

Priority Services

Your questions answered



What are Priority Services?

Our Priority Services are free and registering allows us to help our customers who would benefit the most from additional support and respond quickly to their particular needs.

What is a Priority Services Register?

You may have heard of the term 'Priority Services Register'. This is the general name for a free scheme for customers who need extra help and is offered by gas, electricity and water suppliers.

Once you register you can receive additional support and special services from each of your suppliers. All suppliers have their own registers, so you will have to join each scheme separately.

Registering makes sure that we tailor services to meet your needs, for example by providing you with extra help during interruptions to your water supply and help with your bill. These services are free.

Who can use our free Priority Services?

Our Priority Services are open to customers who find themselves in circumstances where they need a little extra help and support.

This could be due to many situations, such as if you:

- are blind, visually-impaired or have hearing difficulties
- are registered disabled
- are chronically sick
- are suffering from serious short-term illness or injury
- are suffering from mental illness
- have financial difficulties
- have literacy, numeracy or language problems
- are of state-pensionable age
- are experiencing a 'life event' which means that you have a change in circumstance, such as a bereavement, losing a job or have an increase in caring responsibilities
- have other specific needs where you may need some extra help

Even if you don't fit into any of the above, we still want to make sure we're doing everything we can for you. If you feel as though you could do with some extra help, please contact us, we would never want our customers to struggle or suffer in silence.

How can we help you?

The type of services we offer include:

- dedicated team on hand to listen and help
- you can nominate a carer, family member or friend to speak to us on your behalf
- text relay service
- Braille, large print and 'talking' bills and leaflets
- knock and wait service, so if you tell us you have mobility needs, we'll wait after knocking to allow you enough time to answer the door
- protection from bogus callers with a password protection scheme to keep you safe
- translation services
- notice of interruptions to your water supply
- alternative water supplies if supply is likely to be off for more than 12 hours
- support for dialysis patients
- support for customers who have been flooded
- your meter moved free of charge if it's hard for you to use or read the meter
- help if you're struggling to pay your water bill
- bills sent to a relative, carer or friend to help you check them
- a free quarterly meter reading if you can't read your meter
- free advice on being more water-efficient

Priority Services - your questions answered

I am experiencing short-term issues, can I still get help?

Yes, of course. We understand that situations in life change and are often unexpected, we'll do all we can to help until you get back on your feet.

What if I move house?

If you move within the United Utilities area, please contact us to let us know that you have moved and that you would like to go on our Priority Services Register. If you move home to outside of the North West, you will need to contact your new water supplier to register for their Priority Services.

Can I sign up a relative or friend?

Yes, you will need to be nominated by the person who needs help. You can then call us to register them for the Priority Services scheme or complete the form our website at unitedutilities.com/priorityservices

I'm too worried to contact you

We understand that people feel worried or helpless when they find themselves in a vulnerable situation.

This is very common, but we promise to deal with problems with care and sensitivity, so please don't worry.

We have a specially trained team who will listen and are very kind. Many of our customers say they are relieved after contacting us.

If you're worried about speaking to us yourself, you can ask a member of your family or a friend to speak to us on your behalf.

My circumstances are a bit different, can you still help?

Even if your circumstances don't fit the standard mould, our dedicated Priority Services team will treat you as an individual and are here to help. We are able to offer a flexible approach to most issues.

Will I need to repeat the same information every time I contact you?

No, your details will be recorded properly so you don't have to repeat them every time you contact us.

How do I register for Priority Services?

To get a Priority Services registration form, visit our website at unitedutilities.com/priorityservices and complete the form online or give us a call on **0345 072 6093** or by textphone dial 18001 followed by **0345 072 6093**.

Don't forget to also contact your gas and electricity suppliers to register for their Priority Services Register, as we're not allowed to pass your details to other companies.

Can I get any more help for debt?

Yes, PayPlan, StepChange and National Debtline all provide free advice to help you tackle all your debt problems, not just water. They have experts on hand via free helplines and have a range of online tools you can use for free to create debt action plans personal to your specific circumstances. There is more information on our website at unitedutilities.com/difficulties-paying-bill