



Councilmember Charles Allen

A BILL

IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

To amend, on an emergency basis, the Language Access Act of 2004 to include the District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority as a covered entity with major public contact; to amend the District of Columbia Public Works Act of 1954 to require that the District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority submit information regarding disconnections to the Council, the Office of the Attorney General, and the Office of the Tenant Advocate on a monthly basis; to amend the Water and Sewer Authority Establishment and Department of Public Works Reorganization Act of 1996 to clarify the imposition of charges and penalties for late payment of water service charges and bills; and to amend section 431 of Title 21 of the District of Columbia Municipal Regulations to modify the notice requirements to building occupants prior to a water service disconnection.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this act may be cited as the “DC Water and Sewer Authority Billing and Disconnection Clarification Emergency Amendment Act of 2026”.

Sec. 2. Section 2(3)(B) of the Language Access Act of 2004, effective June 19, 2004 (D.C. Law 15-167; D.C. Official Code § 2-1931(3)(B)), is amended by adding a new sub-subparagraph (vii-I) to read as follows:

“(vii-I) The District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority;”.

Sec. 3. Section 216(d) of the Water and Sewer Authority Establishment and Department of

Public Works Reorganization Act of 1996, effective April 18, 1996 (D.C. Law 11-111; D.C. Official Code § 34-2202.16(d)), is amended to read as follows:

“(d) The Authority may impose additional charges and penalties for late payment of bills not exceeding a charge of 10% for any charges or bills remaining unpaid for more than 30 days, and a penalty at the rate of 1% per month compounded monthly for any charges or bills that remain unpaid for more than 60 days.”

Sec. 4. Section 103 of the District of Columbia Public Works Act of 1954, approved May 18, 1954 (68 Stat. 102; D.C. Official Code § 34-2407.01), is amended to read as follows:

“Sec. 103. Discontinuance of water service for failure to pay water charges.

“(a)(1) The District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority (“Authority”), established pursuant to section 202(a) of the Water and Sewer Authority Establishment and Department of Public Works Reorganization Act of 1996, effective April 18, 1996 (D.C. Law 11-111; D.C. Official Code § 34-2202.02(a)), may provide for the collection of water charges, in advance or otherwise, from the owner or occupant of any building, property, or other location furnished water or water service by the District.

“(2) The Authority may shut off the water supply to any such building, property, or other location upon failure of the owner or occupant thereof to pay such water charges within 30 days from the date of rendition of the bill therefor, regardless of any change in ownership or occupancy of such building, property, or other location.

“(b)(1) If the Authority has shut off the water supply to any property for failure to pay District water and sanitary sewer service charges, it shall be unlawful for any person to restore the water supply without the express authorization of the Authority.

56 “(2) The Authority shall impose a fine in an amount not less than 20% of the
57 delinquent charges or more than \$100, whichever is greater, upon the owner or occupant of the
58 property, unless the Authority determines that the owner or occupant did not restore or solicit a
59 person to restore the water.

60 “(c) The Authority shall submit on the 7th day of each month, the following information
61 to the Council, the Office of the Attorney General, and the Office of the Tenant Advocate for the
62 preceding month:

63 “(1) The number of properties that received a notice of disconnection;

64 “(2) Of those properties that were issued a notice, the number of properties that
65 experienced a disconnection;

66 “(3) Of those properties that experienced a disconnection, the number of properties
67 that had service restored;

68 “(4) The number of properties that entered into a payment plan;

69 “(5) The number of properties that have had bill payment assumed by the tenants
70 through a tenant association; and

71 “(6) The number of properties that have been placed in receivership.”.

72 Sec. 5. Section 431 of Title 21 of the District of Columbia Municipal Regulations (21
73 DCMR § 431), is amended as follows:

74 (a) The section heading is amended by striking the phrase “TO TENANTS” and inserting
75 the phrase “TO OCCUPANTS” in its place.

76 (b) Subsection 431.1 is amended to read as follows:

“431.1 At least thirty (30) working days prior to terminating water and sewer services to the premises, the General Manager shall post notice outside of the premises, and at each unit if publicly accessible and where practicable, in English, Spanish, or another language that the Authority reasonably determines may be spoken by occupants at the premises.”.

(b) Subsection 431.2 is amended as follows:

(1) The lead-in language is amended to read as follows:

“431.2 The notice shall be developed in consultation with the Office of the Tenant Advocate and provide the occupants, whether tenants or owners, with the following information:”.

(2) Paragraph (a) is amended to read as follows

“(a) That the owner, condominium association, community association, or other common interest development is delinquent in the payment of water and sewer service charges, including the current amount owed and the number of days the account is past due;”.

(3) Paragraph (c) is amended by striking the phrase “may permit” and inserting the phrase “shall permit” in its place.

(4) Paragraph (d) is amended by striking the phrase “receivership;” and inserting the phrase “receivership, as provided in D.C. Official Code § 34-2304(a)(1);” in its place.

(c) Subsection 431.5 is amended by striking the word “Director” and inserting the phrase “General Manager” in its place.

Sec. 6. Applicability.

Section 3 shall apply as of April 18, 1996.

Sec. 7. Fiscal impact statement.

The Council adopts the fiscal impact statement of the Budget Director as the fiscal impact

99 statement required by section 4a of the General Legislative Procedures Act of 1975, approved
100 October 16, 2006 (120 Stat. 2038; D.C. Official Code § 1-301.47a).

101 Sec. 8. Effective date.

102 This act shall take effect following approval by the Mayor (or in the event of veto by the
103 Mayor, action by the Council to override the veto), and shall remain in effect for no longer than
104 90 days, as provided for emergency acts of the Council of the District of Columbia in section
105 412(a) of the District of Columbia Home Rule Act approved December 24, 1973 (87 Stat. 788;
106 D.C. Official Code § 1-204.12(a)).