
State Water Resources Control Board

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**NOTICE OF OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENTS,
PUBLIC WORKSHOP AND BOARD CONSIDERATION OF
DRAFT CALIFORNIA WATER AND WASTEWATER
ARREARAGE PAYMENT PROGRAM GUIDELINES**

Video and Teleconference Meeting During COVID-19 Emergency

This workshop/meeting will occur via remote presence only as a result of the COVID-19 emergency and the Governor's Executive Orders to protect public health by limiting public gatherings and requiring social distancing.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) will accept public written comments on the Draft California Water and Wastewater Arrearage Payment Program (Program) Guidelines (Guidelines). Public written comments must be submitted no later than 12:00 p.m. (noon) on Friday, September 10, 2021. Public written comments must be submitted per the procedures in the "Submission of Comments" section of this public notice.

NOTICE IS ADDITIONALLY HEREBY GIVEN that the State Water Board will have a Board Workshop on the Draft Guidelines on **Thursday, September 9, 2021**. The anticipated date, time, and location of the Board workshop are provided below.

**Divisions of Drinking Water and Financial Assistance
State Water Board Workshop
Thursday, September 9, 2021
9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
Remote Participation Only**

The Board Workshop is for informational purposes and no formal action will be taken. While a quorum of the State Water Board may be present, the State Water Board will not take formal action at the workshop. There will be no sworn testimony or cross-examination of interested persons, but the State Water Board and its staff may ask clarifying questions.

E. JOAQUIN ESQUIVEL, CHAIR | EILEEN SOBECK, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

If you wish to watch or attend the Board Workshop: A webcast will be available at video.calepa.ca.gov/ and should be used UNLESS you intend to provide comments or ask questions orally during the workshop. Click on the video icon under the corresponding date and event. Please note that the link to the webcast will be available a few minutes before the workshop begins. For questions regarding the Guidelines, please email communitywatersystemscovidrelief@waterboards.ca.gov with the subject line "Draft Guidelines Workshop."

NOTICE IS ADDITIONALLY HEREBY GIVEN that the State Water Board will consider adopting the Draft Guidelines on **Tuesday or Wednesday, September 21-22, 2021** at the State Water Board Meeting. The anticipated date and time of the Board meeting are provided below.

**State Water Board Meeting
Tuesday and Wednesday, September 21-22, 2021
9:00 a.m. both days
Remote Participation Only**

If you wish to watch the Board Meeting: A webcast will be available at video.calepa.ca.gov/ and should be used UNLESS you intend to provide comments or ask questions orally during the workshop. Click on the video icon under the corresponding date and event. Please note that the link to the webcast will be available a few minutes before the workshop begins. For questions regarding the Guidelines, please email communitywatersystemscovidrelief@waterboards.ca.gov with the subject line "Draft Guidelines Workshop."

ACCESSIBILITY

Telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) users may contact the California Relay Service at: (800) 735-2929 or voice line at (800) 735-2922.

BACKGROUND

The Fiscal Year 2021-22 State Budget Act (Senate Bill 129) appropriated \$985 million from the Coronavirus Fiscal Recovery Fund, established by the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, to the State Water Board for payments to community water systems to forgive residential and commercial customer arrearages that accrued during the COVID-19 pandemic relief bill period (March 4, 2020 through June 15, 2021). A Budget trailer bill (Assembly Bill 148) added Chapter 4.7, commencing with section 116773 of part 12 of division 104 to the Health and Safety Code to establish requirements for the Program.

The State Water Board surveyed community water systems to determine total statewide residential and commercial customer arrearages and water enterprise revenue shortfalls. The State Water Board must adopt a resolution establishing guidelines for the Program within 90 days of receiving the funds; begin disbursing funds by November 1, 2021 and complete disbursing funds by January 31, 2022.

The Guidelines establish the process and criteria for the allocation and administration of the funds, including requirements for participating community water systems. The Guidelines establish the total statewide need and proportional allocation methodology for payments to eligible community water systems, and customer notification and payment plan requirements.

If there are remaining funds after fully reimbursing community water system residential and commercial customer arrearages, the State Water Board will amend the Guidelines or adopt new guidelines to establish a Wastewater Arrearage Payment Program.

DOCUMENT AVAILABILITY

The initial Draft Guidelines are available for public comment at: https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/arrearage_payment_program/. Subsequent versions may be made available prior to the workshop.

You may also request a copy of the Draft FY 2021-22 Guidelines by contacting CommunityWaterSystemsCovidRelief@waterboards.ca.gov or calling (916) 322-6227.

After reviewing oral and written public comments, an updated version of the Draft Guidelines will be posted on the September 21-22, 2021 Board Meeting agenda.

SUBMISSION OF COMMENTS

The State Water Board will accept both written and oral comments on the Draft Guidelines. To submit written comments, please use the subject line: "**Comment Letter – Draft Water and Wastewater Arrearage Payment Program Guidelines**". Written comments must be received by 12:00 p.m. (noon) on Friday, September 10, 2021 and should be submitted to the attention of:

Jeanine Townsend, Clerk to the Board
State Water Resources Control Board
1001 I Street, 24th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

Comment letters may be submitted to the Clerk to the Board via email (if less than 15 megabytes) at commentletters@waterboards.ca.gov. If the electronic comment letter is greater than 15 megabytes, it may be submitted by fax at (916) 341-5620. Couriers delivering hard copies of comment letters must check in with lobby security personnel, who can contact Ms. Townsend at (916) 341-5600.

At the Board Workshop and Meeting, commenters will be given an opportunity to make oral comments or to summarize and supplement orally previously submitted written materials. If you would like to provide oral comments, please follow the remote participation guidelines available at: https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/board_info/remote_meeting/#provide_comments

PROCEDURAL MATTERS

At the State Water Board Meeting, the Board will consider adoption of the Draft Guidelines. Members of the public may present oral comments at the meeting. To ensure a productive and efficient Board Meeting, the Board may limit the time for oral comments.

For recommendations regarding presentations to the Board, please go to:
http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/board_info/meetings/board_presentations.shtml.

FUTURE NOTICES

Any change in the date, time, the public comment period, or to the intended date of State Water Board consideration of adoption of the Draft Guidelines will be provided via the State Water Board's email distribution list. Any person desiring to receive future notices concerning the Guidelines must subscribe to the State Water Board's email distribution list. The subscription form is located at:

http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/resources/email_subscriptions/swrcb_subscribe.html

To subscribe, select the "General Interests" category, then check the box for "Board Meetings", and provide the required information.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION Please direct all questions regarding this notice and the Guidelines to CommunityWaterSystemsCovidRelief@waterboards.ca.gov or call (916) 322-6227.

August 26, 2021
Date

SIGNATURE ON FILE
Jeanine Townsend
Clerk to the Board