

RULE NO. 26

WATER BILL ASSISTANCE FOR INCOME-QUALIFIED CUSTOMERS

GENERAL

The Utility offers programs in the areas of water efficiency and low-income assistance and, in connection with the foregoing, this Rule outlines water bill assistance for income-qualified Customers.

A. **WATER DISCOUNT FOR INCOME-QUALIFIED SENIOR, LONG-TERM DISABLED, OR MILITARY VETERAN CUSTOMERS**

The Income-Qualified Senior/Long-Term Disabled/Military Veteran Water Discount Program provides a 10% discount on residential water charges for income-qualified senior, long-term disabled, and military veteran Customers, as set forth in Paragraphs A.1 and A.4. This Program remains in effect until terminated by the City Council.

1. **Qualifications**

To receive the assistance as an income-qualified senior Customer, the following guidelines must be met:

- a. Have an annual household income level of 80% or less of the Orange County median, according to the annual Housing and Urban Development Section 8 income guidelines.
- b. Be at least 62 years of age as demonstrated by submitting a copy of state issued identification.
- c. Be a residential Customer of record or Sub-metered master-metered Customer.

To receive the assistance as an income-qualified long-term disabled Customer, the following guidelines must be met:

- a. Have an annual household income level of 80% or less of the Orange County median, according to the annual Housing and Urban Development Section 8 income guidelines.
- b. Submit to the Utility Social Security Supplement to Income (SSI) documentation or a letter from a licensed physician.
- c. Be a residential Customer of record or Sub-metered master-metered Customer.

To receive the assistance as an income-qualified military veteran Customer, the following guidelines must be met:

- a. Have an annual household income level of 80% or less of the Orange County median, according to the annual Housing and Urban Development Section 8 income guidelines.
- b. Submit to the Utility identification establishing military service such as a copy of a DD-214, Veteran Health Identification Card (VHIC), or Common Access Card (CAC).
- c. Be a residential Customer of record or Sub-metered master-metered Customer.

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A. **WATER DISCOUNT FOR INCOME-QUALIFIED SENIOR, LONG-TERM DISABLED, OR MILITARY VETERAN CUSTOMERS (Continued)**

2. **Adjustment of Water Bills**

Income-qualified senior, long-term disabled, and military veteran residential water Customers will receive a ten percent (10%) discount applied to the water charges on their bill. For the purpose of this Rule, these water charges include the Customer Charge, Commodity Charge, Schedule W-CA charge, and Schedule W-SRA charge. The discount shall appear as a line item on the Customer's bill. The discount shall be calculated separately for each Customer individually metered by the Utility, based upon the water charge.

Master-metered Customers that provide water Sub-metering to qualified tenants are also eligible for the water discount. The master-metered Customer shall be issued a flat discount amount equal to \$5 per month. This will be multiplied by the number of income-qualified senior, long-term disabled, and military veteran tenants who are Sub-metered to the master meter.

3. **Termination of Billing Discount**

Once instituted, the discount shall remain in effect until any one of the following occurs:

1. The annual household income of the income-qualifying senior, long-term disabled, or military veteran person exceeds 80% of the Orange County median, according to the annual Housing and Urban Development Section 8 income guidelines.
2. For individually metered accounts, the income-qualifying senior, long-term disabled, or military veteran person is no longer named on the Customer account.
3. For master-metered accounts, the income-qualifying senior, long-term disabled, or military veteran person is no longer named as the tenant.
4. Funds allocated to the program are exhausted.
5. The Income-Qualified Senior/Long-term Disabled/Military Veteran Water Discount Program is terminated by the City Council.

4. **Billing Discount**

1. Income-qualified senior, long-term disabled, and military veteran Customers who are individually metered by the Utility will receive a ten percent (10%) discount applied to the water charges on their bill, including the Customer Charge, Commodity Charge, Schedule W-CA charge, and Schedule W-SRA charge, as shown in the following formula:

$$(\text{Customer Charge} + \text{Commodity Charge} + \text{WCA} + \text{WSRA}) \times .10 = \text{Water Discount}$$

2. **Master-Metered Customers**

- a. Master-metered Customers that provide water Sub-metering and issue water bills to their tenants shall be issued a flat monthly discount for their income-qualifying senior, long-term disabled, and military veteran tenants using the following formula:

$$\text{Number of income-qualified senior, long-term disabled, and military veteran tenants} \times \$5 = \text{Water Discount.}$$

The master-metered Customer shall pass this savings directly on to the income-qualified senior, long-term disabled, and military veteran tenants.

- b. The master-metered Customer shall maintain records of proof of payment of Customer credits to qualified tenants. The records of proof of payment of Customer credits to qualified tenants are subject to periodic review and audit by the Utility. Credits that are misappropriated are subject to recapture on the master-metered Customer bill by the Utility.

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B. EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE

Emergency Water Utility bill payment assistance is offered by the Utility to income-qualified residents, subject to available funding. Customer service representatives will provide information regarding Water Utility bill payment assistance, including the application process. Customers approved for emergency Water Utility bill payment assistance receive assistance in the form of a bill credit applied to the water charges portion of the Customer's bill.

C. THIRD PARTY FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Customers experiencing financial difficulty may qualify for Water Utility bill payment assistance from a third-party local, state, or federal agency. The Utility is not directly affiliated with these agencies but provides a list of such agencies on its website. Assistance from these agencies is subject to Customers meeting the agency's eligibility requirements and is dependent upon available funding. Payments received by the Utility from such agencies, on behalf of the Customer, shall be applied to the water charges portion of the Customer's Utility bill.