Customer Complaint Policy

POLICY STATEMENT

All Utility Districts must establish a complaint policy. TCA 7-82-402

1… Complaints concerning the availability of service, the quality of service performed, the amount of a bill, and all other complaints may initially be made to any regular clerical employee in WBUD's office or to WBUD's General Manager.

2… Regular clerical employees are authorized to make adjustments to bills provided the clerical employee can ascertain that a bill is erroneous because of a bookkeeping, accounting error or meter reading error.

3… The General Manager is authorized to resolve all complaints and/or authorized to designate appropriate office or field staff to handle routine complaints.

4… Certain customer complaints shall be maintained in a file or log designated Customer Complaints. Such shall contain the name of the person complaining, the date of the complaint, a brief summary of the complaint and a summary of the action taken by WBUD in response to such complaint. The following specifies what will be considered a complaint for purposes of logging:

(a) Inquiries.

Certain Utility Districts are exempt from having a complaint policy. TCA 7-82-103

1… **Inquiries not required to be logged** - When WBUD receives an inquiry by phone or in writing from a customer concerning the routine operation of WBUD and such inquiry is handled to the customer's satisfaction, such inquiry shall not be considered a complaint under this policy EXCEPT;

2… **Inquiries which must be logged** - All inquiries concerning water quality or supply shall be considered complaints and must be logged.

(b) Complaints.

All water systems must establish and maintain a file for customer complaints. 1200-5-1-.17(24)

All complaints must be logged - All complaints must be **in writing.** Any Customer indicating the desire to pursue a complaint must submit the complaint **in writing** to the Office of WBUD.

5… The General Manager or the employee acting on his behalf shall notify the complaining party of the disposition of his or her complaint by telephone, electronic mail, letter, or otherwise within ten (10) days after receipt of the complaint, excluding Saturdays, Sundays, holidays, and any periods during which the General Manager may be unable to act upon the complaint because of his absence from the office.

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6… If the complaint is one which the General Manager is not authorized to resolve or if the action of the General Manager on the complaint is unacceptable to the Customer, the Customer may request review by the Board. At the complaining party's request, the General Manager shall schedule the complaint for consideration at the Board's next available meeting and shall inform the complaining party of the time and place of the meeting. The Customer may appear in person before the Board or may request that the complaint be submitted to the Board without his presence. The Customer shall be notified of the disposition of the complaint in accordance with Paragraph 5 hereof. (Each complaint/customer will be given five (5) minutes at the Board meeting. If the Board needs additional time, the Board can take an additional five (5) minutes for a total of ten (10) minutes for the complaint. The maximum time per meeting will be no more than ten (10) minutes. If additional time is needed for the complaint or more investigation for the complaint, the board may schedule the complaint for the next available meeting and shall inform the complaining party of the time and place of the meeting.) The Customer may appear in person before the Board or may request that the complaint be submitted to the Board without his presence. The Customer shall be notified of the disposition of the complaint in accordance with Paragraph 5 hereof.

Board may defer complaint

7… When a Customer or complaining party shall appear at a Board meeting to make a complaint without previously submitting the complaint to the General Manager, the Board may require the complaining party to present the complaint to the General Manager or other WBUD employee in accordance with the procedures set forth in this rule so the Board may be fully informed of the facts before resolving the complaint. In its discretion, however, the Board may hear and act upon such a complaint when presented.

8… If the complaining party appears at a Board meeting to seek review of a complaint, the Board may defer hearing the complaint until a subsequent meeting to allow an opportunity to locate and prepare materials concerning the complaint.

9… All notices, statements, requests and other communications from the WBUD to the Customer shall be deemed properly given if provided in writing and delivered personally, attached in plain view on the front or main door of the Customer's dwelling, or sent by U.S. Mail or by electronic mail. The Customer's refusal to accept such communication shall be deemed receipt.

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10… If the complaint is not handled to the satisfaction of the Customer by the General Manager or the governing Board, the customer has thirty days from the date of the Board meeting where his complaint was last heard in which to file a written complaint with the Tennessee Board of Utility Regulation (TBOUR). The TBOUR is a state wide Board set up, in part, to hear legitimate customer complaints. They will refuse to hear any complaint that has not first been presented to the utility governing Board. Information about TBOUR hearings or procedures may be handled by phone: (615) 747-5260.

Written complaints may be mailed to the TBOUR at the following address:

Tennessee Board of Utility Regulation

Cordell Hull Building

425 Fifth Avenue North

Nashville, TN 37243

Strict interpretation of this policy may be deviated by/from General Manager.

Adoption Date: December 21, 2023

Effective Date: December 21, 2023

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