

SUBJECT: **COVID-19 CUSTOMER BILL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

POLICY NO. **7.15**

MOTION NO. **20-07-02**

APPROVED: **JULY 28, 2020**

ISSUED: **JULY 2020**

REVISED:

### **Background:**

All utilities have a general obligation to provide safe, reliable, and affordable essential services to their customers. On April 20<sup>th</sup>, Governor Inslee announced Washington's Recovery Plan, which includes ensuring access to essential services during the state's recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. On May 1<sup>st</sup>, Governor Inslee announced the "Safe Start" approach for Washington state to begin reopening some businesses safely and continue essential businesses. On July 2<sup>nd</sup>, Governor Inslee issued Proclamation 20-23.6, which extended, and amended Proclamation 20-23, pertaining to Utility Ratepayer Assistance and Preservation of Essential Services. In part, Proclamation 20-23.6 prohibits utilities from disconnecting service, refusing to reconnect service, and charging late fees.

In response to the Governor's proclamation, Summit Water & Supply Company (Company) has drafted and adopted the following COVID-19 Customer Assistance Program (CCAP) policy, which provides the framework for ensuring that customers experiencing economic hardship as a direct result of the COVID-19 pandemic maintain access to essential services by suspending Company delinquent fees for non-payment and late fees during the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as offering customers a Deferred Payment Arrangement for customers who are economically impacted by this emergency.

***Neither the Governor's proclamation nor this policy relieves customers from their obligation to pay their water bill.***

### **Deferred Payment Arrangement:**

A deferred payment arrangement may be granted to customers for the payment of delinquent accounts where the customer attests to his/her/their temporary inability to make full payment due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Upon approval, the Deferred Payment Arrangement will provide customers up to **two (2) billing cycles of payment deferral** (four months) beginning March 24<sup>th</sup> without any late or delinquent fees imposed on outstanding balances as well as suspending disconnection of the customer's water service. After this period, customers may request a payment arrangement to spread the costs of the outstanding bills over a period of up to twelve (12) months, based on the amount of the outstanding balance.

Customers wishing to apply for a payment deferral will be required to complete a **Deferred Payment Arrangement Request** (attached). Customers will need to attest that, due to COVID-19

related issues, the customer is unable to make timely payment of his/her/their water bill.

Deferred payment arrangements may be extended on a case-by-case basis as may be requested by the customer and approved by the General Manager.

**Authorization:**

This policy/program as approved by the Company's General Manager and Board of Directors is retroactively effective beginning the 24<sup>th</sup> day of March 2020. Discontinuation of this policy/program will be based on the Board of Directors direction/approval.

**DEFERRED PAYMENT ARRANGEMENT REQUEST APPLICATION**

This Deferred Payment Arrangement grants customers up to **two (2) billing cycles of payment deferral** (four months) without any late or delinquent fees imposed on outstanding balances as well as suspending disconnection of the customer's water service. After this period, customers may request a payment arrangement to spread the costs of the outstanding bills over a period of up to twelve (12) months, based on the amount of the outstanding balance.

To be approved for the Deferred Payment Arrangement, the Customer will need to attest that, due to COVID-19 related issues, the Customer is unable to make timely payment of his/her/their water bill.

**REQUIRED INFORMATION:**

**ACCOUNT HOLDER NAME(S):** \_\_\_\_\_

**ACCOUNT NUMBER:** \_\_\_\_\_

**SERVICE ADDRESS:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_, WA, \_\_\_\_\_  
City State Zip Code

**DEFERRAL REQUEST FOR BILLINGS:**

From: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ To: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

**ATTESTATION OF APPLICATION:**

Under penalty of perjury, I/we declare that I/we are experiencing or have experienced economic hardship as a direct result of the COVID-19 pandemic and due to this economic hardship I/we are unable to make timely payment of the water bill on the account as noted above.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**APPLICANT'S SIGNATURE**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**DATE**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**APPLICANT'S SIGNATURE**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**DATE**