

Proposed Amendments to Bill 251021

Note:

Proposed additions are in **Bold**

Proposed deletions to the Bill are in ~~Strikethrough~~

AN ORDINANCE

Amending Chapter 19-1600 of The Philadelphia Code, entitled “Water and Sewer Rents,” by revising income eligibility standards for rate discounts and installment payment agreements, all under certain terms and conditions.

THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA HEREBY ORDAINS:

SECTION 1. Chapter 19-1600 of The Philadelphia Code is hereby amended to read as follows:

CHAPTER 1600. WATER AND SEWER RENTS.

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§19-1605. Limitation on Action to Enforce Collection; Income-Based Water Rate Assistance Program.

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(3) The IWRAP program is authorized under the following terms and conditions:

(a) Monthly IWRAP bills shall be affordable for low-income households, based on a percentage of the household's income and a schedule of different percentage rates for (i) households with income up to fifty percent (50%) of FPL, (ii) households with income from fifty percent (50%) to one hundred percent (100%) of FPL, and (iii) households with income from one hundred percent (100%) to ~~[one hundred fifty]~~ *two hundred* percent (~~[150]~~*200*%) of FPL, and shall be charged in lieu of the Department's service, usage, and stormwater charges. That goal shall be achieved through a discount on generally-applicable residential rates or other bill calculation mechanism based upon each Customer's actual income and, if practicable, historical usage, in a manner consistent with applicable federal law. The percentage of income limitations to be imposed at each level by the first sentence shall be determined by the Water, Sewer and Storm Water Rate Board, which also shall have discretion to establish more, but not fewer, Low-Income tiers. Bills issued pursuant to this IWRAP program shall be deemed to comply with Philadelphia Code subsection 13-101(4)(d). The Department shall have discretion to offer more favorable terms than the standard rates upon an individualized finding of Special Hardship. Historical usage shall not include significant usage attributable to leaks or activities not customary to a residential setting.

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(h.2) ~~*Earned forgiveness.*~~ **Earned forgiveness.** Earned forgiveness of arrearages shall be available under such terms and conditions as are adopted by regulation. Customers with household income from [one hundred] ~~*two hundred*~~ [fifty] ***two hundred*** percent ([150]~~200~~%) to [two hundred fifty] ~~*three hundred*~~ percent ([250]~~300~~%) of FPL, shall be offered payment plans that result in a total bill - including arrearages - that is affordable.

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SECTION 2. ~~This Ordinance shall be effective immediately.~~ This Ordinance shall go into effect on the effective date of new Water Department base rates and charges established by the Philadelphia Water, Sewer and Storm Water Rate Board after January 1, 2027.