POLICY ON DISCONTINUATION OF DOMESTIC WATER SERVICE

Adopted by Ordinance 98 of the Twentynine Palms Water District Board of Directors on January 22, 2020.

1. Background and Purpose. This Policy on Discontinuation of Domestic Water Service (this "Policy") is intended to provide District customers with certain information required by law. (Cal. Health & Safety Code § 116906.) This Policy shall be posted on the District's website and provided to customers in the manner required by law and Chapter 5.05, Retail Water Service Rules and Regulations of the District Code. A full description of District procedures relating to water service billing, payment, and discontinuation of service is provided in Chapter 5.05. To the extent of any conflict between this Policy and the District Code, the District Code shall control.

2. Billing Complaints and Appeals. Customers may initiate a complaint or request an investigation concerning water service or charges as follows:

> If you have a complaint that you are being overcharged or if you have any other complaint in connection with District billings YOU MUST PRESENT YOUR COMPLAINT to the District Manager, by mail or in person, at 72401 Hatch Road, Twentynine Palms, California 92277 or by telephone at (760) 367-7546 PRIOR TO THE DATE OF DELINQUENCY specified on the bill. The Manager is designated by the District to hear any complaint and is empowered to investigate and to rectify any District errors in connection with billing matters.

The manager shall consider and resolve all complaints made in accordance with this section. Any customer who has timely initiated a complaint shall be given consideration by the manager as to a payment arrangement as described in this Policy.

Any customer whose timely complaint or request for an investigation has resulted in an adverse determination by the manager may appeal the determination to the Board of Directors by filing a written notice of appeal with the Board Secretary within 10 business days of the manager's determination. Upon receiving the appeal, the Board Secretary will set the matter to be heard at an upcoming Board meeting and mail the customer written notice of the time and place of the meeting at least 10 days before the meeting. The decision of the Board shall be final.

3. Payment Arrangements Generally. If a customer is unable to pay a bill during the normal payment period, the customer may request a payment arrangement, which may include an extension of the payment date for up to six months, amortization of the unpaid balance for a period not to exceed 12 months, or an alternative payment schedule allowing periodic payments that do not coincide with the District's established payment schedule. If a customer submits his or her request within 13 days after mailing of a written notice of discontinuation of service by the District, the request will be reviewed by a District manager. Terms and conditions for a payment arrangement shall be set by the General Manager or his or her designee. District decisions regarding payment arrangements are final and are not subject to appeal to the board.

If a customer has been granted a payment arrangement under this section and fails to pay

an amount due under the arrangement by the due date, then the District may terminate water service. The District will post a final notice of intent to disconnect service in a prominent and conspicuous location at the service address at least five business days before discontinuation of service. The final notice will not entitle the customer to any investigation or review by the District.

4. Payment Arrangements for Customers Experiencing Both Medical and Financial Hardships. The District will not terminate domestic service for nonpayment if all of the following requirements are met: (a) a licensed primary care provider certifies that doing so will be life threatening or pose a serious threat to the health and safety of the customer or another resident of the premises; (b) the customer is financially unable to pay for service within the normal payment period; and (c) the customer is willing to enter into a payment arrangement with the District with respect to all delinquent charges.

A customer is deemed financially unable to pay within the normal billing cycle if: (i) any member of the customer's household is a current recipient of CalWORKs, CalFresh, general assistance, Medi-Cal, Supplemental Security Income/State Supplementary Payment Program, or California Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children, or (ii) the customer declares under penalty of perjury that the household's annual income is less than 200 percent of the federal poverty level.

The customer is responsible for demonstrating that the above requirements have been met. For customers who meet all of the above requirements, the District shall offer the customer an extension, amortization of the unpaid balance, or an alternative payment schedule, to be selected by the District in its discretion. Upon receipt of documentation from the customer, the District will review the documentation within seven days and: (i) notify the customer of the alternative payment arrangement selected by the District and request the customer's signed assent to participate in that alternative arrangement; (ii) request additional information from the customer; or (iii) notify the customer that he or she does not meet the above requirements.

The District may discontinue water service if a customer who has been granted an payment arrangement under this section fails to do either of the following for 60 days or more: (i) pay an amount due under the payment arrangement; or (ii) pay current charges for water service. The District will post a final notice of intent to disconnect service in a prominent and conspicuous location at the service address at least five business days before discontinuation of service. The final notice will not entitle the customer to any investigation or review by the District.

5. Contact Information. For billing questions, or for assistance regarding options to avoid discontinuation of service for nonpayment, the District's Customer Service staff can be reached at 760-367-7546. Customers may also visit a District's Customer Service Representative in person Monday through Friday, from 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., except on District holidays.