

## ICOSA WATER SERVICES LIMITED

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### OUR CUSTOMER PROMISE

**2021**



# OUR PROMISES TO YOU

We want to give you the very best service possible at all times and we work hard to ensure that all our customers receive a consistently high level of service.

We try to keep our promises and make sure you're satisfied with what we do for you.

Our commitment is backed up by our Guaranteed Standards of Service, outlined below which includes all the standards set out in government regulations.

**If we fail to achieve any of standards 1-4 detailed below, we will credit your water services account with a payment that is equivalent to that offered by the upstream regional water company for the area. If we fail to credit your account within 10 working days, you will be entitled to an additional penalty payment credited to your account.**

## 1. Appointments

When we make an appointment to visit you, we will offer you either a morning (before 1pm) or afternoon appointment or you can request an appointment within a 2-hour period. We aim to meet all our appointment times.

If we have to change the appointment, we will give you at least 24 hours' notice.

Payments will not apply if the appointment is cancelled with less than 24 hours' notice due to circumstances beyond our control, for example extreme weather conditions, strikes or the actions of a third party.

## 2. Account queries

If you write to us with a query regarding your bill, we will send you a reply within 10 working days.

## 3. Payment arrangements

If you write to us asking to change your payment method and if for any reason it is not possible to action your request, we will notify you within five working days of receiving your contact.

## 4. Written complaints

If you complain in writing, we'll respond within 10 working days of receiving your complaint.

## 5. Interruptions to supply.

Planned interruptions.

Occasionally we need to turn off the water supply to carry our essential, planned work. We will let you know in advance and tell you when the supply will be restored.

For interruptions of more than 4 hours, we will give you at least 48 hours' notice in writing. We will restore the supply by the time stated in the notice.

If we fail to correctly notify you of the interruption or if the supply is not restored within the stated time, we will credit your water services account with a payment that is equivalent to that offered by the upstream regional water company for the area.



If we fail to credit your account within 20 working days, you will be entitled to an additional penalty payment credited to your account.

Unplanned interruptions.

After an emergency or unplanned interruption, we will restore supplies within 12 hours of becoming aware of the interruption.

If we fail to restore your supply within the stated time, we will credit your water services account with a payment that is equivalent to that offered by the upstream regional water company for the area with an additional payment for every 12 hours that you remain without water.

If we fail to credit your account within 20 working days, you will be entitled to an additional penalty payment credited to your account.

It is sometimes difficult to know who has been affected by these interruptions. If you were affected and we have not credited your account, please contact our Customer Service Team.

If you experience three or more unplanned interruptions lasting more than 15 hours in total within a 12 month period, you can claim £25.

## 6. Sewer flooding

On rare occasions where there is a blockage or collapse in one of our sewers, or where exceptionally heavy rainfall has overloaded our sewer, some properties may experience sewage flooding. If this happens, please call us straight away. We will investigate the cause of sewage flooding following all reported incidents. If sewage enters your home from our sewer network, we aim to inspect the problem within 4 hours of you letting us know.

We will also provide a full clean up service where possible within 12 hours (internal flooding or within 24 hours (external flooding).

Where the sewage flooding enters your home, we will automatically refund your sewage charge for the year (minimum payment £150 up to a maximum of £1,000 per incident). In addition to this sum, we will automatically pay you up to £100 for the disturbance the sewage flooding causes. We will determine the amount payable on a case-by-case basis. Where the sewage flooding has caused damage to your home or contents, we will consider contributing to your uninsured losses.

If you have a critical health related circumstances at the time of the sewage flooding and you arrange to move into temporary accommodation, we will consider making a discretionary payment of up to £50 per day, up to a maximum of £500 towards your costs.

If we fail to credit your account within 20 working days, you may be entitled to an additional penalty payment credited to your account.

If sewage enters your garden from our sewer network, we aim to inspect the problem the same day you let us know. Where the sewage flooding enters only your land or garden, you can claim back a sum equal to half of your sewage charges for the year (minimum payment £75 up to a maximum of £500 per incident).

If we fail to credit your account within 20 working days, you may be entitled to an additional penalty payment credited to your account.

Your claim will only be valid if you were materially affected by the sewage flooding incident to your land or garden. You will therefore need to show or explain the effect of the sewage flooding, on your land or garden when you make a claim.



Normally, we will make this assessment when we visit to view the sewage flooding and we will leave a claim form with you if we consider you have been materially affected. We only accept written claims for external sewage flooding and will assess your claim based upon the information you provide.

If you are affected by both internal and external sewage flooding in the same incident, we will only pay you for the internal sewage flooding incident. You will not receive an additional payment for the external sewage flooding. We will also assist with the clean-up of the public highway if this has been affected by the sewage flooding incident.

Payments will not apply if:

- The flooding happened because of exceptional weather conditions or industrial action,
- The flooding was caused by a customer's actions or any defect, blockage or inadequacy in the customer's drain or sewers,
- You notified us more than three months after your property was flooded.

## 7. Water pressure

If your water pressure falls substantially below normal, please let us know. We will first check whether this is due to an operational fault for example a burst main. If not, then we will carry out further checks with pressure loggers.

If we have identified a pressure level in the communication pipe below seven meters static head for at least 1 hour on two separate occasions within a 28-day period, you are automatically entitled to a payment equivalent to that offered by the upstream regional water company for the area.

If we fail to credit your account within 10 working days, you will be entitled to an additional penalty payment credited to your account.

It is sometimes difficult to know who has been affected by low pressure. If you were affected and we have not credited your account, please call us within 3 months of the last of the two occasions of low pressure.

If significantly high-water pressure causes any damage to your water fittings as a result of our negligence, we will pay for the cost of any repairs to these fittings.

## 8. Drinking water quality

If we believe there is a problem with the quality of your tap water due to our water supply system, we will provide you with appropriate advice on what to do. If you complain about our water making you ill, we will contact you within 2 hours of receiving the complaint to arrange for the water at your tap to be tested.

If the problem lasts for longer than 48 hours and is specific to your property or to a group of local properties, we will credit your water services account with a payment that is equivalent to that offered by the upstream regional water company for the area.

However, if the problem is more widespread, we will consider compensation where it is proved to be the result of our negligence.

If you tell us that you are unhappy with the taste or smell of your water, we will investigate. Please note that all our tap water contains chlorine, which helps to keep the water safe to drink – it is there for normal for your tap water to have a slight chlorine taste or smell.

If you report a water quality problem which we consider could have an impact on the safety of your water supply, we will visit you within 4 hours (if it is convenient with you). In this circumstance, if we take a sample of water for analysis at our laboratory, we will give you an explanation of the key



results by phone within 48 hours if you request it and confirm key results in writing within 10 working days.

If we don't meet any part of this timetable, you can claim a payment that is equivalent to that offered by the upstream regional water company for the area.

Please note that this doesn't apply if we tell you the analysis will take more than 48 hours.

## 9. Discolouration

Very occasionally you may find that your water supply is a brownish colour. This discolouration is often caused by work being carried out on ageing iron mains and although unsightly, poses not health risk. If laundry is stained because of water discolouration due to our mains, we'll compensate you for the cost of the affected items.

If other damage is caused e.g. damage to your boiler, we will arrange for a plumber to visit your property and pay the appropriate compensation

## 10. Water shortages

If we have to interrupt or cut off your supply as a result of a Drought Order, we will, except in exceptional circumstances automatically pay you a payment that is equivalent to that offered by the upstream regional water company for the area. This is up to a maximum of the average household water bill from the previous year.

## Debt recovery action

If we incorrectly issue a County Court judgement against you in respect of a debt for which you are not liable, and for which you have previously informed us that you are not liable, we will correct the situation, withdraw the fees and costs. We will credit your water services account with the same payment that is offered by the upstream regional water company for the area. If we fail to credit your account within 10 working days of our reply, you will be entitled to an additional penalty payment credited to your account.

## Debt collection

There are circumstances when we will refer customers' debts to a debt collection agency. The agencies we use are registered with the Financial Conducts Authority and are members of the Credit Services Association and subject to its code of practice.

In the unlikely event that a debt is pursued this way in error, or the debt collection agent acts improperly, we will credit your water services account with a payment that is equivalent to that offered by the upstream regional water company for the area.

In some circumstances, we register a default against customers' credit files held by Credit Reference Agencies. In the unlikely event that a debt is pursued this way in error, we will correct the situation and credit your water service account with a payment that is equivalent to that offered by the upstream regional water company for the area.

If we fail to credit your account within 10 working days, you will be entitled to an additional penalty payment credited to your account.



## Exceptional circumstances

In certain circumstances it will be impractical for us to meet our service standards. In such cases you will not be entitled to a payment.

Examples of where exclusions may apply are:

- Exceptional or severe weather conditions
- Industrial action
- Third party action including action by customers.

Where a payment is made, it does not act as an admission of liability for any other purpose. Similarly, its acceptance by the customer, will not affect any other liability owed to them.

Any disputes arising in relation to the Guaranteed Standards Scheme may be referred to Ofwat for determination. Its decision is binding.

## Dealing with compensation

Payments will be made within 10 working days. If we fail to make a payment within this time, you are entitled to claim a penalty payment of £30 unless otherwise stated. You must claim the penalty payment within 3 months.

## Access

Where we are undertaking works and require access to your property, we will agree the timing and any specific access requirements in advance. Failure to consult will result in a £25 payment in respect of each affected property. If we fail to credit your account within 10 working days of our failure to consult with you, you will be entitled to an additional £10 penalty payment credited to your account.

## Water meters

We will undertake a survey and fit a meter within 50 working days from receipt of your request. If we do not meet this timescale, we will only bill you the metered standing charge element of your bill until the meter has been fitted.

Since 1 April 2000 customers have been entitled to a Switchback Guarantee when applying for a water meter. The guarantee gives you the right to revert to rateable value-based charges anytime within the first 24 months. However, you will still need to pay for any metered charges incurred before you opt back.

Please note: the meter will remain in position and future occupants will be charged on metered usage.

## Meter relocation

For elderly customers and those with additional needs who are having difficulty reading their meter and would like it relocated, we will carry out a free survey. If it is possible to move the meter, we will move it free of charge. If we are unable to move it, we will let you know why.

For customers who are unable to read their meter themselves or want to monitor their consumption we can provide a service whereby we read their meter four times a year.



## Leakage

If you are on a metered supply, the meter will record the water we supply to your property, which will include any leak on your supply pipe or from appliances in your home. However, if the cause of the leak is fully repaired, you will qualify for a one-off leak allowance, where we will adjust your charges back to their normal levels. Where we have no record of previous usage, e.g. you have recently moved into the property, we will estimate your normal usage. If subsequent meter readings show your actual usage to be lower than our estimate, we will make a further adjustment to reflect this.

If you are worried that you may have a leak on your supply pipe, please contact us and we will arrange for a technician to visit and check your supply. If our visit confirms that there is a leak, we will advise you to contact your plumber for this to be repaired. Details of the assistance we can give to the cost of the repair or replacement are outlined in our Leakage Code of Practice.

If the repair is completed within 30 days of the date of our technician's visit, we will make an allowance for the leak as a credit to your water bill.

If the repair takes longer than 30 days, the value of the allowance may be reduced. Time to repair 30-60 days allowance reduced by 33%; 60-90 days allowance reduced by 66%. More than 90 days no allowance

You should apply for the leak allowance once the leak has been satisfactorily repaired and within one month of the repair being carried out. A copy of the invoice for the repair work will be required. If you are unable to provide this, we may need to visit your property to inspect the repair. Leak allowances are not made where the leak is due to customer negligence. Customers may receive one leak allowance per property.

## COMPLAINTS

### Did we meet your expectations?

When you raise a query or want to make a complaint about our service, we don't want it to be an unpleasant experience for either of us.

We want to provide you with a first-rate customer service at all times. We appreciate, however, that sometimes we don't always get it right. If you're unhappy let us know straight away so we can discuss the situation with you and decide what we need to do.

Our complaints procedure has been developed to ensure that all employees and contractors working on our behalf are able to handle customer complaints effectively, whether face to face, over the telephone or in writing.

### What you can expect.

Please contact us as soon as possible if you are not satisfied.

We aim to operate in a way that makes communication easy, offering a variety of ways of getting in touch with us, including by telephone, by email, by letter or face to face. If there is anything more, we can do to make it easier for you to get in contact with us, please let us know.

We will respond to written complaints within 10 working days which follow the day that we receive your complaint. In the unlikely event that we fail to meet this timescale, we will credit your water services account with a payment that is equivalent to that offered by the upstream regional water company for the area.



If we fail to credit your account within 10 working days, you will be entitled to an additional penalty payment credited to your account.

We keep a record of all the complaints we get and use them to improve our service, these records are also monitored, reviewed, and audited by us and our regulators.

## **OUR COMPLAINTS PROCESS**

### **Stage One – Customer Care Team**

If you email or write to us, we will provide a response within 10 working days from the date we receive your complaint. If we don't respond within this timescale, we will credit your water services account with a payment that is equivalent to that offered by the upstream regional water company for the area.

If we fail to credit your account within 10 working days, you will be entitled to an additional penalty payment credited to your account.

### **Stage Two – Escalation to Senior Manager**

In the rare case that you remain unhappy and feel that our Customer Care Team haven't resolved the matter to your satisfaction, you can choose to escalate your complaint to an appropriate Senior Manager or Director who will review the case. They will then write to you explaining the outcome of their review.

### **Stage Three – What happens if I'm still not happy?**

If, having fully exhausted this process, we haven't resolved the complaint to your satisfaction, you may take your complaint to the Consumer Council for Water (CCWater) who may act on your behalf to try to resolve your complaint with us. They are an independence body set up to protect your interests and to champion customer issues.

**CCWater contact details:** 0330 034 2222, [ccwater.org.uk](http://ccwater.org.uk), 1<sup>st</sup> floor, Victoria Square House, Victoria Square, Birmingham B2 4AJ.





## GETTING IN TOUCH WITH US

If you would like to discuss any aspect of our service, please contact our Customer Service Team. There are a number of ways in which you can contact us.

### You can write to us at:

Icosa Water Services  
Sophia House  
Cathedral Road  
Cardiff  
CF11 9LJ

### Telephone:

If you have any queries, please feel free to call our teams:

Customer Service & Billing Team on **0330 000 0113**.

### Email us:

[billing@icosawater.co.uk](mailto:billing@icosawater.co.uk)

[customerservices@icosawater.co.uk](mailto:customerservices@icosawater.co.uk)

### Our office hours for general and billing enquires are:

Monday – Friday 8:30am to 5:30pm (Excluding Bank Holidays).

### Drainage Emergencies:

For any drainage emergencies please call our 24-hour emergency number **0330 111 2014**.

Our website [www.icosawater.co.uk](http://www.icosawater.co.uk) contains further company information. If you do not have access to the internet, we can send you any relevant information that you require by post.

