



Legislation Text

File #: CB 120329, Version: 1

CITY OF SEATTLE

ORDINANCE _____

COUNCIL BILL _____

AN ORDINANCE relating to Seattle Public Utilities' Emergency Assistance Program; temporarily extending increased assistance related to COVID-induced customer delinquencies; and amending Section 21.76.065 of the Seattle Municipal Code.

WHEREAS, Seattle Municipal Code Section 21.76.065 established Seattle Public Utilities' low-income emergency assistance program; and

WHEREAS, Seattle Municipal Code Section 21.76.065 provides once-a-year emergency bill payment assistance for low-income SPU customers; and

WHEREAS, Seattle Municipal Code Section 21.76.065 provides twice-a-year emergency bill payment assistance for low-income SPU customers who have minor children in the household; and

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic and economic fallout have created widespread financial hardship across the community, increased utility account delinquencies, and growing debt and arrears for customers;

NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF SEATTLE AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. Section 21.76.065 of the Seattle Municipal Code, last amended by Ordinance 126494, is amended as follows:

21.76.065 Low income emergency assistance program

A. Qualification. Upon satisfactory proof, emergency assistance shall be issued to each household for which a member of the household is billed, by Seattle Public Utilities (SPU), for water, wastewater, or solid waste services and has annual income that, when combined with the annual income of all household members,

does not exceed 80 percent of the Washington State median income for the number of individuals in the household as computed annually by the state or the City.

B. Application. Applicants shall provide the information required by the Human Services Department or SPU, on forms and in the manner determined by the Human Services Department or SPU.

C. Emergency credit. Customers with SPU residential accounts, metered for a single-family residence, and determined by the Human Services Department or SPU to be eligible under subsection 21.76.065.A, shall receive an emergency credit of 100 percent of the customer's delinquent bills up to a maximum credit defined in subsection 21.76.065.D, but may only receive such credit once each calendar year unless a minor child lives with the customer. When a minor child lives in the household, the customer may receive an emergency credit twice each calendar year.

D. Maximum credit defined. (~~In 2006, the maximum credit shall be \$200.~~) In ~~((2007))~~ 2022 and subsequent years, the maximum amount (~~(from 2006))~~ of \$477 shall be adjusted annually by SPU to reflect the average growth in combined water, sewer, and solid waste bills for residential customers.

E. SPU may, at its discretion, require a payment plan for the unpaid balance as a condition of receiving emergency assistance under this program.

F. Temporary COVID-19 assistance. Until December 31, ~~((2022))~~ 2023, households qualifying under subsection 21.76.065.A who do not have minor children in the household may receive a second emergency assistance credit within the same calendar year, notwithstanding anything in subsection 21.76.065.C.

G. For customers eligible to receive two credits in one calendar year, the Department, at its discretion, may grant one credit exceeding the maximum single credit amount under subsection 21.76.065.D so long as the total amount credited to a customer during a calendar year does not exceed two times the single maximum credit.

Section 2. This ordinance shall take effect and be in force 30 days after its approval by the Mayor, but if not approved and returned by the Mayor within ten days after presentation, it shall take effect as provided by Seattle Municipal Code Section 1.04.020.

Passed by the City Council the _____ day of _____, 2022,
and signed by me in open session in authentication of its passage this _____ day of _____, 2022.

President _____ of the City Council

Approved / returned unsigned / vetoed this _____ day of _____, 2022.

Bruce A. Harrell, Mayor

Filed by me this _____ day of _____, 2022.

Monica Martinez Simmons, City Clerk

(Seal)

Attachments: