

## **PAYMENT EXTENSION PROCESS IS CHANGING**

The City of Concord is changing the process for utility services payment extensions, effective October 1, 2019.

Customers often need more time to pay their utility bills. The payment extension process is the method City staff applies to aid qualifying customers in getting their bill caught up. The payment extension process is part of the City's Customer Service Policies and Procedures (Section 3.12). City staff strives to be more efficient and has reviewed the payment extension process that other utility providers have implemented. It is the City's objective to collect all utility fees owed but also to work with our customers and offer options which allow the customer time to satisfy their outstanding balance.

Customers requesting extensions of time to pay their utility bill will be given an extension of 2 weeks to make their payment. A payment extension agreement that extends beyond 2 weeks would be considered an exception to the City's policy. A customer may have one payment extension every 3 months if the customer successfully completes the prior payment extension agreement. No extensions will be given on the first bill or the deposit due to the City.

Payment extensions are intended to aid the customer in catching up their bill, not to allow the customer to only pay a small amount while the bill continues to increase to an amount that the customer would not be able to pay. The new payment extension process will help customers avoid accumulating large bills.

Any exceptions to a 2 week payment extension would be handled individually by staff.

### **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

- **What if I already have a payment agreement with the City?**

Current payment agreements will be honored. Once the current payment agreement is complete, any new agreement that is requested would follow the new procedures that go into effect on October 1, 2019.

- **Who qualifies for a payment extension?**

Each customer's history will be reviewed to determine if the payment extension option is available. If a customer has a good payment history and all previous payment extension agreements have been honored, a customer qualifies for a payment extension once every 3 months. No extensions are granted for first bills or deposits.

- **How do I get a payment extension?**

If you are requesting a payment extension for 2 weeks or less, you may contact Customer Care at (704) 920-5555, or you may also visit the City's Customer Care Department located on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of City Hall, 35 Cabarrus Avenue West. Any Customer Care coworker will be able to assist you with a 2 week extension agreement.

- **What happens if I do not keep my payment extension agreement?**

Service will be disconnected without further notice and all amounts due to the City will be due and payable before service is restored. *A payment agreement extension contract will not be available in the next quarter (next 3 months) with a broken promise of an agreement.*

