

PRESS RELEASE

Water, electricity, gas: automatic bonuses for over 2.6 million families experiencing economic hardship, by submitting the ISEE

All you have to do is fill in the Dichiarazione Sostitutiva Unica (Single Self Declaration) for ISEE to benefit from discounts on utility bills. 2021 bonuses recognised from July, including any amounts accrued in previous months.

Milan, 25 February 2021 – The **automatic recognition of social bonuses** for discounts on **water, electricity and gas bills for families experiencing economic hardship (with ISEE, Equivalent Financial Situation Index, not exceeding 8,265 euros)** comes into effect. As of this year, all you have to do is to fill in the *Dichiarazione Sostitutiva Unica* (Single Self Declaration - DSU), for ISEE purposes, in order to benefit from the discount on the expenses incurred for electricity, natural gas and water supplies.

This will make it possible to **ensure that over 2.6 million eligible households receive the benefits and to end the old bonus-on-demand mechanism**, which over the years had effectively limited the discounts to only a third of potential beneficiaries.

The mechanism is effective from 1 January 2021. Each bonus will last for 12 months from the date of eligibility for the discount. The actual payment date depends on the type of bonus. In the first application phase, functional checks for eligibility (2021 bonus) will be launched in July, to allow the procedures to be fully functional. The Authority - whose resolution takes into account the relevant observations contained in the opinion of the Italian Data Protection Authority - has defined the payment methods that operators will have to apply in order to guarantee that those entitled to receive the 2021 bonus will also be granted any amounts accrued in previous months.

Those wishing to benefit from the **electricity bonus linked to physical hardship**, i.e. the discount for people with serious health conditions and who use life-saving electro-medical equipment, will still have to submit an application the municipalities or authorised Tax Assistance Centres (CAF).

HOW TO REQUEST THE BONUSES

Until 2020, in order to receive bonuses for economic hardship, it was necessary to submit an application to the municipality of residence or CAF, attaching the required documentation. From now on, all you have to do is submit the DSU required to obtain ISEE certification every year and, if your household falls within the parameters, INPS (the National Social Security Institute) will automatically send the information to the Integrated Information System (SII), the database containing useful information for identifying electricity, gas and water operators in your area.

By cross-referencing the data that the INPS sends to the SII, the data contained in the SII and in the databases of the water operators, and upon the positive outcome of the eligibility checks defined by the Authority, the direct (individual) supplies to be subsidised will be identified automatically and the bonuses paid to those who are entitled to them.

In the case of households served by centralised supplies there is an ad hoc automatic eligibility process. Each household is entitled to one bonus of each type - electricity, gas, water - per year.

The subjective requirements for entitlement to economic hardship bonuses remain the same, i.e. belonging to a household:

- ✓ with an ISEE indicator not exceeding 8,265 euros;

- ✓ or with at least 4 dependent children (large family) and ISEE indicator not exceeding 20,000 euros;
- ✓ or receiving Citizenship Income or Citizenship Pension.

In addition, one of the members of the ISEE household must have an active (or suspended for arrears) electricity/gas/water supply for domestic use or an active centralised gas/water supply for domestic use.

For the sake of **clarity and transparency, the customer will be able to check whether the bonus has been applied on the bill**, because the supplier will have to highlight this item.

HOW AND WHEN THEY ARE PAID

The **social bonuses for electricity and gas are applied directly to the bill** if one of the members of the household has a direct (individual) supply that meets the above-mentioned requirements.

On the other hand, if the household has a centralised (condominium) supply, the **full amount is granted to the disadvantaged household once a year**, in the case of the **water bonus** with a bank draft made out to the household member who submitted the DSU and delivered to the household's home, and in the case of the **gas bonus** with a direct debit transfer made out to the household member who submitted the DSU and withdrawn at any Poste Italiane counter (the procedures and timing for withdrawing the transfer will be communicated to the interested parties through a special notice; the **terms for withdrawing the transfer have been significantly extended compared to those provided under the previous "on demand" system**).

Finally, if the customer closes the utility or it is transferred to another user - because, for example, he or she changes residence and moves to another house - the remaining bonus amount will be paid in a lump sum and no new bonus can be claimed for the relevant year by any of the household members. The bonus is paid continuously even when the customer decides to change contract or supplier.

For further information visit www.arera.it