

**North Coast County Water District
Residential Water Service Termination Policy
(Effective February 1, 2020)**

1. Background

This policy is adopted to satisfy North Coast County Water District's (District) obligations under California Government Code Section 60370 *et seq.*, California Public Utilities Code Section 10001 *et seq.* and Health and Safety Code Section 116900 *et seq.*, which govern the termination of certain utility service. Health and Safety Code Section 116900 *et seq.*, the Water Shutoff Protection Act enacted by SB 998, requires urban water suppliers and urban and community water systems, such as the District, to adopt a written policy regarding the discontinuation of residential service due to non-payment. The District can be contacted by phone at (650) 355-3462 to discuss options for averting discontinuation of water service for non-payment under the terms of this policy.

This policy will be available and posted on the District's website (www.nccwd.com) in English, Spanish, Chinese, Tagalog, Vietnamese, Korean, and any other language that is spoken by at least 10% of the residents in the service area.

2. Payment for Residential Water Service

Every person receiving water service from the District is required to pay for such service within 20 days of mailing of the statement or billing. Except as prohibited by statute, the District will have the right to discontinue water service for the failure to make complete and timely payment. The District will not discontinue residential service for nonpayment until the subject account has been delinquent for at least 60 calendar days.

3. Late Fee

If payment for a bill is not received by close of business on the 20th calendar day after the bill date, the account is considered "delinquent." On the 30th calendar day after the bill date, a Late Fee will be assessed as established in the District's Rate and Fee Schedule.

4. Payment Arrangements

Any customer who is unable to pay for water service or any other fees assessed in accordance with the District's Rate and Fee Schedule or this policy and within the normal payment period may request a payment arrangement to avoid disruption of service. The District will grant a payment arrangement or amortization plan as specified in this policy for any customer who does not already have an active payment arrangement or amortization plan.

Payment arrangements that extend into the next billing period are considered an amortization plan, which must be in writing and confirmed by the customer. An amortization plan will amortize the unpaid balance over a period defined by the customer, not to exceed 12 months from date of the amortization agreement. The amortized payments may be combined with, and subject to the due date of, the customer's future regular bills. The customer must comply with the terms of the amortization plan and remain current as charges accrue in each subsequent billing period. The customer may not request

further amortization of any subsequent unpaid charges while paying delinquent charges pursuant to an amortization plan.

A customer who enters into and abides by an amortization or payment arrangement plan shall not be considered delinquent. Failure to comply with the terms of an amortization or payment arrangement plan will result in the customer being considered delinquent. The customer will then be subject to disconnection once the account is delinquent for 60 calendar days and additional arrangements or extensions will not be available for any new delinquent balance, and the customer will not be granted future alternative payment arrangements until the delinquent balance has been paid. No less than 7 business days before disconnection, the District will make a good faith effort to contact the customer of pending disconnection by telephone, mail or email notice. In addition, a final Shut-Off Warning Notice will be provided by means of a door hanger delivered to the premises no less than 5 business days in advance of discontinuance of service.

5. **Notifications**

As required by law, the District will notify the customer that the account remains past due and further collection action will be forthcoming. The means of notification will be by phone, mail, or notification at the premises. The District assumes no responsibility for phone, mail or email contact information that has not been kept up to date by the customer.

6. **Written Disconnection Notice**

The District shall not discontinue water service for non-payment until payment by the customer has been delinquent for at least 60 calendar days. The District will make a reasonable, good faith effort to contact the customer in writing at least 7 business days before discontinuation of water service for non-payment. The Written Disconnection Notice will be mailed to the mailing address designated on the account and delivered or mailed to the service address, if different from the mailing address. The Written Disconnection Notice will include:

- Customer's name and address
- Amount that is past due
- Date by which payment or payment arrangements are required to avoid discontinuation of service
- Description of the process and procedure to apply for an amortization plan
- Description of the process to dispute or appeal a bill
- District's phone number and a web link to the District's Residential Water Termination Policy

Notice to Residential Tenants/Occupants in an Individually Metered Residence: The District will make a reasonable, good faith effort to inform the occupants, by means of written notice, when the water service account is in arrears and subject to disconnection at least 10 calendar days before water service is shut off. The written notice will advise the tenant/occupant that they have the right to become customers of the District without being required to pay the amount due on the delinquent account, as long as they are willing to assume financial responsibility for subsequent charges for water service at that address. In order for the tenant/occupant not to be charged for the delinquent amount, the tenant/occupant must provide verification of tenancy in the form of a rental agreement or proof of rent payments and verify that the delinquent account holder was the landlord, property manager, or other agent of the property.

Notice to Tenants/Occupants in a Multi-Unit Complex Served through a Master Meter: The District will make a reasonable, good faith effort to inform the occupants, by means of written notice hung on the door of each residence, when the water service account is in arrears and subject to disconnection at least 15 calendar days before water service is shut off.

The written notice will advise the tenant/occupant that they have the right to become customers of the District without being required to pay the amount due on the delinquent account, as long as they are willing to assume financial responsibility for subsequent charges for water service at the address(es) served by the master meter. If one or more of the occupants are willing and able to assume responsibility for the subsequent charges for water service to the satisfaction of the District, or if there is a physical means, legally available to the District, of selectively terminating service to those occupants who have not met the requirements for service, the District will make service available to the occupants who have met those requirements.

If the Written Disconnection Notice is returned through the mail as undeliverable, the District will make a reasonable, good faith effort to contact the customer by phone, and to visit the residence and leave a notice of discontinuance for non-payment.

7. Shut-Off Warning Notice

The District will make a reasonable, good faith effort to notify the customer in advance of disconnection of water service for non-payment as set forth in this Policy. The last means of notification will be in the form of a door hanger (Shut-Off Warning Notice) delivered to the premises no less than 48 hours in advance of discontinuance of service. A Shut-Off Warning Notice Fee will be applied to an account for any such notice as established in the Rate and Fee Schedule.

8. Disconnection of Water Service

The District will disconnect water service by turning off and locking the meter.

9. Reestablishment of Water Service

In order to resume or continue service that has been disconnected for non-payment, the customer must pay a Reconnection Fee, as established in the Rate and Fee Schedule. The District will reconnect service as soon as practicable but, at a minimum, will restore service before the end of the next regular working day following payment of any past due amount and delinquent fees attributable to the termination of service. Water service that is turned on by any person other than District personnel or without District authorization may be subject to fines or additional charges or fees. Any damages that occur as a result of unauthorized restoration of service are the responsibility of the customer.

10. Reestablishment of Water Service after Business Hours

Service restored after 5:00 pm Monday through Friday, weekends, or holidays will be charged an outside of normal business hours Reconnection Fee, as established in the Rate and Fee Schedule.

11. Notification of Disposition of Returned Payment

Upon receipt of a returned check (or other payment method) taken as payment of water service or other charges, the account shall be returned to the District's delinquency process as though no attempt was made to pay the balance due. The District will make a reasonable, good faith effort to notify the customer by phone, mail, or e-mail of the returned item and the account's delinquency status. All amounts paid to redeem a returned check and to pay a returned check charge (as specified in the District's Rate and Fee schedule) must be in cash, credit card or certified funds.

12. Returned Payment for Previously Disconnected Service

In the event a customer tenders a non-negotiable check or a disputed credit card as payment to restore water service previously disconnected for non-payment and the District restores service, the District may promptly disconnect service without providing further notice. No notice of termination will be given in the case of a non-negotiable check or fraudulent credit card tendered for payment of water charges that were subject to discontinuance.

13. Disputed Bills and Leak Adjustment Policy

If a customer believes he or she was overcharged for residential water service or charged for residential water service not rendered, the customer may contest the amount due by notifying the District in writing no later than 10 calendar days from the date the customer received the disputed bill, at PO Box 1039, 2400 Francisco Blvd., Pacifica, CA 94044. The District will evaluate the information provided by the customer and investigate the matter. The General Manager, or designee, shall make a decision based upon all the information and shall have the authority to adjust the amount due in a fair and equitable manner, if appropriate.

If the customer disagrees with the decision, the customer may, within 10 calendar days from the General Manager's decision, appeal the decision, in writing, to the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors will review the record and make a determination at its next regular Board of Directors' meeting. The decision of the Board of Directors will be final.

The District has a Leak Adjustment Policy in place to ease the financial difficulties after a customer has experienced a leak on their side of the water meter.

In order for the District to consider a reduction in a customer's water bill, the customer must notify the District of the water leak within 10 working days from the date the customer received their high water bill and the customer must repair the water leak within 10 working days from the date the customer had knowledge of the water leak. See the District's website for further information: <https://www.nccwd.com/billing/leak-adjustment-policy.html>.