



RESOLUTION NO. 40575

1 A RESOLUTION relating to the Department of Public Utilities; approving the
2 creation of an Emergency Assistance Program by the Department of
3 Public Utilities during the period of the state of emergency declared by
4 the City of Tacoma in response to COVID-19, in order to allow more
5 households to qualify for assistance.

6 WHEREAS, effective December 22, 1982, the City of Tacoma,
7 Department of Public Utilities, pursuant to Board Resolution U-6645, created the
8 Project Need Program which would encourage Tacoma Power customers to
9 donate to a special fund to be used and applied for the benefit of assisting
10 eligible low-income customers with Power bill payments, and

11 WHEREAS the City Council appropriated funding for the administration of
12 the Project Need Program, and

13 WHEREAS the Project Need Program was renamed the Family Need
14 Program and, ultimately, renamed the Bill Credit Assistance Program ("BCAP"),
15 and

16 WHEREAS subsequent to, and in addition to the funding appropriated by
17 the City Council and ongoing donations from customers, Tacoma Public Utilities'
18 budgets have consistently funded the BCAP through moneys in a fund, and a
19 fund for Water Utility operations, and

20 WHEREAS the BCAP is available to eligible electric, drinking water, solid
21 waste, recycling, and surface water customers, and provides assistance in the
22 form of a utility credit of up to \$564 annually, which is applied to the utility
23 account each time the bill is paid in full and on time, and
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WHEREAS households eligible to receive assistance from the BCAP must have a current Tacoma Public Utilities account; live in the dwelling unit as the primary residence; have residential, single metered service; and meet the applicable household income guidelines, and

WHEREAS the current household income eligibility levels are set at not more than 150 percent of the poverty guidelines established by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (or its successor agency), as computed annually and published in the Federal Register, and

WHEREAS the current household income guidelines are as listed below:

- Household Size: 1: Maximum Monthly Household Income: \$1,595;
- Household Size: 2: Maximum Monthly Household Income: \$2,155;
- Household Size: 3: Maximum Monthly Household Income: \$2,715;
- Household Size: 4: Maximum Monthly Household Income: \$3,275;
- Household Size: 5: Maximum Monthly Household Income: \$3,835; and
- Household Size: 6: Maximum Monthly Household Income: \$4, 395, and

WHEREAS, as a result of the impacts of COVID-19 and the state of emergency that has been declared to respond to COVID-19, it is anticipated that more Tacoma Public Utilities customers may be in need of the utility credit than is available through the existing BCAP, and

WHEREAS, in response to the state of emergency that has been declared to respond to COVID-19, Tacoma Public Utilities desires to create a new Emergency Assistance Program with income eligibility levels at not more



1 than 200 percent of the poverty guidelines established by the U.S. Department
2 of Health and Human Services, and

3 WHEREAS setting income eligibility at 200 percent of the federal poverty
4 guidelines for the Emergency Assistance Program during the COVID-19
5 Emergency period would allow households with the following maximum monthly
6 income to utilize the Emergency Assistance Program:

7 Household Size: 1: Maximum Monthly Household Income: \$2,127;

8 Household Size: 2: Maximum Monthly Household Income: \$2,874;

9 Household Size: 3: Maximum Monthly Household Income: \$3,621;

10 Household Size: 4: Maximum Monthly Household Income: \$4,367;

11 Household Size: 5: Maximum Monthly Household Income: \$5,114; and

12 Household Size: 6: Maximum Monthly Household Income: \$5,861, and

13 WHEREAS it is estimated that changing the eligibility guidelines will
14 result in a significant number of additional households becoming potentially
15 eligible to be assisted in response to the state of emergency, and

16 WHEREAS the eligibility criteria for the BPAC may be more restrictive
17 than is necessary for the Emergency Assistance Program, and therefore the
18 criteria for such a program should be established by the Director of the Utilities
19 in light of the needs of the Emergency Assistance Program and those potentially
20 being served by the Emergency Assistance Program, and

21 WHEREAS, by adoption of Public Utility Board Resolution No. U-11149
22 on March 17, 2020, the creation of the Employee Assistance Program during the
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1 state of emergency declared by the City of Tacoma in response to COVID-19,
2 was approved, pending confirmation from the City Council; Now, Therefore,

3 **BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF TACOMA:**

4 Section 1. That, to allow for more households to qualify for assistance in
5 this time of emergency, the City Council concurs with the recommendation of
6 the Public Utility Board, and approves the creation of a new Emergency
7 Assistance Program in response to the state of emergency declared by the City
8 of Tacoma concerning COVID-19, with up to one million dollars in the fund used
9 for low-income assistance and the fund used for Water Utility operations to be
10 used for the Emergency Assistance Program.
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12 Section 2. That the Director of Utilities is delegated authority to establish
13 criteria for the Emergency Assistance Program for households with income
14 eligibility levels at not more than 200 percent of the federal poverty guidelines.
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16 Section 3. That, at the conclusion of the state of emergency declared by
17 the City of Tacoma in response to COVID-19, the Director of Utilities will
18 determine when to terminate the Emergency Assistance Program.

19 Section 4. That this action does not impact the existing Bill Credit
20 Assistance Program ("BCAP"), and all prior administrative actions concerning
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the eligibility and administration of the programs known as Project Need, Family
Need, and currently known as BCAP, are hereby ratified.

Adopted _____

Mayor

Attest:

City Clerk

Approved as to form:

City Attorney

Requested by Public Utility Board
Resolution No. U-11149