



City of Philadelphia

City Council
Chief Clerk's Office
402 City Hall
Philadelphia, PA 19107

BILL NO. 251020

Introduced November 20, 2025

Councilmember Gauthier

**Referred to the
Committee on Transportation and Public Utilities**

AN ORDINANCE

Amending Section 19-1604 of The Philadelphia Code, entitled “Charges Where Water Meter Has Become Defective,” by authorizing the reduction of customer water bills due to defective or inaccurate water meters, under certain terms and conditions.

WHEREAS, The City of Philadelphia requires all service connections to the City’s water system to be metered and furnishes water meters for this purpose;

WHEREAS, The City’s water meters require regular replacement in accordance with industry standards and developments in metering technology;

WHEREAS, When the City’s water meters become defective, and fail to register or transmit the amount of water supplied, customers are not billed accurately until meter repairs or replacements can occur;

WHEREAS, A customer who is not billed accurately for an extended period of time due to a defective meter can face significant, unexpected water costs when the meter is repaired or replaced;

WHEREAS, It was reported in 2013 that the City adopted a “shared responsibility policy” to reduce the amounts billed to customers when the City does not obtain meter readings for an extended period of time;

WHEREAS, the City has not maintained the “shared responsibility policy,” leaving customers with defective meters forced to seek individualized relief from high bills associated with meter replacement;

City of Philadelphia

BILL NO. 251020 continued

WHEREAS, City Council desires for the City to establish a consistent approach to addressing the financial burdens that may be associated with the repair and replacement of defective meters; now, therefore

THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA HEREBY ORDAINS:

SECTION 1. Section 19-1604 of The Philadelphia Code is hereby amended to read as follows:

TITLE 19. FINANCE, TAXES AND COLLECTIONS

* * *

CHAPTER 19-1600. WATER AND SEWER RENTS.

* * *

§ 19-1604. Charges Where Water Meter Has Become Defective.

(1) When a water meter *or associated transmitter* has become [defective and] *defective*, has failed to register correctly the amount of water supplied to the premises wherein said meter is located, *or has failed to timely and accurately transmit such amount*, the Department may compute the amount of water used according to such method of computation as the Water Department may by regulation prescribe. *The Department is authorized to adopt regulations setting forth the methodology by which it will reduce the customer's obligation to pay for water supplied due to a water meter or associated transmitter that has remained defective, failed to register correctly the amount of water supplied to the premises wherein said meter is located, or failed to timely and accurately transmit such amount for a period in excess of 12 months.*

* * *

SECTION 2. This Ordinance shall be effective immediately.

Explanation:

Italics indicate new matter added.