

# Domestic Violence Waiver Policy



## Program Overview

House Bill 2242 enables public utilities and municipally-owned utility providers to waive the initial credit and deposit requirements for domestic violence. Oklahoma is a highly ranked state when it comes to domestic violence statistics, including the rate of intimate partner homicides. The number of reported domestic violence incidents reached its highest point in Oklahoma in 2020, the previous record numbers were in 2000. The pandemic and subsequent economic circumstances continue to exacerbate certain escalating factors that often result in increased domestic violence.

Financial constraints often serve as a barrier to survivors when they contemplate leaving an abusive situation; abusers frequently exercise financial and economic control such that a survivor with the means to leave may not be able to access their own resources. Tahlequah seeks to alleviate a small part of that financial barrier by implementing a Family Violence Waiver policy. This is a concept borrowed from several other states (e.g., Texas, Louisiana, Pennsylvania, Mississippi) that act to waive the deposit typically required to start, restore, or transfer utility service.

TPWA staff in conjunction with Help-In-Crisis and the City of Tahlequah Police Department are working together so that survivors can provide this form to TPWA Customer Service in lieu of their deposit. The form allows three options to verify that the applicant is a survivor of domestic violence but does not require any details or personal information relating to any abuse they have experienced.

## Eligibility

A person seeking to have their deposit waived may do so by completing the **Domestic Violence Waiver Form** and submitting verification in one of the following ways:

1. By providing the completed form along with a protective order of an incident of such violence within thirty (30) days of the date of the order; or
2. By providing the completed form signed by a representative of Help-In-Crisis ("Certifying Agency") within thirty (30) days of signature; or
3. By providing the form signed by a representative of the Tahlequah Police Department within thirty (30) days of signature.

Completed Forms may be submitted:

In person at 710 West Choctaw, Tahlequah, OK 74464 or  
By mail to TPWA, P.O. Box 29, Tahlequah, OK 74465

*If you have any questions, please call our office at (918) 456-2564 or email [CS@TahlequahPWA.com](mailto:CS@TahlequahPWA.com).*