



TOWN POLICY

POLICY NUMBER: 1813

REFERENCE:

Resolution No.
372.12.22

ADOPTED BY:

Town Council
December 7, 2022

PREPARED BY: Strategic, Administrative &
Financial Services

DATE: December 7, 2022

TITLE: Forgiveness of Penalties on Utility Hardship Cases

Policy Statement

Council authorizes residential utility customers to enter into a payback agreement and to obtain relief from penalties whenever their account has a single bill which is five times or more greater than the average of the past years average bill.

1.0. Definitions

1.1. "Pay Back Agreement" means an agreement entered into between the ratepayer and the Town that contains requirements for a maximum of twelve equal monthly payments that, in total, will equal the balance in question. It will contain a provision that, after the agreement is entered into, each penalty on the account that applies to this balance will be reversed as long as the payments are up to date and have not been returned by the bank. In addition, the agreement will require that all future charges to the account be kept current.

2.0. Reason for Policy

2.1. This policy allows Council to provide residential utility customers with a process that will allow them to get relief from single bills that are much greater than their past bills.

3.0. Policy Criteria

3.1. Penalties will be forgiven on utility bills for hardship cases that meet the following criteria:

(a) This policy applies only to residential utility accounts.

(b) This policy applies only to accounts where a single bill is five or more times greater than

the average of the past years bills (i.e. the six bills immediately preceding the one in question).

- (c) The ratepayer must approach the Town in writing, utilizing the form attached, requesting to be included under this policy prior to the due date shown on the bill in question.
- (d) The ratepayer enters into a payback agreement for a period not longer than one year.
- (e) The ratepayer keeps future charges current, and meets the agreement made with the Town.
- (f) The agreement will be cancelled if the ratepayer does not make any payment by its due date or if any of the payments are returned by the bank.

4.0. Responsibilities

- 4.1. The Senior Manager of Financial Services will be responsible to ensure that this policy is applied in a fair and consistent basis and is authorized to enter into agreements for the purpose of this policy.

5.0 Related Policies

- 5.1 Water Utility Billing Anomalies Policy 1814

Appendix "A"

This agreement is made this ____ day of _____, 202_, between:

(The Applicant)

Being identified as utility account # _____

- and-

The Town of Strathmore

(The Town)

Whereas the Applicant has applied for forgiveness of penalties on utility bills for hardship cases under Council Policy 1814 and whereas it has been determined by the Town that the Applicant meets all of the policy criteria, the two parties enter into an agreement for repayment of the utility bill in question under the following conditions:

The Applicant hereby promises to pay to the Town of Strathmore the sum of \$ _____ in _____ (no more than eleven) equal monthly payments of \$ _____ and a final payment of \$ _____ on, or before, the last day of each month. The first payment will be due on, or before, the last day of the first full month immediately following the signing of this agreement.

The Town promises to reverse each penalty on the account that applies to this balance as long as the payments are up to date and have not been returned by the bank.

The Applicant acknowledges that this agreement will become void and all outstanding balance will become immediately due if any payments are not made on time or if any payment is returned by the bank and that if this happens, there will not be any further reversal of penalties.

The Applicant further acknowledges that all charges on subsequent utility bills for the duration of this agreement will be paid prior to their due dates or this agreement will become void.

The Applicant further acknowledges that if this agreement becomes void, the Town may take any or all actions that it is allowed to do so under the Municipal Government Act in order to collect the outstanding balances on this Utility Account.

Signed by both parties on the ____ day of _____, 202_.

APPLICANT:

TOWN OF STRATHMORE:

Senior Manager of Financial Services