



# Notice

9 November 2023

## Water Corporation

### Approval of amended financial hardship policy

The Economic Regulation Authority has approved the Water Corporation's amended financial hardship policy for its water services licence WL32.

The Water Corporation is a statutory State-owned corporation that provides potable and non-potable water supply, sewerage and drainage services to households, businesses and rural communities in an area that spans over 2.6 million square kilometres. It also provides bulk water to farms for irrigation. The Water Corporation has approximately 1.251 million customers.

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.<sup>1</sup> The Water Corporation has conducted the five yearly review of its financial hardship policy, required by clause 29(7) of the Code, and made amendments to clarify how customers experiencing financial hardship can expect to be treated.

The Water Corporation's amended policy notes that anyone can experience payment difficulties. It clarifies how the Water Corporation will assess if a customer is in financial hardship and when a payment plan can be offered. The policy now notes that financial hardship may be caused by: insufficient income, mortgage stress and natural disaster such as bushfire, flood or cyclone.

A new section on family violence explains the Water Corporation's steps to support customers and notes that recovery action will not be taken on unpaid accounts. The Water Corporation has also committed to not commence or continue proceedings to recover debt if a customer has made a complaint to the Water Corporation or the Energy and Water Ombudsman.

The policy also now includes a description of WA Connect, an online directory of community service providers including organisations able to assist customers in financial hardship, and minor wording and administration changes.

The ERA considers that the Water Corporation'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 [Financial Hardship Policies webpage](#).

#### Further information

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<sup>1</sup> With the exception of licensees that solely supply non-residential customers or solely supply members.

