**CASE STUDY**

# Cleco Power

How an Energy Services Company in Central Louisiana Is Connecting Their Customers to Social Care Resources in the Community

**Cleco Power, a subsidiary of Cleco Corporate Holdings LLC, is a dedicated Unite Us partner and part of [Unite Louisiana](#), a coordinated care network of health and social service organizations.** Headquartered in Pineville, Louisiana, Cleco Power is a regulated electric utility company that seeks to continuously improve customer connections and experiences through better technology, all while keeping affordability at the forefront of everything they do.



## The Challenge

In business since 1935, Cleco Power serves approximately 290,000 customers in 24 of Louisiana's parishes. With inflation affecting the costs of essential goods and services such as food, housing, and gasoline, Cleco Power wanted a partner who could assist their customers with **more than just their utility bill.**

## The Opportunity

**Cleco Power's partnership with Unite Us provides another avenue for their customers to get the support they need to cover basic living expenses, including utilities.** Some customers who request assistance encounter barriers in following through with the application process, which is needed to qualify for various services. To ensure everyone gets the assistance they need, it's important to make the process as simple as possible.

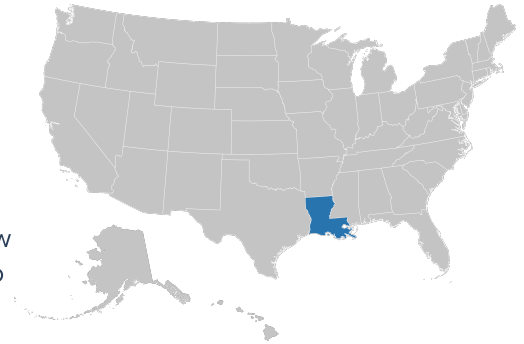
## The Solution

Cleco Power uses an [assistance request form](#), powered by Unite Us, which allows their customers to easily and remotely request community-based resources—beyond utilities—by providing their contact information and answering a few questions. Customers can even specify a preferred time to be contacted. Connecting their customers with food, clothing, lodging, child care, transportation, mental health services, utilities assistance, and more allows Cleco Power to play an active role in getting individuals the help they need when they need it.

## Client Success Story

### Utility bill payment assistance through Cleco and Unite Us

**Situation:** The Unite Us Care Coordination team received an assistance request for utility bill payment assistance. The Cleco customer had tried to get assistance through a variety of community-based organizations, but Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) funding wasn't going to be available for another two months. Catholic Charities was willing to pledge a portion of the customer's utility bill, but could not process the customer's case for another two weeks.



A **Unite Us Care Coordinator** contacts the customer, assesses additional unmet needs, and gathers more information.

The Unite Us Care Coordinator learns that the customer has also applied for an extension through **Cleco**.



A referral is made to **St. Tammany Parish Community Action Agency (CAA)** and is accepted the next day.

The Unite Us Care Coordinator contacts the recipient organization to confirm they have received the referral. The agency reports that they have funding available for **Utility Crisis Applications**.



The **Unite Us Care Coordinator** calls the customer and encourages them to submit a utility crisis application.

Upon completion, the Cleco customer is informed **St. Tammany CAA** can assist with a portion of the bill in the amount of \$600, which can be paid out if the outstanding balance is covered.



**Resolution:** The customer reaches out again to **Cleco**, who states that they would extend the remaining portion of the bill.

With the extension, the customer is given the allotted time for Catholic Charities to process their case, and the **outstanding utility bill is paid on time**.

## Meeting People Where They Are

Cleco Power is committed to helping its customers manage their bills year-round regardless of financial status. To support these efforts, customers are able to enroll in **Budget Billing**, which spreads their billing over a 12-month period and costs approximately the same amount each month. They can also request a **credit extension agreement** to receive more time to pay, participate in the **Power Wise energy efficiency program** for help managing their usage, or apply for help through **state and federal programs** if they meet certain requirements.

Cleco Power will keep exploring opportunities to better serve its customers and provide them with bill payment assistance when needed. Establishing mutually beneficial partnerships, such as the one with Unite Us, will remain a priority.



Learn more about Cleco's Customer Assistance Programs [here](#) and visit [uniteus.com/contact](https://uniteus.com/contact) to get more information about Unite Us' solutions.