



Notice

26 September 2023

Busselton Water Corporation

Approval of amended financial hardship policy

The Economic Regulation Authority has approved Busselton Water's amended financial hardship policy for its water services licence WL3.

Busselton Water provides potable (drinking) water supply services to an operating area that includes Busselton city centre, Port Geographe, Siesta Park, Vasse and Wonnerrup. Busselton Water has approximately 14,727 residential and business customer accounts.

The *Water Services Code of Conduct (Customer Service Standards) 2018* requires water service licensees that supply drinking water or sewerage services to have an ERA-approved financial hardship policy.¹ Clause 29(7) of the Code requires a licensee to review its financial hardship policy at least once every five years.

Busselton Water's five-year review was due this year and following the review it submitted an amended policy to the ERA for approval. The following amendments were made to clarify:

- What a payment plan is and when it may be offered to a customer in financial hardship.
- The process for assessing whether a customer is in financial hardship.
- Tenants experiencing payment difficulties who are registered to receive water consumption bills can contact Busselton Water directly to discuss payment plan options.
- If a customer owes a debt, Busselton Water may partner with a debt collection agency to recover the outstanding amount and additional fees may apply.
- Busselton Water will not reduce a customer's water flow if they have been identified as experiencing payment difficulties.
- In what circumstances full water supply will be restored if it has previously been restricted for failure to pay a bill.
- What external financial counselling support services are available to customers.

The ERA considers that Busselton Water's amended policy meets the requirements of the Code and the ERA's *Financial Hardship Policy Guidelines for Water Licences (June 2018)*.

A copy of the approved policy is available on the ERA [website](#).

¹ There are two exceptions to this requirement: licensees that only supply non-residential customers, and licensees that supply solely to members.

Further information

General enquiries

Alex Kroon

Ph: 08 6557 7989

info@erawa.com.au

Media enquiries

Danielle Asarpota

Ph: +61 428 859 826

media@erawa.com.au