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## State Water Resources Control Board

### **NOTICE OF OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENTS, PUBLIC WORKSHOP AND BOARD CONSIDERATION OF THE DRAFT CALIFORNIA WATER AND WASTEWATER EXTENDED ARREARAGE PAYMENT PROGRAM GUIDELINES**

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN** that the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) will accept public written comments on the draft California Water and Wastewater Extended Arrearage Payment Program (Extended Arrearage Program) Guidelines (Guidelines). Public written comments must be submitted no later than **12:00 p.m. (noon) on Monday, September 25, 2023**. Public written comments must be submitted per the procedures in the “Submission of Comments” section of this public notice.

**NOTICE IS ADDITIONALLY HEREBY GIVEN** that State Water Board staff will hold an information webinar on the draft Guidelines on:

**Thursday, September 21 – 2:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.**  
Remote Participation Only

Zoom link: <https://waterboards.zoom.us/j/93079538103>

Video broadcast link: [CalEPA Public Webcasts](#)

If you would like to submit questions during the webinar, please use the Zoom link above. The Video broadcast link is available for those who only wish to view the workshop.

**NOTICE IS ADDITIONALLY HEREBY GIVEN** that State Water Board will consider adoption of the Guidelines on **Tuesday, October 3, 2023** at the State Water Board meeting as follows:

**Consideration of Adoption Meeting**  
**Tuesday, October 3, 2023, at 9:30am**  
Joe Serna Jr. – CalEPA Headquarters Building  
1001 I Street, Second Floor  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
And via Video and Teleconference

#### **VIDEO AND TELECONFERENCE PARTICIPATION**

The consideration of adoption meeting will occur with both a physical meeting location and an option for the public to participate from a remote location.

E. JOAQUIN ESQUIVEL, CHAIR | EILEEN SOBECK, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

- Webcast: Live video and audio broadcasts of the public hearing, for attendees that are solely interested in watching and not participating, will be available via the internet and can be accessed at the [CalEPA Public Meeting Live Webcasts page](#). Closed captioning is available.
- Video and teleconference participation: For members of the public who wish to comment telephonically or via the remote meeting solution, additional information about participating will be available at least 10 days before the hearing on the [Remote Meeting page](#).

Additional information on the consideration of adoption meeting can be found at the [State Water Board's website](#). Any person desiring to receive future notices about changes to the date, time, location, or format of the public meeting should sign up for the e-mail subscription list, as described below under "Potential Future Changes to the Noticed Items."

## **BACKGROUND**

On July 10, 2023, Governor Newsom signed a budget trailer bill that expanded the California Water and Wastewater Arrearages Payment Program by extending the COVID-19 pandemic bill relief period. The State Water Board previously provided payments to community water systems, wastewater treatment providers, and wastewater billing entities to forgive residential and commercial customer arrearages that accrued during the COVID-19 pandemic bill relief period of March 4, 2020 through June 15, 2021 (Water and Wastewater Arrearages Programs).

This new Extended Arrearage Program would provide payments to both water and wastewater customer arrearages for the extended COVID-19 pandemic bill relief period of March 4, 2020 through December 31, 2022. The Water and Wastewater Arrearages Program resolutions and guidelines remain in effect until all entities who received funding complete all financial obligations and reporting. The Extended Arrearage Program will be jointly administered by the State Water Board's Division of Drinking Water (DDW), Division of Water Quality (DWQ), and Division of Financial Assistance (DFA).

The American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 provided funding to the State to address revenue losses as a result of the pandemic. The State Water Board has approximately \$600 million appropriated by the Budget Act of 2021 (Senate Bill 129) and the Budget Act of 2023 (Assembly Bill 102) from the Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Fund to the State Water Board for the California Water and Wastewater Arrearage Program. These funds are to be distributed to all eligible applicants, or proportionally distributed if application amounts exceed the funded amount. The Budget Act of 2023 included enterprise revenue losses as an eligible cost under the Extended Arrearage Program, however, after consultation with the Department of Finance it has been determined that this is not allowable under the American Rescue Plan Act. Therefore, the Guidelines exclude enterprise revenue losses.

State Water Board staff will provide an application package to all eligible applicants, establish an online portal for submittal of applications, and provide 60 days to receive the applications. Community water systems, wastewater treatment providers, and wastewater billing entities that participated in the Water Arrearages Program or Wastewater Arrearage Program are eligible for the Extended Arrearages Program but with the modified COVID relief period that excludes the original COVID relief period (March 4, 2020 through June 15, 2021). No modifications or adjustments to the Water and Wastewater Arrearages Program are allowed. Applications for the Extended Arrearages Program will be stand-alone applications considering only the modified COVID relief period. Community water systems, wastewater treatment providers, and wastewater billing entities who did not participate in the original arrearages Programs are eligible for the Extended Arrearages Program for the full, unmodified COVID relief period.

### **DOCUMENT AVAILABILITY**

The Draft Extended Arrearage Program Guidelines are available on the [California Water and Wastewater Arrearages Payment Program website](#).

You may also request a copy of the Draft Guidelines by emailing [DFA-WaterArrearages@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:DFA-WaterArrearages@waterboards.ca.gov).

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBMITTING COMMENTS:** All written comments must be received by the State Water Board by no later than **12:00 noon on Monday, September 25, 2023**. Comment letters received after this time and date will not be accepted unless the State Water Board determines otherwise.

Address comments to Courtney Tyler, Clerk to the State Water Board. Please include in the subject line: **“Comment Letter – Draft Extended Arrearage Program Guidelines”**.

Written comments may be submitted electronically in pdf format (if less than 15 megabytes in total size) to the Board Clerk via e-mail at [commentletters@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:commentletters@waterboards.ca.gov). If the file is greater than 15 megabytes in size, then written comments may be submitted by fax at (916) 341-5620.

Alternatively, comments may be submitted by hand delivery or mail to:

**Courtney Tyler, Clerk to the Board  
State Water Resources Control Board  
P.O. Box 100, Sacramento, CA 95812-2000 (by mail)  
1001 I Street, 24<sup>th</sup> Floor, 24<sup>th</sup> Floor, Sacramento, CA 95814 (hand delivery)**

Couriers delivering a hard copy of a comment letter must check in with the lobby security personnel, who can contact Ms. Tyler at (916) 341-5611.

## PROCEDURAL MATTERS

### LANGUAGE SERVICES AND ACCESSIBILITY

To request oral interpretation or sign language services, please submit your request at least 7 calendar days before the meeting by contacting Marina Perez at (916) 322-4265 or [OPP-LanguageServices@Waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:OPP-LanguageServices@Waterboards.ca.gov).

Telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) users may contact the California Relay Service at: TTY (800) 735-2929 or voice line at (800) 735-2922.

### PARKING AND ACCESSIBILITY

For directions to the Joe Serna, Jr. (CalEPA) Building and public parking information, please refer to the map on the State Water Board website: <http://www.calepa.ca.gov/headquarters-sacramento/location/>.

The CalEPA Building is accessible to persons with disabilities. Individuals requiring special accommodations are requested to call (916) 341-5254 at least 5 working days prior to the meeting.

All visitors to the CalEPA Building are required to sign in and obtain a badge at the Visitor Services Center located just inside the main entrance (10th Street entrance). Valid picture identification may be required. Please allow up to 15 minutes to receive security clearance.

### POTENTIAL FUTURE CHANGES TO THE NOTICED ITEMS

Any changes regarding the noticed items will be noticed through the e-mail distribution list. Any person desiring to receive future notices must sign up for the e-mail distribution list by accessing the [Email List Subscription Form website](#).

### CONTACT INFORMATION

Please direct questions about this notice or the Extended Arrearage Program to Lisa McCann at (916)323-0844 or [Lisa.McCann@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:Lisa.McCann@waterboards.ca.gov).

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Date August 25, 2023

  
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Courtney Tyler  
Clerk to the Board