



DIVISION

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE/INSTRUCTIONS

for:

SOP Title: Hardship Fund Process for Emergency Water and Wastewater Services

SOP Number: _____

Originator: Shaaron Phillips, Chief Administrative Officer
Bureau of Water and Wastewater
Department of Public Works

Approved By: _____

Effective Date: _____

Revision Date: _____

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PURPOSE

To ensure that qualified low-income Baltimore City homeowners, who do not have a private service contract to repair their external water and sewer service lines during times of an emergency, receive assistance **when available** from a hardship fund designated for this purpose.

PROCEDURE

I. Selection Criteria

A. Immediately upon receiving notification from the Baltimore City Housing Department, a Department of Public Works (DPW) utility investigator or maintenance crew member, or a meter operations technician that a homeowner has an exterior leak or clogged sewer service line on their property, and may be eligible for the hardship program, DPW's Customer Support and Services Division (CSSD) will:

1. Confirm if the homeowner is currently receiving low income assistance for their water bill. Income qualification are as follows:

**Low Income Water Assistance Eligibility
Reflects 175% of the Federal Poverty Threshold*
Effective January 26, 2017**

Household Size	Max. Monthly Income	Max. Yearly Income
1	\$1,759	\$21,105
2	\$2,368	\$28,420
3	\$2,978	\$35,735
4	\$3,588	\$43,050
5	\$4,197	\$50,365
6	\$4,807	\$57,680
7	\$5,416	\$64,995
8	\$6,026	\$72,310
For Each Additional Person, Add	\$610	\$7,315

*This table is calculated based on U.S. Poverty Guidelines for the 48 contiguous states which are adjusted annually by the Department of Health and Human Services.



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2. Confirm the customer is experiencing an emergency breakdown of the water or wastewater system.
 3. Confirm that the customer has no means of paying for the repair.
 4. Confirm that the customer owns the single-family home where the repairs are needed.
- B. If the customer is not enrolled in any low-income programs in DPW, a customer can be deemed eligible with confirmation that the customer is enrolled with the City's Department of Housing or other City agency and is currently receiving housing, energy or some other form of assistance.
- C. If the homeowner is receiving assistance from a City program, CSSD will send email notification to the Program Manager and HomeServe with the customer's name, contact number and address to the following for processing:
1. HomeServeCares@homeserveusa.com
 2. Shirley.Epstein@homeserveusa.com
 3. Tom.Crimmins@homeserveusa.com
- D. If the homeowner is not receiving assistance from a City program, CSSD will attempt to get them qualified for a City program.
- E. If the homeowner is eligible for the City program, upon qualification, will complete step C of this section.
- F. If the homeowner is not eligible for the City assistance program, CSSD will notify the Program Manager and the customer that they are not eligible to receive funds from the hardship fund to repair their leak for clogged service line, and refer them to other services for assistance.



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II. Repair Process

- A. Once received, HomeServe will deploy one of their licensed and city approved contractors to the requested homeowner’s address for assessment.
- B. Jobs will be confirmed as accepted by HomeServe within 24-48 hours.
- C. If repairs are quoted to be less than the established \$3,000 repair limit, and funds are available in the City’s hardship fund managed and administered by HomeServe USA to cover the repairs, then HomeServe USA will conduct the repairs and deduct the cost from the hardship fund balance.
- D. If the quoted repair cost is more than the remaining balance in the hardship fund, then HomeServe will notify the DPW’s Program Manager; at which time, the Program Manager would either approve the overage, contribute the overage from another source so the repair can occur or request HomeServe not perform the repairs as part of the hardship program.
- E. Customers can receive a maximum of \$3,000 from the hardship fund during a 12 month period. Costs above \$3,000 may be approved by DPW prior to performance of the work. *[The urgency of the matter will be considered. Factors such as length of time out of water or exposure to harmful byproducts will be taken into consideration.]*
- F. HomeServe provides updates and a final confirmation when the job is complete.
- G. Flow Chart of Process for the HomeServe/Baltimore Hardship Fund:



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HomeServe/Baltimore Hardship Fund Process

