



Department Source: Law

To: City Council

From: City Manager & Staff

Council Meeting Date: April 6, 2020

Re: Temporary Deviation from City Code Requirements related to Utility Fees and Charges
Due to COVID-19 Pandemic

Executive Summary

Due to COVID-19 pandemic, a bill has been prepared for Council consideration which would authorize a temporary relief from the payment of service fees and late charges on utility bills as well as would authorize landlords to obtain utility service on rental properties without a certificate of compliance in certain situations.

Discussion

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the need to encourage less community contact, the City Manager has authorized the elimination of the requirement of a customer to pay a service charge if the customer pays the utility bill with a credit card in order to reduce a current obstacle to payment of the bill electronically. The current fee is \$2.50 per transaction. That fee will be reduced to \$1.50 per transaction with the contract amendment with Paymentus, which is also on the Council agenda under the Consent Agenda.

In addition, to ensure persons who are delinquent during this time of emergency are not negatively impacted any further, the City is waiving all late charges on delinquent accounts.

Lastly, this ordinance would allow any landlord who is unable to obtain a certificate of compliance due to the inability of the Community Development Department to perform a rental inspection to establish a utility account for the rental unit for which such certificate is pending.

The City Manager's actions which suspended these items are only valid up to a period of 21 days unless confirmed and authorized by Council. If Council chooses not to approve these actions, the department will resume normal activities.

The bill has an emergency clause which allows for the City Council to consider the bill and adopt it on the same day as introduction. In order to do so, the bill must receive a six-sevenths (6/7) vote of the entire Council.

Fiscal Impact

Short-Term Impact: Not applicable.

Long-Term Impact: Not applicable.



City of Columbia

701 East Broadway, Columbia, Missouri 65201

Strategic & Comprehensive Plan Impact

[Strategic Plan Impacts:](#)

Primary Impact: Not Applicable, Secondary Impact: Not Applicable, Tertiary Impact: Not Applicable

[Comprehensive Plan Impacts:](#)

Primary Impact: Not Applicable, Secondary Impact: Not applicable, Tertiary Impact: Not Applicable

Legislative History

Date	Action
	None.

Suggested Council Action

None.