arrangements with the Cooperative and energy assistance pledges shall not be applied to a prepaid account until the energy assistance pledge is received as payment on the member's prepaid account.
10. A member may authorize the Cooperative to transfer any balance from the member's account to a prepaid account and fifty percent (25%) of any payments made on the member's prepaid account shall be applied to the outstanding balance until said balance is paid in full. The transferred outstanding balance represents the amount in debt recovery.
11. Any credit balance that exists on a prepaid account at the time the account is closed shall be refunded to the member via mail.
12. If an account is disconnected and is not reactivated within fourteen (14) days, the account will be considered inactive and the Cooperative shall mail a final bill to the member's last known address.
13. A member may elect to convert a prepaid account to a postpaid service. At that time, HCEC will require full payment of a deposit (if applicable) and any unpaid amount in debt recovery as a condition of continued service.
14. Meters will be read daily. Industry standards will be used to estimate daily readings if daily readings are unattainable due to equipment or communication issues.

### III. BOARD ESTABLISHMENT OF POLICY

This policy was established by the Board of Directors at its meeting on June 25, 2020.



NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ACCOUNT #: \_\_\_\_\_

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

## Prepaid Metering Electric Service Agreement

This Prepaid Metering Agreement is made and entered into between Houston County Electric Cooperative, Inc. (HCEC) and the above-named member and is also governed by HCEC's Tariff for Electric Service (tariff). Prepaid metering is a pay-as-you-go plan. By accepting the prepaid program, the member agrees to the terms and conditions as stated herein.

- Under this agreement, the normal security deposit is not required and the member will not be subject to normal collection or delinquent fees. All other applicable rates and miscellaneous charges will apply.
- Members must establish a minimum credit balance of **\$50.00** prior to meter activation.
- Current members with a post-paid account: When converting to prepaid metering, existing deposits (if applicable) will be applied toward any outstanding balance of the member, with the remaining credit (if applicable) applied to the prepaid metering account. Members may authorize the Cooperative to transfer any balance owed from the postpaid account to the prepaid account and twenty-five percent (25%) of any payments made on the prepaid account shall be applied to the outstanding balance in the debt recovery plan until said balance is paid in full.
- Inactive members with unpaid balances may enter into a debt recovery plan with prepaid service. Twenty-five (25%) of any payments made on the prepaid metering account shall be applied to the outstanding balance in the debt recovery plan until said balance is paid in full.
- Prepaid metering accounts do not receive monthly paper statements (bills). Daily account history will be available for review via the Internet at [www.houstoncountyelec.com](http://www.houstoncountyelec.com) and through HCEC's automated phone system. The website will also allow the member to modify notification settings. The member is solely responsible for managing and updating the notification settings and contact information on their prepaid account(s).
- At any time, the balance reaches **\$0.00**, the account will be subject to immediate disconnection without any written notification from the Cooperative regardless of weather conditions, date, weekends and holidays. The member will be required to establish a minimum of **\$25.00** credit balance on the prepaid metering account plus any unpaid balance that was due at the time of disconnection before service will be reconnected.
- Any returned payments received on the account will be charged to the prepaid account immediately. If this causes the credit balance on the account to be exhausted, service will be subject to immediate disconnection.
- Prepaid accounts are not eligible for payment arrangements.
- Energy assistance pledges will not be applied until the payment is received.
- Critical Care Accounts are not eligible for the prepaid program. The medical and health conditions of any person located at the address of the prepaid account will not postpone disconnection of electric service.
- If an account is disconnected and is not reactivated within fourteen (14) days, the account will be considered inactive and the Cooperative will mail a final bill (if applicable) to the last known address on file.
- Any credit balance that exists on the account at the time the account is closed shall be refunded via mail.
- Members may elect to convert prepaid service to postpaid service. At that time, the Cooperative will require full payment of a deposit (if applicable) and any unpaid amount in debt recovery as a condition of continued service.
- The Cooperative will read the meter daily to determine the amount of kilowatt-hours (kwh) used since the previous day's reading. The

Cooperative will then calculate the dollar amount due for that usage and that dollar amount will be deducted from the available credit balance in the prepaid account. If the daily meter reading is not attainable due to communication or equipment failure, estimated usage will be calculated using industry standards.

• Payments can be made during regular office hours at the main office either in person or by phone. Also, payments can be made 24 hours a day by using the Cooperative automated system or via internet at [www.houstoncountyelec.com](http://www.houstoncountyelec.com). A minimum payment of **\$25.00** is required.

**THE MEMBER WAIVES ALL CLAIMS OR CAUSES OF ACTION AGAINST HCEC AND HEREBY AGREES THAT HCEC WILL NOT BE HELD RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY DIRECT OR INDIRECT DAMAGE TO PROPERTY AND/OR CONSEQUENCES, INJURY TO PERSONS (INCLUDING DEATH) FOR ANY FAILURE BY THE MEMBER TO MAKE TIMELY PURCHASES OF ELECTRICITY TO MAINTAIN A CREDIT BALANCE IN THE ACCOUNT IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN UNINTERRUPTED ELECTRIC SERVICE. THIS AGREEMENT COMPLETELY RELEASES HCEC FROM ANY DAMAGES RELATED TO SERVICE INTERRUPTIONS.**

*I understand and agree that it is my responsibility to make sure that I maintain a credit balance for uninterrupted service. In order for me to receive the necessary system alerts to avoid an interruption of service, I must provide HCEC with current phone numbers.*

**Method of Notification Requested (check all that apply):**

**E-mail**

**Phone**

**Text**

**Phone number used for phone messages:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone number used for text messages:** \_\_\_\_\_

**E-mail address used for notifications:** \_\_\_\_\_

My signature below indicates that I have carefully read and understand the terms within the ***Prepaid Metering- Electric Service Agreement***.

\_\_\_\_\_  
SIGNATURE OF MEMBER

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE