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WATER SERVICES ACT 2012

**WATER SERVICES CODE
OF CONDUCT (CUSTOMER
SERVICE STANDARDS) 2013**

Western Australia

Water Services Code of Conduct (Customer Service Standards) 2013

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Defined terms

Water Services Act 2012

Water Services Code of Conduct (Customer Service Standards) 2013

Made by the Minister for Water under the *Water Services Act 2012* section 27 and Schedule 1 clause 11.

Part 1 — Preliminary

1. Citation

This code is the *Water Services Code of Conduct (Customer Service Standards) 2013*.

2. Commencement

This code comes into operation as follows —

- (a) clauses 1 and 2 — on the day on which this code is published in the *Gazette*;
- (b) clauses 12 and 37(2) — at the end of the 2 year period starting on the day on which the *Water Services Act 2012* section 27 comes into operation;
- (c) the rest of the code — on the day on which the *Water Services Act 2012* section 27 comes into operation.

3. Terms used

In this code —

bill means a bill for a water service charge;

business day means a day that is not a Saturday, Sunday or public holiday;

Water Services Code of Conduct (Customer Service Standards) 2013**Part 1** Preliminary**cl. 4**

drinking water means —

- (a) potable water; and
- (b) water that is not potable but that is supplied on the basis that the customer is responsible for treating the water to make it fit for humans to drink;

publicly available, in relation to a document of a licensee, means that —

- (a) any person may view the document on, and download the document from, the licensee's website; and
- (b) a hard copy of the document is provided to a customer on request and at no charge;

section means section of the Act.

Note: Other words and expressions used in this code have the same respective meanings as in the *Water Services Act 2012*. See the *Water Services Act 2012* sections 26(5) and 27(5) and the *Interpretation Act 1984* section 44.

4. Application of code

(1) In this clause —

customer, of a licensee, means a customer as defined in section 3(1) who is —

- (a) an owner of the land in respect of which the water services are provided; or
- (b) an occupier of the land in respect of which the water services are provided who is authorised by an owner to receive bills for the water services,

and includes any other person who is authorised by an owner of the land in respect of which the water services are provided to receive bills for the water services.

(2) This code applies to —

- (a) each licensee that provides a water supply service, but only in respect of the supply of drinking water, and each of the licensee's customers; and

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Preliminary

Part 1

cl. 5

- (b) each licensee that provides a sewerage service and each of the licensee's customers; and
- (c) each licensee that provides an irrigation service and each of the licensee's customers; and
- (d) each licensee that provides a drainage service and each of the licensee's customers.

5. Contracting out

(1) Nothing in this code prevents a licensee and a customer from entering into an agreement that varies or displaces the requirements of this code in relation to the licensee or customer.

(2) If —

- (a) a licensee's licence is one to which Schedule 1 clause 10(1) of the Act applies; and
- (b) on the day on which the *Water Services Act 2012* section 27 comes into operation an agreement between a licensee and a customer is in effect that has provisions that are inconsistent with the requirements of this code in relation to the licensee or customer,

the provisions of the agreement prevail to the extent of the inconsistency.

6. Notes not part of code

Notes in this code are provided to assist understanding and do not form part of the code.

Water Services Code of Conduct (Customer Service Standards) 2013**Part 2** Connection of water services to land**cl. 7**

Part 2 — Connection of water services to land**7. Information about connections**

- (1) In this clause —
connection means a connection of a water service to land.
- (2) A licensee must have written information for customers about each of the following —
 - (a) entitlements under section 73 to the provision of —
 - (i) drinking water supply services; and
 - (ii) sewerage, irrigation and drainage services;
 - (b) licensee functions under section 21 concerning the provision of —
 - (i) drinking water supply services; and
 - (ii) sewerage, irrigation and drainage services;
 - (c) the regulations that prescribe requirements for the purpose of section 21(2)(c) or (3)(c);
 - (d) how to apply for a connection;
 - (e) the things that a customer must do, and the things that must be complied with, before a connection is made;
 - (f) the fees that apply in relation to connections and when the fees are payable;
 - (g) the period mentioned in clause 8 in which connections are required to be completed.
- (3) The information must be publicly available.

8. Minimum performance standards for standard water supply connections

- (1) In this clause —
connection means a connection of a metered water supply service to an existing main comprising 20 mm water supply pipes.

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Connection of water services to land

Part 2**cl. 8**

- (2) A connection must be completed before the end of the period of 10 business days starting on the day on which both of these things have been complied with —
 - (a) the customer has done, or complied with, all the things, that the customer must do and comply with before a connection is made;
 - (b) the fees that apply in relation to the connection have been paid.
- (3) Subclause (2) does not apply if the licensee and customer expressly agree otherwise.
- (4) A licensee must ensure that there is a 90% compliance rate with subclause (2) in any 12 month period ending on 30 June.

Water Services Code of Conduct (Customer Service Standards) 2013**Part 3** Billing for water services**cl. 9**

Part 3 — Billing for water services**9. Bills other than for quantities supplied, discharged**

(1) In this clause —

bill (non-quantity) charges means a bill for a water service charge that is not determined by the quantity of water supplied, or the quantity of wastewater discharged.

(2) A licensee must, at least once in every 12 month period, issue a bill (non-quantity) charges to each customer to whom the licensee provides water services.

10. Bills for quantities supplied, discharged

(1) In this clause —

bill for usage means a bill for a water service charge for the quantity of water supplied, or the quantity of wastewater discharged.

(2) A licensee must, at least once in every 6 month period, issue a bill for usage to each customer to whom the licensee provides water services.

(3) A bill for usage must be based on a meter reading to ascertain the quantity supplied or discharged.

(4) If an accurate meter reading is not possible, a bill for usage must be based on an estimation or calculation, in accordance with regulations mentioned in section 222(2)(h) (if any), of the quantity of water supplied or wastewater discharged.

(5) If an accurate meter reading is not possible and there are no applicable regulations, a bill for usage must be based on a reasonable estimate of supply or discharge —

- (a) by referring to a daily average quantity of water supplied, or wastewater discharged, in a previous period;
or

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Billing for water services

Part 3**cl. 11**

- (b) by adjusting the quantity as measured by a faulty meter to take into account the effects of the fault; or
- (c) on a basis agreed with the customer.

11. Sending bills

A licensee must send a bill —

- (a) to the address of the place in respect of which the water service is provided; or
- (b) if the customer nominates another address, to the nominated address.

Note: Note the *Electronic Transactions Act 2011* in relation to electronic communications.

12. Information on bills

- (1) Each bill must contain the following information —
 - (a) the customer's name;
 - (b) the account number;
 - (c) the address of the place in respect of which the water service is provided;
 - (d) any other address nominated by the customer for sending of bills;
 - (e) the day on which the bill is issued;
 - (f) the charges payable;
 - (g) the water service or services for which the charges are payable;
 - (h) the date when payment is due;
 - (i) the nature and amount of any applicable concession, discount or rebate;
 - (j) the amount of interest or fees charged for late payment of outstanding amounts;
 - (k) the amount of any arrears or credit standing to the customer's name;

Water Services Code of Conduct (Customer Service Standards) 2013**Part 3** Billing for water services**cl. 12**

- (l) the options for payment that are available to the customer;
 - (m) the licensee's website address;
 - (n) a telephone number for account, payment and general enquiries;
 - (o) contact details for account, payment and general enquiries for use by customers with hearing or speech impairment;
 - (p) a statement that the website contains information about estimates, meter reading and testing, complaints and review.
- (2) Each bill for usage for a metered water service must, in addition to the requirements of subclause (1), contain the following information —
- (a) whether the bill was based on —
 - (i) a meter reading; or
 - (ii) an estimate of the quantity of water supplied or the quantity of wastewater discharged;
 - (b) the billing period;
 - (c) the number of days to which the bill applies;
 - (d) the 2 most recent dates on which the quantity of water supplied or the quantity of wastewater discharged was ascertained, whether by a meter reading or an estimate;
 - (e) if the bill was based on a meter reading, the total quantity of water supplied or the quantity of wastewater discharged according to the meter reading;
 - (f) if the bill was based on an estimate, the total quantity of water supplied or the quantity of wastewater discharged according to the estimate;
 - (g) information, if available, about the customer's water usage compared with the customer's previous usage.

Water Services Code of Conduct (Customer Service Standards) 2013

Billing for water services

Part 3**cl. 13**

-
- (3) Each bill must inform the customer of the following and where further details can be obtained —
- (a) if the bill was based on an estimate, that the licensee will tell the customer on request —
 - (i) the basis of the estimate; and
 - (ii) the reason for the estimate;
 - (b) that the customer may request a meter reading and bill to determine outstanding charges for a period that is not the same as the usual billing cycle;
 - (c) that the customer may request a meter reading and revised bill if the customer disputes an estimate on which a bill is based and that if the customer so requests, information about the fees that apply;
 - (d) that the customer may request, in accordance with the regulations mentioned in section 79(3)(b), the testing of a meter and that if the customer so requests, information about the fees that apply and when the fees may be reimbursed in accordance with the regulations mentioned in section 79(3)(c);
 - (e) that the bill can be reviewed in accordance with the licensee's review procedure mentioned in clause 18;
 - (f) that complaints about the provision of a water service by the licensee or a failure by the licensee to provide a water service can be made in accordance with the licensee's complaints procedure mentioned in clause 35.

Note: Clause 2(b) applies to the commencement of this clause.

13. Estimates: licensees' obligations

- (1) If a bill is based on an estimate, the licensee must tell the customer, on request —
- (a) the basis of the estimate; and
 - (b) the reason for the estimate.

Water Services Code of Conduct (Customer Service Standards) 2013**Part 3** Billing for water services**cl. 14**

- (2) If a bill is based on an estimate, the licensee must make any necessary adjustments to the next bill to take into account the extent to which the estimate was not reasonable having regard to a subsequent and accurate meter reading.

14. Requested meter readings, revised bills: licensee's obligations

- (1) A licensee must provide to the customer on request any of the following —
- (a) in the case of a metered water service, a meter reading and bill to determine outstanding charges for a period that is not the same as the usual billing cycle;
 - (b) in the case where the customer disputes an estimate on which a bill is based —
 - (i) a meter reading (if the water service is metered and the meter is operable); and
 - (ii) in any event, a revised bill.
- (2) A licensee does not have to provide, under subclause (1)(a) or (b), a meter reading, bill or revised bill if a fee that applies to providing the reading or bill has not been paid.

15. Leaks

- (1) In this clause —
leak means a leak from a fitting, fixture or pipe for which the customer, as an owner or occupier of land, is responsible under section 92(1).
- (2) A licensee must have a written policy, standard or set of guidelines in relation to the granting of a discount to a customer whose meter reading indicates a water usage that is higher than normal for the customer but is likely to have been wasted because of a leak.
- (3) The policy, standard or guidelines must be publicly available.

Water Services Code of Conduct (Customer Service Standards) 2013

Billing for water services

Part 3**cl. 16**

16. Undercharging in bills

- (1) A licensee may recover from a customer an amount that has not been, but could have been, the subject of a bill (the *undercharged amount*).
- (2) An undercharged amount cannot be recovered from a customer unless it is for water services provided in the 12 month period ending on the day on which the licensee informed the customer that the customer has not been charged for the undercharged amount.
- (3) An undercharged amount must be the subject of, and explained in —
 - (a) a special bill for the undercharged amount; or
 - (b) a separate item in the next bill.
- (4) A licensee must not charge interest or late payment fees on an undercharged amount.
- (5) A licensee must allow a customer to pay an undercharged amount by way of a repayment plan that has effect for the shorter of the following periods starting on the day on which the bill mentioned in subclause (3)(a) or (b) is issued, as is applicable in the case —
 - (a) a period for the same amount of time in which the undercharging occurred;
 - (b) a period of 12 months.

17. Overcharging in bills

- (1) A licensee that overcharges a customer must, before the end of the period of 15 business days starting on the day the licensee became aware of the error —
 - (a) credit the customer's account and immediately afterwards notify the customer; or

Water Services Code of Conduct (Customer Service Standards) 2013**Part 3** Billing for water services**cl. 18**

- (b) inform the customer of the overcharging and recommend options for how the amount overcharged may be refunded to the customer or credited to the customer's account.
- (2) A licensee must, in accordance with the instructions of a customer who has been overcharged, refund the amount or credit the amount to the customer's account before the end of the period of 15 business days starting on the day the licensee receives the instructions.

18. Review of bills

- (1) A licensee must review a bill on the customer's request.
- (2) A licensee must have a written procedure for the review of a bill on the customer's request.
- (3) The review procedure must include information about the following —
 - (a) requesting a meter reading or testing as mentioned in clause 12(3)(c) and (d);
 - (b) what happens if, on review, it is found that the customer has been undercharged or overcharged;
 - (c) what the customer can do if unsatisfied with the outcome of the review.
- (4) In relation to subclause (3)(c), the review procedure must state that the customer may, but does not have to, use the licensee's complaints procedure mentioned in clause 35 before or instead of —
 - (a) applying to the water services ombudsman under a scheme approved under section 65 in respect of the complaint (if any); or

Water Services Code of Conduct (Customer Service Standards) 2013

Billing for water services

Part 3**cl. 18**

- (b) making an appeal from, or applying for a review of, the decision that gave rise to the complaint, if an appeal or review is available under regulations mentioned in section 222(2)(k).
- (5) A licensee must inform the customer of the outcome of a review of the customer's bill as soon as practicable or otherwise before the end of the period of 15 business days starting on the day the customer's request for review was received.
- (6) The review procedure must be publicly available.

Water Services Code of Conduct (Customer Service Standards) 2013**Part 4** Payment for water services**cl. 19**

Part 4 — Payment for water services**19. Terms used**

In this Part —

consumer organisation means an organisation that represents the interest of customers as consumers;

financial hardship means being in an ongoing state of financial disadvantage in which the customer's ability to meet the basic living needs of the customer or a dependant of the customer would be adversely affected if the customer were to pay an unpaid bill for a water service supplied in respect of the place used solely or primarily as the customer's dwelling;

payment difficulties means being in a state of financial disadvantage that is not likely to be ongoing and in which the customer is unable to pay an unpaid bill.

20. When payment due if not set under regulations

The time set by a licensee for the payment of a bill must be after the end of the period of 14 days starting on the day the bill is issued.

21. Payment methods

- (1) A licensee must allow a customer to pay a bill by any of the following methods selected by the customer —
 - (a) direct debit;
 - (b) Centrepay (the facility that allows Centrelink customers to have automatic deductions taken from Centrelink payments);
 - (c) internet;
 - (d) telephone;
 - (e) post.

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Payment for water services

Part 4**cl. 22**

- (2) A licensee must, when offering bill payment method options, inform customers of the fees and charges (if any) associated with each bill payment method offered.
- (3) Nothing in subclause (1) prevents a licensee from providing another bill payment method in addition to those set out in that subclause.

22. Consent for direct debits

Before receiving a bill payment by direct debit a licensee must obtain the express consent, either orally or in writing —

- (a) of the holder of the account to be debited; and
- (b) of the customer or an adult person nominated by the customer, to do so.

23. Payment in advance

- (1) A licensee must accept payment in advance from a customer on the customer's request.
- (2) A licensee does not have to credit interest to an amount paid in advance.

24. Free redirection in absence, illness

A licensee must redirect a customer's bills to another person on the customer's request and at no charge if the customer is or will be unable to pay the bills because of the customer's absence or illness.

25. Assistance for customers experiencing payment difficulties

- (1) In this clause —

customer means a customer who has been assessed by the licensee as a customer who is experiencing payment difficulties.

Water Services Code of Conduct (Customer Service Standards) 2013**Part 4** Payment for water services**cl. 26**

- (2) A licensee must allow a customer to pay a bill under a payment plan or other arrangement under which the customer is given more time to pay the bill or to pay arrears.

26. Financial hardship policy

- (1) A licensee must have a written policy in relation to financial hardship.
- (2) A licensee's financial hardship policy does not have effect unless it is approved by the Authority.
- (3) If a licensee's licence is one to which Schedule 1 clause 10(1) of the Act applies, the licensee's financial hardship policy must be in effect before the end of the 6 month period starting on the day on which the *Water Services Act 2012* section 27 comes into operation.
- (4) If subclause (3) does not apply, a licensee's financial hardship policy must be in effect before the end of the 6 month period starting on the day of the grant of the licensee's licence.
- (5) The financial hardship policy must be publicly available.
- (6) A licensee must review its financial hardship policy at least once in every 5 year period and, as part of the review process, consult with relevant consumer organisations.

27. Assistance for customers experiencing financial hardship

- (1) In this clause —
- bill* means a bill for a water service supplied in respect of the place used solely or primarily as the customer's dwelling;
- customer* means a customer who has been assessed under a licensee's financial hardship policy as a customer who is experiencing financial hardship.

Water Services Code of Conduct (Customer Service Standards) 2013

Payment for water services

Part 4**cl. 28**

-
- (2) A licensee must allow a customer to pay a bill under an interest-free and fee-free payment plan or other arrangement under which the customer is given more time to pay the bill or to pay arrears.
- (3) In addition to the requirements of subclause (2), a licensee must —
- (a) consider reducing an amount owing by a customer to the licensee; and
 - (b) review and revise, if appropriate, how a customer is paying a bill under subclause (2); and
 - (c) provide written information to a customer about —
 - (i) redirecting the bill free of charge under clause 24; and
 - (ii) the bill payment methods provided by the licensee; and
 - (iii) applying for concessions or other financial relief to which the customer may be entitled under the Act; and
 - (iv) seeking independent financial counselling or advice from relevant consumer organisations; and
 - (v) applying for any other financial assistance to which the customer may be entitled including from Government-funded grant schemes.

28. Matters relating to customers experiencing payment difficulties or financial hardship

- (1) Before a licensee enters into a payment plan or other arrangement under clause 25(2) or 27(2) with a customer who is not the owner of the land in respect of which the water service is provided, the licensee must ensure that the owner is aware of the proposed plan or arrangement.

Water Services Code of Conduct (Customer Service Standards) 2013**Part 4** Payment for water services**cl. 29**

- (2) Nothing in clause 25(2) or 27(2) or (3) prevents a licensee from offering another payment arrangement or other kind of assistance.
- (3) Despite clause 25(2) or 27(2) or (3), a licensee does not have to, but may, offer a payment plan to a customer who has had 2 payment plans cancelled because of non-payment.
- (4) A licensee must have written information about the payment plans, arrangements and other assistance that it has available to customers for the purposes of clause 25 or 27.
- (5) The information must be publicly available.

29. No debt collection in certain cases

A licensee must not commence or continue proceedings to recover a debt from a customer —

- (a) who is complying with a payment plan or other arrangement under clause 25(2) or 27(2); or
- (b) who is being assessed by the licensee as to whether or not the customer is experiencing payment difficulties; or
- (c) who is being assessed under the licensee's financial hardship policy as a customer who is experiencing financial hardship.

30. Restoration of drinking water supply

- (1) A licensee that has, under section 95(1)(b), reduced the rate of flow of a supply of drinking water to land must restore the supply of water if —
 - (a) the amount owing is paid; or
 - (b) the customer enters into an arrangement satisfactory to the licensee to be made for the payment of the amount owing.

Water Services Code of Conduct (Customer Service Standards) 2013

Payment for water services

Part 4**cl. 30**

- (2) A licensee that has, under section 95(1)(a), (c), (d) or (e), cut off or reduced the rate of flow of a supply of drinking water to land must restore the supply of water if the licensee is satisfied that the reason for the disconnection or reduction no longer applies.

Water Services Code of Conduct (Customer Service Standards) 2013**Part 5** Reducing the rate of flow of water**cl. 31**

Part 5 — Reducing the rate of flow of water**31. Preliminary action**

A licensee must not, under section 95(1)(b), reduce the rate of flow of a supply of drinking water to a customer without having first used its best endeavours to inform the customer in person, by telephone or electronic means, of its intention to do so if the amount owing is not paid.

32. No reduction in certain cases

A licensee must not, under section 95(1)(b), reduce the rate of flow of a supply of drinking water to a customer in the following cases —

- (a) the amount owing is less than \$200;
- (b) the customer is being assessed by the licensee as to whether or not the customer is experiencing payment difficulties;
- (c) the customer is being assessed under the licensee's financial hardship policy as a customer who is experiencing financial hardship;
- (d) the customer is experiencing payment difficulties or financial hardship and is complying with a payment plan or other arrangement under which the customer has been given more time to pay the bill or to pay arrears;
- (e) a complaint made by the customer in relation to the water service charges is not resolved;
- (f) after 3 p.m. on a Friday, Saturday, Sunday, public holiday or day before a public holiday;
- (g) the occupier is a tenant and the owner is liable to pay the amount owing;
- (h) the customer —
 - (i) requires water to operate a life support machine;
or

Water Services Code of Conduct (Customer Service Standards) 2013

Reducing the rate of flow of water

Part 5**cl. 33**

- (ii) has been assessed and determined by the licensee as requiring water for a special need.

33. Water flow not to be reduced below minimum rate

A licensee must not reduce the rate of flow of a supply of water to a customer to below 2.3 litres each minute.

34. Minimum performance standards for restoration of water supply

- (1) In this clause —

metropolitan region means the region described in the *Planning and Development Act 2005* Schedule 3;

restoration event means —

- (a) payment under clause 30(1)(a); or
 - (b) entering into an arrangement under clause 30(1)(b); or
 - (c) the licensee being satisfied under clause 30(2).
- (2) If the licensee is the Water Corporation and the land is in the metropolitan region, the Water Corporation must restore a water supply —
 - (a) if the restoration event occurs before 3 p.m. on a business day, by the next business day; or
 - (b) if the restoration event occurs at any other time, within the next 2 business days,

unless the licensee and customer expressly agree otherwise.

- (3) If the licensee is the Water Corporation and the land is outside the metropolitan region, the Water Corporation must restore a water supply —
 - (a) if the restoration event occurs before 3 p.m. on a business day, within the next 2 business days; and
 - (b) if the restoration event occurs at any other time, within the next 3 business days,

Water Services Code of Conduct (Customer Service Standards) 2013**Part 5** Reducing the rate of flow of water**cl. 34**

unless the licensee and customer expressly agree otherwise.

- (4) A licensee other than the Water Corporation must restore a water supply —
- (a) if the restoration event occurs before 3 p.m. on a business day, by the next business day; and
 - (b) if the restoration event occurs at any other time, within the next 2 business days,

unless the licensee and customer expressly agree otherwise.

- (5) The Water Corporation must ensure that there is a 90% compliance rate with both of subclauses (2) and (3) in any 12 month period ending on 30 June.
- (6) A licensee other than the Water Corporation must ensure that there is a 90% compliance rate with subclause (4) in any 12 month period ending on 30 June.

Water Services Code of Conduct (Customer Service Standards) 2013

Complaints about water services

Part 6**cl. 35****Part 6 — Complaints about water services****35. Procedure for dealing with complaints about water services**

- (1) A licensee must have a written procedure in relation to investigating and dealing with complaints of customers about the provision of a water service by the licensee or a failure by the licensee to provide a water service.
- (2) A complaints procedure must be developed using as minimum standards the relevant provisions of —
 - (a) the AS ISO 10002-2006; and
 - (b) the Authority's guidelines (if any).
- (3) A complaints procedure must provide for the following —
 - (a) how complaints are to be lodged and recorded;
 - (b) time limits and methods for responding to complaints;
 - (c) dispute resolution arrangements;
 - (d) resolving a complaint before the end of the period of 15 business days starting on the day the complaint was received.
- (4) A complaints procedure must —
 - (a) state that a customer may, but does not have to, use the complaints procedure before or instead of the procedures under the Act; and
 - (b) list the procedures under the Act available to the customer; and
 - (c) set out the benefits to the customer, in relation to time and costs, if the customer chooses to use the complaints procedure before or instead of the procedures under the Act.

Water Services Code of Conduct (Customer Service Standards) 2013**Part 6** Complaints about water services**cl. 35**

- (5) In subclause (4) —
- procedures under the Act* means —
- (a) applying to the water services ombudsman under a scheme approved under section 65 in respect of the complaint (if any); or
 - (b) making an appeal from, or applying for a review of, the decision that gave rise to the complaint, if an appeal or review is available under regulations mentioned in section 222(2)(k).
- (6) The complaints procedure must be publicly available.

Water Services Code of Conduct (Customer Service Standards) 2013
Information and communication services **Part 7**

cl. 36

Part 7 — Information and communication services

36. Services to be provided without charge

- (1) A licensee must provide a customer with the following on request and at no charge —
 - (a) services for account, payment and general enquiries for use by customers with hearing or speech impairment;
 - (b) interpreter services for account, payment and general enquiries;
 - (c) a large-print version of any of the licensee's publicly available documents.
- (2) A licensee must make available to each customer the customer's personal account information.

37. Information to be publicly available

- (1) A licensee must make information about the following matters publicly available —
 - (a) the fees and charges that will be imposed and collected by the licensee;
 - (b) the licensee's bill payment method options and the fees and charges (if any) associated with each bill payment method offered;
 - (c) the exemptions, discounts, rebates and concessions that are available to customers;
 - (d) the services provided by the licensee under clause 36;
 - (e) the power of a person authorised by a licensee under section 129 to enter a place without consent, notice or warrant to read a meter connected to the licensee's water service works;
 - (f) the obligations of customers under the regulations to ensure that access to a meter is available;

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- (g) that under section 95(1)(b), the licensee may cut off, or reduce the rate of flow of, a supply of water if water service charges remain unpaid for 30 days after they become due;
 - (h) that the licensee's power as mentioned in paragraph (g) may be exercised even if —
 - (i) the customer is offered a payment plan or other arrangement under which the customer has been given more time to pay the bill or to pay arrears; or
 - (ii) having entered such a plan or other arrangement, the customer does not comply with it;
 - (i) that under section 95(3), the supply of water cannot be cut off to an occupied dwelling unless the occupier agrees;
 - (j) the quality of water and its management;
 - (k) sustainable use of water;
 - (l) planned and unplanned interruptions of water supply or other incidents that may significantly affect the provision of water services to customers.
- (2) A licensee must ensure that the following information about bills may be obtained from its website —
- (a) if a bill is based on an estimate, that the licensee will tell a customer on request —
 - (i) the basis of the estimate; and
 - (ii) the reason for the estimate;
 - (b) that in the case of a metered water service, a customer may request a meter reading and bill to determine outstanding charges for a period that is not the same as the usual billing cycle;

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- (c) that in the case where a customer disputes an estimate on which a bill is based, the customer may request a meter reading (if the water service is metered and the meter is operable) and in any event a revised bill and that if the customer so requests, information about the fees that apply;
- (d) that a customer may request, in accordance with the regulations mentioned in section 79(3)(b), the testing of a meter and that if the customer so requests, information about the fees that apply and when the fees may be reimbursed in accordance with the regulations mentioned in section 79(3)(c);
- (e) that the bill can be reviewed in accordance with the licensee's review procedure mentioned in clause 18;
- (f) that complaints about the provision of a water service by the licensee or a failure by the licensee to provide a water service can be made in accordance with the licensee's complaints procedure mentioned in clause 35.

Note: Clause 2(b) applies to the commencement of this subclause.

- (3) The requirements under this clause are in addition to the requirements under clauses 7(3), 15(3), 18(6), 26(5), 28(5) and 35(6).

TERRY REDMAN, Minister for Water.

Water Services Code of Conduct (Customer Service Standards) 2013**Defined terms**

Defined terms

*[This is a list of terms defined and the provisions where they are defined.
The list is not part of the law.]*

Defined term	Provision(s)
bill	3, 27(1)
bill (non-quantity) charges	9(1)
bill for usage	10(1)
business day	3
connection	7(1), 8(1)
consumer organisation	19
customer	4(1), 25(1), 27(1)
drinking water	3
financial hardship	19
leak	15(1)
metropolitan region	34(1)
payment difficulties	19
procedures under the Act	35(5)
publicly available	3
restoration event	34(1)
section	3
undercharged amount	16(1)