



CALIFORNIA WATER & WASTEWATER ARREARAGE PAYMENT PROGRAM

Program Eligibility FAQs for the Extended Arrearage Program

1. What if an entity participated in a previous arrearage program?

Applicants that participated in the Water Arrearages Program or the Wastewater Arrearages Program are eligible for the Extended Arrearage Program, but only are eligible for the modified COVID relief period that excludes the previous Programs' original COVID relief period (March 4, 2020, through June 15, 2021). No modifications or adjustments to applications or funding amounts for the Water Arrearages Program or the Wastewater Arrearages Program are allowed.

2. Who is considered a commercial customer vs. an industrial customer?

- a. Commercial customers include customers who receive water services to commercial/institutional customers, such as hotels, motels, restaurants, office buildings, government and military facilities, gas stations, hospitals, educational institutions, retail establishments, dormitories, nursing homes, churches, jails, prisons, mental health facilities, addiction recovery centers, farmworker housing, and campgrounds.
- b. Industrial customers include, but are not limited to, the following: manufacturing (chemical, refineries, cooling towers, animal & food processing, etc.); agriculture irrigation (crops, aquaculture, etc.); or landscape irrigation (parks, golf courses, etc.).
- c. Eligible entities may use their existing billing designations for residential, commercial, and industrial customers when determining eligibility for residential and commercial customers.

3. Can an entity that already transferred customer debt to a third party (such as a county under a Teeter Plan or a debt collection entity) participate in the Extended Arrearage Program?

- a. Yes, entities that transferred debt to a third party are encouraged to apply to provide relief to their customers.
- b. The entity can credit customer accounts through one of these three methods:
 - i. Directly paying the third party to reduce or eliminate the debt;
 - ii. Refunding the credited amount to the customer; or

- iii. Creating a positive balance for customers to apply toward future wastewater bills.
 - c. The entity must notify customers of this credit and indicate that the credit should be used to pay down the debt that was transferred to the third party.
 - d. If the entity receives funding for arrearages that have been assigned to a third party other than a tax agency, the entity must recall the debt.
- 4. What if customers are charged for water or wastewater through property tax rolls?**
 - a. Entities that collect eligible customer revenue through property tax rolls are eligible for the program if they can identify water or wastewater arrearages and directly credit customers' accounts.
 - b. If counties, cities, or special districts collect water or wastewater fees through property taxes, then the county, city, or special district should apply to cover the customer arrearages.
- 5. What if an entity used a customer assistance program to aid customers with qualifying arrearages?**
 - a. An entity that used an existing customer assistance program to aid customers with qualifying arrearages may be eligible to participate in the program and receive payment for arrearages previously covered by the customer assistance program.
 - b. The entity should consult with the Extended Arrearage Program staff to determine that all program requirements can be met and confirm eligibility by emailing DFA-WaterArrearages@waterboards.ca.gov.
- 6. Are arrearages on accounts that are inactive or closed eligible for funding?**

Yes, all residential and commercial wastewater arrearages from the eligibility period (March 4, 2020, through December 31, 2022) can be included, even if the account is inactive or closed.
- 7. Are recycled water or stormwater arrearages eligible?**

The statute is limited to arrearages for wastewater collection, treatment, and disposal services. Stormwater arrearages are not eligible. Staff will consider requests for inclusion of charges for recycled water that is included within billing for wastewater collection, treatment, or disposal services. The entity should consult with Extended Arrearage Program staff to determine eligibility.
- 8. Can an entity receive Extended Arrearage Program funds if the entity is applying for other COVID-19 relief funding?**

It depends. The Extended Arrearage Program does not restrict an entity from receiving other COVID-19-related funding from other sources. However, entities receiving money for water arrearages or wastewater arrearages cannot also receive money from any other source for these same arrearages.

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If entities are seeking COVID-19 related funding from multiple sources, entities are strongly encouraged to discuss program eligibility requirements directly with the respective awarding agency before accepting funding from the Extended Arrearage Program. There may be instances where accepting funding from the Extended Arrearage Program may cause an entity to not be eligible for some other programs.

For support with additional questions, please contact: DFA-WaterArrearages@waterboards.ca.gov