

# Water Service Shutoff Procedures



## Payment Plans

### You do not need to dispute a water bill to qualify for a payment plan.

You can obtain a reasonable income-based payment plan if you can demonstrate you do not have the ability to pay your outstanding water bill.

This reasonable income-based plan limits your monthly payments, to not more than 5% of your monthly household income, for both your current water bill and outstanding balance.

These payment plans are also available to vulnerable households with children under the age of 6, seniors age 65 or older, or persons with disabilities or medical issues that could be further complicated by a water shutoff.

Anyone with evidence of these conditions, can stop a water shutoff for 21 days with the option to extend for up to 90 days or until a payment plan is established.



### Your water may be shutoff if:

- You do not pay a delinquent balance.
- You do not contact the Water Department to setup a payment plan
- You do not resolve a disputed bill, as outlined within.
- Providing service to your property is illegal.
- Your water service is illegally connected.
- There are health and safety reasons to shutoff your service during a state of emergency. However, in these cases you will be notified if at all possible, in advance of a shutoff.

Your service is subject to shutoff anytime after 14 days following a final notice stating the earliest date of shutoff, except on days immediately preceding a day when the Water Department is closed. The notice will be personally delivered to your address and mailed to you. The notice will include options to avoid a shutoff including payment plans, temporary medical relief, the dispute resolution process, and resources available to help with payments or plumbing issues.

Please note that anytime the Water Department visits your home, you will be provided a document that clearly explains the purpose of the visit and how to restore service if the visit disconnects service, including how to dispute a shutoff or obtain a payment plan. If you are not home when the visit occurs, the document will be provided to a responsible person at your home or placed conspicuously on your property.

Upon payment of your outstanding balance or obtaining a payment plan, service will be restored within 24 hours.

If you are renting and your landlord is responsible for and is not paying the water bill, you may begin payment for service directly. However, if you take the payment out of your rent, the Water Department is not responsible for any unpaid rent. Tenants should have a written lease or other evidence showing who is responsible for the water bill which is on file with the Water Department. Tenants paying water bills get the same protections as other water customers including payment plans and dispute resolution procedures.

## Water Bill Dispute Process

If you feel there is a problem with your water bill, you have a right to dispute it by following the processes in this brochure.

You have 45-days from the date your water bill is issued to initiate this dispute process. The informal process takes just 7 business days to complete.

This dispute process does not bar you from pursuing other appropriate resolutions, including payment plans, either before or after completing the formal appeal process.

### City of Highland Park Water Department Customer Service Center

14110 Woodward Avenue  
Highland Park, MI 48203

Tel: 313.865.1876  
Fax: 313.429.1459

Email: [hpwaterdepartment@metroca.net](mailto:hpwaterdepartment@metroca.net)  
Web: [highlandparkmi.gov/Services/Water.aspx](http://highlandparkmi.gov/Services/Water.aspx)

# Informal Process

7 business days, start to finish

City of Highland Park Water Department

# Formal Appeal Process

First complete the Informal Process

Resident/Customer | Highland Park Water Dept.

Resident/Customer | Highland Park Water Dept.

## 1 Initiate Process: Notify Water Dept.

- Notify the Water Department in writing that you wish to dispute your bill.
- Must happen within 45 days of billing date.

Note: once your dispute is filed with the Water Department, water shutoffs for non-payment of disputed bills are prohibited until the dispute is resolved.

### 4 Ways to Notify Water Department:

1. **In-Person** at the Customer Service Center located at 14110 Woodward Avenue, Highland Park, MI 48203
2. **Email notification** to [hwaterdepartment@metroca.net](mailto:hwaterdepartment@metroca.net)
3. **Web form** submission at <https://highlandparkmi.gov/Services/Water.aspx>
4. **Fax notification** to 313.429.1459

## 2 Confirm Dispute Filing

Water Department provides written confirmation that your dispute was filed:

- **In-Person:** date-stamped, signed copy of filing
- **Email:** reply email
- **Fax & Web:** first class postage mailed to address on file

### 3 Ways to File Formal Appeal:

1. **In-Person** at the Customer Service Center located at 14110 Woodward Avenue, Highland Park, MI 48203
2. **Email notification** to [hwaterdepartment@metroca.net](mailto:hwaterdepartment@metroca.net)
4. **Fax notification** to 313.429.1459

## 1 Initiate Process: File Formal Appeal

- Formal appeal must be filed within 10 business days from when the resolution was issued for the informal process.
- Complete the Formal Appeal Form and attach the resolution issued from the informal process.
- The Formal Appeal Form is available for download on the City of Highland Park website at <https://highlandparkmi.gov/Services/Water.aspx>

## 3 Identify Problem & Resolution

The Water Department follows these 3 steps, escalating to the next if necessary, to identify the problem and resolution:

1. Conduct an administrative review of your account for possible billing errors.
2. Apply troubleshooting guide to identify possible water leaks or other issues.
3. Test the accuracy of your water meter at your request, if required.

## Unsatisfied with the informal process?

- You have 10 business days from when the dispute resolution was issued to file a formal appeal.
- At your own expense, you can have your water meter tested by an independent laboratory.

## 2 Review Appeal

Your formal appeal is reviewed by Water Department Director within 30 days of filing date.

## 4 Resolution Issued: Process Complete

- Water Department issues its proposed resolution in writing.
- Occurs within 7 business days from when your dispute was originally filed.
- If credits are due, the Water Department applies the credits to your account within 7 business days of billing resolution acceptance.

If you are due credits and the credits DO NOT appear on your account, you have 90 days from the date on the disputed water bill to notify the Water Department of this omission.

## 3 Issue Decision: Complete Process

The Water Department Director issues a decision and follows a procedure that accounts for due process that includes conducting a hearing in front of a City official.

- Opportunity to present evidence and case
- Opportunity to subpoena and examine witnesses
- Goal is to make decisions based on evidence gathered during the informal process

Attend and participate in hearing or other procedure with the Water Department Director and City official.

- Third party representatives or advocates can attend with you or on your behalf
- Present evidence and your case
- Subpoena and examine witnesses

