

Waivers and Remissions Policy

Information to support customers applying for reduced drinking water and wastewater charges

DRAFT FOR FEEDBACK

Our commitment to customers

We understand that unexpected situations, such as leaks or faults, can sometimes result in higher-than-usual drinking water or wastewater charges. We also understand that temporary financial hardship can impact on a customer's ability to meet these charges, and that there may be other situations where it is appropriate for charges to be waived or reduced.

This policy explains when and how Selwyn Water may be able to help by reducing, adjusting, or waiving certain charges where it is fair and reasonable to do so. It is designed to ensure customers are treated consistently, transparently, and with care, while also protecting the long-term sustainability of essential water services.

This policy ensures Selwyn Water:

- Complies with section 102 of the Local Government (Water Services) Act 2025
- Applies waivers and remissions transparently and consistently, while respecting individuals' circumstances and privacy
- Treats customers fairly when they experience unavoidable circumstances
- Protects the organisation's long-term financial sustainability

What this policy covers

This policy applies to Selwyn Water's Fees and Charges Schedule, including:

- Drinking water fixed charges and metered volumetric (use based) charges
- Wastewater fixed charges and volumetric (use based) charges
- Trade waste charges
- Connection, administrative, and service fees¹

Please note: Selwyn Water does not provide charge reductions or waivers for separate homes or units on the same property based on family relationships. Separately Used or Inhabited Parts (SUIPs) are self-contained parts of a property that are used or lived in independently, even if they share the same land title. Each SUIP is charged a base fixed fee, which reflects the cost of having water and wastewater services available to that unit.

¹ For a full list of fees and charges, see Selwyn Water's Fees and Charges Schedule.



Policy principles

Selwyn Water will apply waivers or remissions in a fair, consistent, and accountable manner, guided by the following principles:

Principle	Description
Legitimate cause	Waivers/remissions are only available for circumstances beyond the customer's control
Cost recovery	Waivers/remissions must not undermine the recovery of costs for network operation and maintenance
Transparency	Criteria and processes for seeking a waiver/remission are published and available to all customers
Documentation	All approvals and amounts waived must be recorded in Selwyn Water's billing system for audit purposes
Confidentiality	Personal information will be treated in accordance with Selwyn Water's statutory obligations and care will be taken with applications which contain sensitive information

Eligible circumstances

Selwyn Water may consider reducing or waiving charges in the following situations. In each case, Selwyn Water will consider the particular circumstances which have led to the application for a waiver or reduction as well as any other matters which Selwyn Water considers relevant to its decision.

1. Leaks on private property

Selwyn Water may consider reducing or waiving charges if a leak occurs on your private pipework (not Selwyn Water's network) and results in unusually high water use.

What you need to do:

- Let us know as soon as possible
- Repair the leak within a reasonable timeframe
- Provide evidence of the repair (e.g. plumber's invoice or certification from a licenced plumber)

What support may be available:

- Metered water charges (volumetric charges) may be waived or adjusted back to average historical usage
- Fixed charges will still apply, as they cover the ongoing availability of services

2. Faulty water meters

Selwyn Water may consider reducing or waiving charges if a water meter is found to be faulty or not recording accurately.



What support may be available:

- Charges may be adjusted based on previous usage or a standard average

3. Temporary financial hardship

Selwyn Water may consider reducing or waiving charges to recognise temporary financial hardship. This ground applies to residential customers only, who are experiencing short-term financial difficulty due to circumstances outside their control, such as unexpected medical costs or a loss of income.

To consider your application, we may ask for:

- Information that helps us understand your situation, such as evidence of unexpected expenses
- Confirmation that other available assistance has been explored, where appropriate
- A willingness to set up a payment arrangement for any remaining charges

We may not be able to process your application without this information

What support may be available:

- A one-off reduction, adjustment, or deferral of charges may be approved by an authorised staff member in line with their decision-making authority

4. Medical or special care situations

Selwyn Water may consider reducing or waiving charges if medical, health, or care-related needs mean your household requires higher-than-usual water use.

What you need to know:

- All applications must be made in writing
- Each application is considered on a case-by-case basis
- We may request supporting information. We may not be able to process your application without this information; however, you should contact us if you have any concerns with providing the relevant information to us
- All applications will be assessed in accordance with our policy principles of legitimate cause, cost recovery, transparency, and documentation

5. Exceptional circumstances

In rare cases, such as natural disasters or significant service disruptions affecting private property, Selwyn Water may consider support for affected residents.

These situations will be assessed by the Chief Executive or a delegated officer.



Support for community organisations

Certain community, sporting and other not-for-profit organisations may be eligible for limited charge relief.

Eligible organisations

- Owned by Selwyn District Council, or
- Owned and occupied by a not-for-profit, community-based organisation primarily used for sporting, recreation, or community purposes

Such support is not available to organisations operating for profit or charging commercial fees.

What support may be available:

- Up to 50% remission of fixed annual drinking water and wastewater charges

Schools

Primary schools may apply for remission on additional wastewater pan (toilet) charges, so they are only charged based on the number of toilets required by Ministry of Education guidelines.

How to apply

- Complete a Waiver/Remission Application Form – these will be available on the Selwyn Water website from 1 July 2026
- Provide any supporting information requested
- Your application will then be assessed in line with this policy

What happens next

- A decision will usually be made within 10 business days
- We will confirm the outcome in writing, including any adjusted charges or payment arrangements

Recording and reporting

To ensure fairness, transparency, and accountability:

- The policy was prepared in accordance with the Significance and Engagement Policy to determine consultation, as required by s102(2)
- All approved waivers and remissions are recorded in Selwyn Water's billing system



- Each waiver or remission must be approved by an authorised Selwyn Water staff member, in line with established decision-making authority
- We provide an annual report to the Selwyn Water Board that outlines:
 - The number and types of waivers or remissions granted
 - The total value of charges reduced or waived
 - Any trends or recurring issues identified (for example, repeated leaks)

Reviewing this policy

This policy will be reviewed annually or after significant legislative or operational changes.

Selwyn Water may update, pause, or withdraw this policy, with approval from the Board.

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