

**TIMELINE**

**March 12, 2020**

- *First stage of customer assistance for Charlotte Water customers:* Customer shutoffs for non-payment were discontinued.
- Previously disconnected customers were reconnected immediately.

**March 23, 2020**

- Late fees no longer charged on past due balances

**March 31, 2020**

- NC Executive Order 124 issued stating that utilities across North Carolina were required to discontinue customer disconnections of service for non-payment and collection of late fees to reduce hardships caused by the Coronavirus pandemic.

**May 29, 2020**

- NC Executive Order 142 extended terms of Executive Order 124 for 60 days

**July 29, 2020**

- NC Executive Order 124/142 expires

**July 30, 2020**

- *Next stage of customer assistance:* Charlotte Water continues terms of Executive Order
- Set in motion additional talks with community assistance agencies; conversations with peer municipalities

**September 2020**

- Communication plan to customers and community is implemented

**October 2020**

- *Next stage of customer assistance:* Automatic 12-month payment plans begin

As the region’s supplier of water, now more than ever, Charlotte Water’s service to the community is critical to the health and well-being of residents. And, we realize that many customers are facing unexpected, unparalleled financial hardships.

Charlotte Water, in conjunction, with Charlotte-Mecklenburg Storm Water Services, has created the **Customer Care Program**, the goal of which is to work with customers to avoid any situation where a customer is disconnected for non-payment.

- **No Disconnects** Continuing the temporary practice of not disconnecting customers for delinquent account balances
- **No Late Fees** Waiving the 1.5% late fee on past due balances
- **Payment Arrangements** Automatically placing customers with past due balances as of September 30 on a 12-month, no interest payment arrangement beginning with the October 2020 bill
- **Financial Assistance** Using existing partnerships with Crisis Assistance Ministries and 20 other organizations as models to further develop assistance programs with additional local non-profits

Charlotte Water has also established the **Customer Care Team**, a group of trained customer service professionals dedicated to work one-on-one with customers, connecting them with community assistance agencies and working with customers to address and resolve past due balances.

**CURRENT LANDSCAPE**

- As of July 31, nearly 25,000 customers are more than 30 days behind in payments to Charlotte Water and Charlotte-Mecklenburg Storm Water Services.
- Approximately, 6% of all Charlotte Water accounts are considered delinquent or currently eligible for disconnection.
- The NC Executive Order requiring utilities to discontinue disconnection for non-payment expired July 29.
- A cross-departmental team with members from Charlotte Water, Storm Water Services, Finance, the Office of Equity, Mobility and Immigrant Integration, and the Office of Data Management meet weekly to bring resources and partners together to help customers facing hardships.
- Legally, Charlotte Water cannot forgive charges for services received by customers during the pandemic despite the current economic hardships the community faces.
- Most federal and state relief funds are not eligible for utilities such as Charlotte Water to assist customers financially.