



## RESOLUTION NO. 40596

1 A RESOLUTION relating to the COVID-19 emergency; authorizing the temporary  
2 establishment of an Emergency Assistance Program by the Department of  
3 Environmental Services in order to allow more households to qualify for  
4 assistance; authorizing the City Manager to establish the criteria for the  
5 Program and to determine when the Program will be terminated; authorizing  
6 funding for the Program; and increasing the funding for the Emergency  
7 Assistance Program for Tacoma Public Utilities.

8 WHEREAS RCW 35.67.020(5) and RCW 35.92.020(5) authorize cities to  
9 provide assistance to aid to low-income persons in connection with power, water,  
10 sewerage, and solid waste utility services, and

11 WHEREAS, effective December 22, 1982, the City of Tacoma, Department  
12 of Public Utilities ("TPU"), pursuant to Board Resolution No. U-6645, created the  
13 Project Need Program which would encourage Tacoma Power customers to  
14 donate to a special fund to be used and applied for the benefit of assisting eligible  
15 low-income customers with Power bill payments, and

16 WHEREAS the City Council appropriated funding for the administration of  
17 the Project Need Program, and

18 WHEREAS the Project Need Program was renamed the Family Need  
19 Program and, ultimately, renamed the Bill Credit Assistance Program ("BCAP"),  
20 and

21 WHEREAS subsequent to, and in addition to the funding appropriated by  
22 the City Council and the ongoing donations from customers, the TPU budgets have  
23 consistently funded the program now known as BCAP through moneys in a fund  
24 for low-income assistance and a fund for Water Utility operations, and  
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1 WHEREAS, as a result of the impacts of COVID-19 and the state of  
2 emergency that has been declared to respond to COVID-19, it was anticipated that  
3 more TPU customers may be in need of the utility credit than is available through  
4 the existing the BCAP program, and

5 WHEREAS, in response to the state of emergency that has been declared  
6 to respond to COVID-19, a new Emergency Assistance Program (“Program”) was  
7 created on March 17, 2020, pursuant to Second Amended Resolution No. U-11149  
8 and City Council Resolution No. 40575, with up to \$1,000,000 of the fund used for  
9 Power low-income assistance and the fund used for Water Utility operations, and  
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11 WHEREAS the Director of Utilities was authorized to develop more flexible  
12 low-income assistance eligibility criteria for the Program than the eligibility  
13 requirements for BCAP, which criteria are set forth in the April 15, 2020, memo  
14 from Customer Services Manager Steve Hatcher to Jackie Flowers, Director of  
15 Utilities, and  
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17 WHEREAS it was estimated that changing the eligibility guidelines would  
18 result in a significant number of additional low-income households becoming  
19 potentially eligible to be assisted through the Program in response to the state of  
20 emergency, and  
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22 WHEREAS the requests for assistance through the TPU Emergency  
23 Assistance Program from utility customers have demonstrated a need for  
24 additional funding of the Program, and

25 WHEREAS the Tacoma Public Utility Board (“Board”), by Resolution  
26 No. U-11159, adopted April 22, 2020, requested that the City Council approve an



1 additional amount of up to \$1,000,000 of the fund used for Power low-income  
2 assistance and the fund used for Water Utility operations, to be added to the  
3 original \$1,000,000 used to create the Program, and

4 WHEREAS the Board, the Director of Utilities, the City Manager, and the  
5 Environmental Services Director also recommend that the City Council establish  
6 an Emergency Assistance Program within the Environmental Services Department  
7 for sanitary sewer, stormwater, and solid waste utilities, approve the use of up to  
8 \$400,000 of Environmental Services Department funds to support the Program,  
9 and grant the City Manager authority to establish the eligibility criteria for the  
10 program consistent with the criteria established for the TPU Emergency Assistance  
11 Program, and to determine when to terminate the program; Now, Therefore,  
12

13 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF TACOMA:

14 Section 1. That, to allow for more households to qualify for low-income  
15 assistance in this time of emergency, the City Council approves the establishment  
16 of an Emergency Assistance Program within the Environmental Services  
17 Department sanitary sewer, stormwater, and solid waste utilities, to provide  
18 emergency assistance to eligible households.  
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20 Section 2. That the City Manager is delegated authority to establish the  
21 eligibility criteria to qualify for low-income assistance that are consistent with the  
22 criteria established for the Tacoma Public Utilities Emergency Assistance Program,  
23 and further, at the conclusion of the state of emergency declared by the City of  
24 Tacoma in response to COVID-19, to determine when to terminate the  
25 Environmental Services Department Emergency Assistance Program.  
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Section 3. That the City Council approves the allocation of funds in the amount of up to \$400,000 from the rate stabilization reserves and funds established for low-income assistance, to support the Environmental Services Department Emergency Assistance Program.

Section 4. That, to allow for more households to qualify for low-income assistance in this time of emergency, the City Council approves an increase in the funding of the Tacoma Public Utilities Emergency Assistance Program, with up to an additional \$1,000,000 of the fund used for low-income assistance and the fund used for Water Utility operations.

Section 5. That the City Council finds that this resolution is necessary, routine, and consistent with Governor Inslee’s emergency proclamation issued March 24, 2020, suspending portions of the Open Public Meetings Act.

Adopted \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor

Attest:  
  
\_\_\_\_\_  
City Clerk

Approved as to form:  
  
\_\_\_\_\_  
City Attorney