

## POLICY ON DISCONTINUATION OF RESIDENTIAL SERVICE FOR NONPAYMENT

4.17. Policy on Discontinuation of Residential Service for Nonpayment. The District's policy on discontinuation of residential water service for nonpayment is set forth in sections 4.17 through 4.23.

4.18. Termination of Service for Billing Delinquencies. When a past due account remains unpaid for 60 days after delinquency, water service shall be disconnected.

### 4.19. Notices

a. Water Shut-Off Notice. At least 20 days before discontinuing water service, the District will mail a water shut-off notice to the customer that states the past due balance, the 10% service charge, and the \$10.00 late fee, the date by which payment or arrangement for payment is required to avoid discontinuation of service, a description of the process to apply for an extension of time to pay the delinquent charges, a description of the procedure for bill protest and appeal, and a description of the procedure for requesting amortization or deferment of the delinquency.

b. Notice to Tenants. When the occupants are tenants of the customer, the District will make every good-faith effort to inform the occupants, by means of written notice hung on the door of the residence, when the account is in arrears that service will be terminated at least 10 days before the termination. The written notice will inform the occupants that they have the right to become customers, to whom the service will then be billed, without being required to pay the amount due on the delinquent account, as long as they are willing and able to assume responsibility for the later charges to the account to the District's satisfaction. For the amount due on the delinquent account to be waived, the occupant must provide verification of tenancy in the form of a rental agreement or proof of rent payments. For multiunit residential structures and mobilehome parks, if there is a physical means available to the District of terminating service to occupants who have not met the District's requirements for service, the District will make service available to the occupants who have met those requirements. The customer will incur a posting fee of \$25.00, plus \$10.00 for each unit in a multiunit residential structure or mobilehome park.

c. Inability to Contact. If the District is unable to contact the customer or an adult occupying the residence by phone, and written notice is returned through the mail as undeliverable, the District will make a good-faith effort to visit the residence and leave, or make other arrangements for placement in a conspicuous place of, a notice of imminent discontinuation of service for nonpayment and the District's policy for discontinuation of residential service for nonpayment.

d. 48-Hour Shut Off Notice. At least 48 hours before discontinuing water service, the District will post in a conspicuous location on the parcel a 48-hour shut off notice and the customer will incur a posting fee of \$25.00.

e. 24-Hour Telephone Call. A final attempt to contact the customer by telephone will be made within 24 hours before the actual discontinuance of water service.



f. Third Party Notification Service. Any customer 65 years of age or older, or who is a dependent adult as defined in Welfare and Institutions Code section 15610(b)(1), may request the District to notify a designated third party, who consents in writing to such designation, whom the District will attempt to notify when the customer's account is past due and subject to termination.

#### 4.20. Customer Assistance

a. Bill Protests. Any customer contending that a billing is incorrect shall file a written protest with the District within 10 days after the billing is mailed, or within 10 days after the notice of termination is given. The protest shall set forth the customer's grounds for protest and shall be signed and dated by the customer. All billings not protested within such time shall be deemed correct, valid and binding on the customer. The General Manager shall advise the customer in writing of his or her decision on the customer's protest which the customer may appeal to the Board in writing within 10 days of the postmark of the General Manager's decision.

b. Extension of Time to Pay. If a customer is unable to pay a bill, the customer may, within 10 days of mailing the notice of termination, file a written request with the District for an extension of time to pay a bill. The request shall set forth the customer's grounds for the extension and the amount of time requested, not exceeding 6 months, and shall be signed and dated by the customer. The extension of time applies only to the delinquency. The customer must still pay, when due, all current charges for water service. The General Manager shall advise the customer in writing of his or her decision on the customer's request.

c. Amortization of Delinquent Bill. If a customer is unable to pay a bill, the customer may, within 10 days of mailing the notice of termination, submit to the District an amortization agreement (available at the District's office) signed by the customer promising to pay the entire delinquency, including any service charges, late fees, and any other fees and charges, in equal monthly installments over a reasonable period of time, not exceeding 12 months. The General Manager shall advise the customer in writing of his or her decision on the request and determine the amortization schedule for paying the delinquency. Any customer whose delinquent account is amortized over 3 or more months shall also pay the District interest on the delinquent balance from the date of delinquency at the rate of 6% per annum, and the amortization agreement shall so provide. The amortization applies only to the delinquency. The customer must still pay, when due, all current charges for water service.

d. Deferral or Reduction in Payment. Low-income customers may request deferral or reduction in payment of delinquent charges. To be eligible for deferral or reduction in payment, the customer must submit documentation to the District showing that the customer is financially unable to pay for service within the District's normal billing cycle. A customer is deemed financially unable to pay if any member of the household receives CalWORKS, CalFresh, general assistance, Medi-Cal, Supplemental Security Income/State Supplementary Payment Program, or California Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Woman, Infants, and Children, or if the annual household income is less than 200 percent of the federal poverty level. The General Manager shall advise the customer in writing of his or her decision on the deferral or reduction in payment. Any deferral shall be to a future date within 12



months of the delinquency and applies only to the delinquency. The customer must still pay, when due, all current charges for water service. For information on the federal poverty level, visit the United States Department of Health and Human Services website at <https://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty-guidelines>.

e. Contact. Any customer may contact the District by phone at (661) 831-0989 to discuss options for averting discontinuation of service for nonpayment.

4.21. When Service Will Not Be Discontinued for Nonpayment. The District will not terminate water service for nonpayment of water bills (a) pending final resolution of a timely received billing protest, (b) if the customer within 12 days of mailing the notice of termination asserts financial inability to pay and applies for amortization of the delinquent bill or temporary deferral of payment, or (c) on receipt of a written certification from a primary care provider (such as a licensed physician or surgeon) that termination of service to the customer will be life threatening, and the customer applies for amortization of the delinquent bill or temporary deferral of payment. If the customer fails to make or tender in a timely fashion payments as required under any such amortization agreement or deferral, or fails to keep the account current as billings accrue in each subsequent billing period, then the District shall post a final notice of termination and discontinue water service after 5 business days even if the life threatening consequence or asserted inability to pay in full persists.

4.22. Reconnection Fees. A customer whose water service has been disconnected for a billing delinquency or violation of these Rules and Regulations who cures such delinquency or violation shall be entitled to restoration of service upon payment of a reconnection fee of \$50.00 if the reconnection is done during the District's normal working hours, or \$150.00 if the reconnection is requested to be made after the District's normal working hours. Whether the District complies with a request to reconnect after the District's normal working hours lies within the sole and unlimited discretion of the General Manager. No customer has any right, and the District has no obligation, to reconnect a customer's water service after the District's normal working hours. No water service will be reconnected unless the customer restores his or her deposit to the full amount required under these Rules and Regulations, if the deposit had been applied by the District in whole or in part to reduce the amount of the delinquency. If the customer has had water service reconnected once before, the reconnection fee will be double that stated above. If the customer has had water service reconnected twice before, the reconnection fee will be triple that stated above.

4.23. Translations. Spanish, Chinese, Tagalog, Vietnamese, and Korean translations of this policy, and written notices issued under it, are available at the District office or website.