

Utility Bill Assistance Program Expansion

Recommendations

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Utilities

June 02, 2026



Direction

Consider directing staff to incorporate the Commission's utility bill assistance program expansion recommendations into the submitted budget and utility rates to be considered by City Council as part of the upcoming biennial budget.

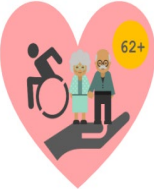








Agenda

1. Background
2. Bill Assistance Expansion Options
3. Environmental Services Commission (ESC) Recommendation
4. Direction



Utility Bill Assistance Program

Long-Term 62+ or Permanent Disability Income: 50% AMI		Long-Term Income: 50% AMI	Short-Term Financial shock or Past-Due Income: 50% AMI	
Utility Bill Discount	Utility Bill Rebate	Utility Tax Rebate	Emergency Assistance	Neighbors Helping Neighbors
Low-Income Seniors and Disabled Residents	Low-Income Seniors and Disabled Residents	Low-Income Multi-family and Single-Family Residents	Low-Income and Financial Shock	Low-Income and Past due
				
70% Utility Bill Discount	 Utility Rebate	 Tax Rebate	Waive up to 4 Months Utility Bills	Waive up to 2 Months Utility Bill



The Need for Assistance

50% AMI



Family of 4: \$78,550

80% AMI



Family of 4: \$121,150



Utility Bill Assistance Gap

Current Long-Term
Assistance Program
Available to 4,000
Households



Utility Bill
Assistance Gap

~11,000 low-income households in Bellevue do not qualify for long-term bill assistance



Community Outreach

Inclusive and Accessible Engagement

- Multilingual communications reduce barriers and increase access
- Partnership with community-based organizations builds trust
- Expanded outreach to more community spaces

Outreach and Engagement Channels

- Community Connect Sessions
- Community Event Tabling
- Social Media Campaign
- News Releases and Bellevue TV
- Community Newsletters
- Cultural Outreach Advisors



What guides our work



Maintain Existing Assistance



Assistance with Meaningful Impacts



Align Eligibility with Other City Programs



Balance Rate Impact with Program Funding



Expansion Options Long-Term Assistance*

Option A

All Senior and Disabled \leq 80% AMI
70% Discount

Rate Increase: +0.4%

Typical Monthly Bill Increase: \$0.93



Up to 6,000

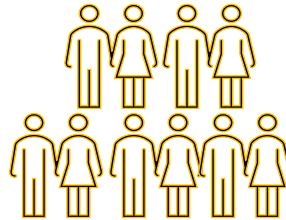


Option B

All Households \leq 50% AMI
50% Discount

Rate Increase: +1.0%

Typical Monthly Bill Increase: \$2.33



Up to 10,000



*Note: Water, sewer, and stormwater bill assistance



Expansion Options Long-Term Assistance*

Option B1

ESC Recommendation

All Households \leq 80% AMI

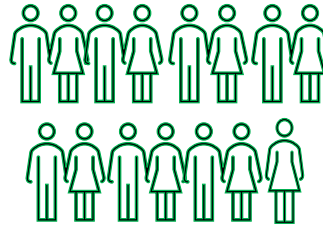
Sr/Disabled, 50% AMI: 70% Discount

Sr/Disabled, 50-80% AMI: 35% Discount

All Other Households, 80% AMI: 35% Discount

Rate Increase: +1.2%

Typical Monthly Residential Bill Increase: \$2.79



Up to 15,000



Option B2

All Households \leq 80% AMI

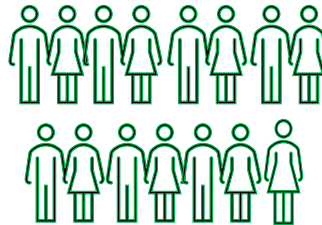
Sr/Disabled, 50% AMI: 70% Discount

Sr/Disabled, 50-80% AMI: 40% Discount

All Other Households, 80% AMI: 40% Discount

Rate Increase: +1.3%

Typical Monthly Residential Bill Increase: \$3.03



Up to 15,000



*Note: Water, sewer, and stormwater bill assistance



Expansion Options

Long-Term Assistance*

Income Eligibility	Households Participating/Eligible	Assistance Discount/Rebate	Rate Impact	Bill Impact Typical Monthly Residential
Option A Sr/Disabled 80% AMI	1,500 / 6,000	70%	+0.4%	+\$0.93
Option B All Households 50% AMI	2,500 / 10,000	50%	+1.0%	+\$2.33
Option B1 All Households 80% AMI	3,800 / 15,000	Sr/Disabled (50% AMI): 70% Sr/Disabled (50%-80% AMI): 35% All Other (80% AMI): 35%	+1.2%	+\$2.79
Option B2 All Households 80% AMI	3,800 / 15,000	Sr/Disabled (50% AMI): 70% Sr/Disabled (50%-80% AMI): 40% All Other (80% AMI): 40%	+1.3%	+\$3.03

*Note: Water, sewer, and stormwater bill assistance



Expansion Options

Short-Term and Solid Waste Assistance

- Short-Term Assistance
 - Align income eligibility requirements with long-term water, sewer, and stormwater assistance programs
- Solid Waste Long-Term Assistance
 - Expand program to multi-family residential households
 - Align income eligibility requirements with water, sewer, and stormwater programs





Environmental Services Commission (ESC) Recommendation



ESC Recommendation

- Expand bill assistance to all low-income households
- Maintains assistance level to households in current program
- Offer meaningful assistance
- Tiered assistance increases proportional to need
- Aligns solid waste assistance program with other utility assistance programs



Direction

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