



**TO:** Elizabeth Pauli, City Manager  
**FROM:** Jackie Flowers, Director, Tacoma Public Utilities  
**COPY:** Chair Hines, Vice Chair Walker, Members of the Government Performance & Finance Committee (GPFC)  
**PRESENTER:** Francine Artis, Interim Customer Services Manager  
**SUBJECT:** Proposed Changes to Bill Credit Assistance Plan (BCAP)  
**DATE:** July 19, 2022

**PRESENTATION TYPE:**

Informational Briefing

**SUMMARY:**

Customer Services will brief the Government Performance & Finance Committee (GPFC) on programs to help income-constrained households, including proposed changes to the Bill Credit Assistance Plan (BCAP).

**BACKGROUND:**

Utility assistance has been available to income-constrained households since 1983. Various programs were created throughout the years that offered different levels of assistance one time per year and had different eligibility criteria. In 2017 a new program was created that merged the criteria for eligibility, increased the amount of assistance, and provided opportunity for a monthly credit over a lump-sum credit once per year. In addition, eligible households can achieve an additional one-time credit for voluntarily completing a financial education program available through one of our authorized community partners.

To offer a holistic approach to serving income-constrained households, efforts are made to connect households with other applicable programs available throughout the city such as energy and water conservation programs, major home rehabilitation and sewer repair programs, etc.

Enhancements have been made to several existing programs to help income-constrained households. The proposed changes will provide greater opportunities for more households to receive assistance.

**Bill Credit Assistance Plan (As of 6/30/2022)**

2021/2022	Power	Water	Wastewater	Surface Water	Solid Waste
Budget	\$2,500,000	\$400,000	\$156,000	\$73,000	\$197,000
Expenditures	\$284,189	\$30,392	\$31,847	\$13,815	\$29,685
Households Assisted	1,212	406	339	324	347

**Discount Rate Program (As of 6/30/2022)**

2021/2022	Power	Water	Wastewater	Surface Water	Solid Waste
Expenditures	\$3,269,137	\$551,449	\$623,144	\$311,268	\$544,327
Households Assisted	5,645	2,492	2,113	2,069	2,183

**ISSUE:**

Currently households enrolled in BCAP can receive a monthly utility credit applied directly to their account. To receive the credit, the household must pay their bill in full and on-time. The program design



was an effort to help customers stay on track and keep services from being disconnected. However, as we learned during the pandemic, not all customers have been able to meet the criteria to receive the credit.

**ALTERNATIVES:**

Enhancements to BCAP will allow all households enrolled in the program to receive an automatic monthly credit. In addition, these households will also have an opportunity to achieve additional credits when they are able to pay their bill in full and on-time.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

Financial impacts will be presented during the 2023/2024 budget presentations later this year.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

This is an information briefing only.