



Legislation Text

File #: 17-0098, Version: 0

**Explanation:** Capitals indicate matter added to existing law.  
[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.

\* **Warning:** This is an unofficial, introductory copy of the bill.  
The official copy considered by the City Council is the first reader copy.

**Introductory\***

**City of Baltimore  
Council Bill**

Introduced by: Councilmember Clarke

A Bill Entitled

An Ordinance concerning  
**Water Bills - Restoring Informal Conferences**

For the purpose of requiring the Director of Public Works to provide informal conferences to certain customers seeking an abatement of water charges before water service is cut-off for nonpayment, or other actions are taken to collect on delinquent water accounts; clarifying and conforming related provisions; and generally relating to City water billing.

By repealing, and reordaining with amendments

Article 24 - Water  
Section(s) 2-2  
Baltimore City Code  
(Edition 2000)

**Section 1. Be it ordained by the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore,** That the Laws of Baltimore City read as follows:

**Baltimore City Code**

**Article 24. Water**

**Subtitle 2. Bills**

**§ 2-2. Abatements.**

(a) *Director may abate.*

The Director of Public Works [shall have full power and authority to] may abate any charge for water made against any property, whether the [same be] charge was made by meter, fixed charge, or otherwise, whenever the Director [in his discretion may], for any cause, [deem such] deems an abatement proper and advisable.

(b) *Scope.*

[Said] An abatement under this section may, in the discretion of the Director of Public Works, be of the whole or any part of the charge [so made], and [upon such] on any terms and conditions [as] set by the Director [may deem advisable and may prescribe].

(c) *Informal conference.*

- (1) Any person seeking an abatement under this section may request an informal conference with a neutral party to discuss the reasons why they believe an abatement should be granted.
- (2) A residential owner-occupied customer, or residential tenant authorized by the owner to be added to the account for the tenant's residence, requesting an informal conference under this subsection who has not had a conference in the previous 365 days must be granted a conference before the Director may:
  - (i) cut off service for non-payment; or
  - (ii) take any other formal action to collect on a delinquent account.
- (3) Conferences under this subsection must be provided to customers without charge.
- (4) At the conclusion of the conference, the neutral party must make a verbal recommendation to the requestor regarding whether an abatement should be granted and, if so, the amount of any recommended abatement. This recommendation must then be presented to the Director of Public Works.
- (5) Within 30 days of the conference, the Director of Public Works must provide a written notification to the customer who attended the conference about what, if any, abatement has been granted.

**Section 2. And be it further ordained,** That the catchlines contained in this Ordinance are not law and may not be considered to have been enacted as a part of this or any prior Ordinance.

**Section 3. And be it further ordained,** That this Ordinance takes effect on the 30<sup>th</sup> day after the date it is enacted.