Winnipeg

CITY OF WINNIPEG POLICY NO. WW-005

POLICY TITLE *H2O Help to Others*	ADOPTED BY *City Council*	EFFECTIVE DATE *June 21, 2017*
ORIGIN / AUTHORITY *City Council*	CITY POLICY NO. WW-005	MOST RECENT CONSOLIDATION *November 27, 2025*

1. Purpose:

The purpose of this Policy is to describe the requirements and administration of the H2O Help to Others Program, which provides financial assistance to eligible low-income customers facing disconnection of their water service.

2. Definitions:

2.1 **"H2O Credit"** means the credit described in section 3.2 of this Policy.

2.2 **"H2O Program"** means the H2O Help to Others Program approved by Council.

2.3 **"Program Administrator"** means the individual or organization designated by the City to administer the H2O Program in accordance with this Policy.

2.4 **"Turn-off Notice"** means a notice issued by the Water and Waste Department which states water service will be stopped if the account is not paid within the period specified in the notice.

2.5 **"Utility Bill"** means a bill issued by the Water and Waste Department that includes water service, and may include sewer, solid waste and other services.

3. H2O Help to Others Program

3.1 Eligibility

To be eligible for assistance from the H2O Program, the applicant must meet all the following conditions:

A. The applicant is the current utility account holder and resident at the service address. H2O credits will not be approved for commercial, rental or multi-family dwelling properties.

B. The service address of the applicant is about to face disconnection of water service due to non-payment of its outstanding utility account balance.

C. The applicant has met with the Program Administrator to complete an application and has provided information or other documentation required by the Program Administrator to determine H2O Program eligibility and/or the H2O Credit, which will include but not be limited to proof of current total household income.

D. The applicant has satisfied the Program Administrator that the applicant and its household are in an emergency situation, where there are no resources to pay the Utility Bill.

E. The applicant's total household income, which includes the income of all adults living in the home, is below Statistics Canada post-Tax Low Income Cut-off.

F. The amount owing on the applicant's utility account is billed to an actual reading, or an actual meter reading is submitted by the applicant with its application.

G. The applicant or any other member of the applicant's household has not received assistance from the H2O Program within the two (2) years prior to the date of their application.

H. The applicant has not been convicted of a violation of the Water By-law or Sewer By-law in the past five (5) years.

3.2 H2O Credits

A. Applicants who qualify for the H2O Program will receive the lesser of:

i. The balance outstanding on the Turn-off Notice; or

ii. The maximum credit for the household, which is calculated based on:

a. average water use by household size;

b. Council-approved rates for water, sewer, and solid waste service; and

c. any other required fees included on the Utility Bill.

B. Maximum credits will be adjusted annually, if required, to reflect increases to utility rates approved by Council.

4. Notice to Applicants

A. Following review of a submitted application, the Water and Waste Department must mail a decision letter to the applicant's residence listed in the application, which shall indicate the amount of approved H2O Credit or an explanation of why no H2O Credit has been approved.

B. The decision letter must advise applicants they may appeal the decision to the Utility Credit Review Committee within 30 days, by mailing an appeal to the address specified in the decision letter.

5. Appeal Process

A. Applicants who are not approved for an H2O Credit, or who feel the approved H2O Credit is not consistent with this Policy, may appeal in writing to the Utility Credit Review Committee within 30 days of the date of the decision letter. The applicant may provide any additional documentation to the Utility Credit Review Committee that they feel is necessary to support their appeal.

B. Applicants who feel their needs will not be adequately met by a written appeal may request their appeal be made in person to the Committee.

5.1 Utility Credit Review Committee

A. The Utility Credit Review Committee will include three members as follows:

i. Manager, Finance and Administration, Water and Waste Department

ii. Manager, Customer Engagement and Strategic Services, Water and Waste Department

iii. Third manager appointed by the Director, Water and Waste Department. This member may be appointed for a single meeting or for a set period, as determined by the Director.

5.2 Committee Decisions

A. The Utility Credit Review Committee shall meet within two weeks after a written appeal has been received.

B. The Committee must send a formal letter to the applicant within 30 days of its meeting date outlining the Committee's decision on the appeal.

C. H2O Credits approved by the Committee must be consistent with section 3.2 of this Policy.

6. Responsibilities

6.1 Applicant

In order to receive an H2O Credit, the applicant must:

A. Meet with the Program Administrator to complete their application; and

B. Provide all documents required by the Program Administrator.

6.2 Program Administrator

The Program Administrator shall administer the H2O Program pursuant to its agreement with the City and this Policy, which includes:

A. Meeting with applicants to assess their eligibility for the H2O Program;

B. Submitting completed applications to the H2O Program on behalf of applicants; and

C. Providing recommendations to the City regarding applicant eligibility and any applicable H2O Credit amount.

6.3 Director, Water and Waste Department

The Director, or their delegate, shall:

A. Review recommendations of the Program Administrator to confirm eligibility and proposed H2O credits are consistent with the Policy.

B. Approve or deny H2O Program applications and provide notice of decision to applicants in accordance with this Policy.

C. Where approved, ensure that customer utility accounts are credited with H2O Credit.

D. Appoint the chair and members of the Utility Credit Review Committee and ensure that appeals are conducted according to this Policy

6.4 Chair, Utility Credit Review Committee

The Chair of the Utility Credit Review Committee shall:

A. Convene a meeting of the Utility Credit Review Committee within two (2) weeks of receiving a written appeal.

B. Issue a letter within 30 days of the meeting date outlining the Committee's decision on the appeal.