

## **Customer FAQs for the Extended Arrearage Program**

### **1. What is the California Extended Water and Wastewater Arrearage Payment Program (Extended Arrearage Program)?**

This new Extended Arrearage Program would provide payments to community water systems, wastewater treatment providers, and wastewater billing entities to forgive water and wastewater customer arrearages for the extended COVID-19 pandemic bill relief period of March 4, 2020 through December 31, 2022. Entities cannot receive funding from this Program for arrearages previously paid through the Water Arrearages Program and Wastewater Arrearages Program.

### **2. Can I apply for the Program?**

No, customers cannot apply for the Program. The State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) will allocate funding directly to eligible community water systems, wastewater treatment providers, and wastewater billing entities that have applied. These entities will then credit customers' accounts based on Extended Arrearage Program Guidelines.

### **3. How do I determine if my community water system, wastewater treatment provider, or wastewater billing entity is applying for this Program?**

The State Water Board will maintain a list of entities that have applied for and received funding through this program. Once available, the list will be posted at [https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/arrearage\\_payment\\_program/](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/arrearage_payment_program/).

### **4. I already paid my past-due water and wastewater bill(s). Can I receive reimbursement?**

No. This Program only covers past-due amounts that remain unpaid at the time the eligible entity receives Program funding.

### **5. My account is closed/inactive, and I still owe my community water system, wastewater treatment provider, or wastewater billing entity. Can my closed/inactive account receive credit?**

Yes, if your entity participates in the Program. Closed accounts with past-due amounts accrued during the eligible funding period are eligible to receive credit for remaining past-due amounts.

**6. Can I receive the money directly to pay my bill?**

No. Funding for the Program will go directly to eligible community water systems, wastewater treatment providers, or wastewater billing entities. The eligible entity will credit customers' accounts consistent with the Extended Arrearage Program Guidelines.

**7. How soon will my bill be credited?**

Eligible entities are expected to begin receiving payments from the Program in January 2024. Entities will have 60 days to credit and notify impacted customers after receiving funding. Customers should contact their community water system, wastewater treatment provider, or wastewater billing entity directly for more information on when their accounts will be credited.

**8. How many months of my past-due water bills will be paid?**

The amounts credited to a customer's bill will be determined by the total amount due, not based on the monthly bill amount or number of bills missed. The Extended Arrearage Program Guidelines set forth how eligible entities will determine how much to credit customers' accounts.

**9. Am I still liable if the Program does not cover a portion of my water or wastewater debt?**

Yes, customers will remain liable for any portion of their debt not covered by this Program. Community water systems, however, are required to enroll any customers with remaining balances after the credits have been applied in a payment plan if the customer is not enrolled in a payment plan at the time the credits are applied. Please get in touch with your community water system directly to ask about your payment plan options.

**10. How can I get help with the remaining portion of my water or wastewater debt not covered by this Program?**

The [Department of Community Services & Development](https://www.csd.ca.gov/) (CSD) recently received funding for a new water and wastewater assistance program. The Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP) assists income-eligible California households to reduce arrearages that have accumulated due to the COVID-19 pandemic. More information will be available soon on CSD's website at: <https://www.csd.ca.gov/waterbill>.