

## COJ's Weird "Refund" Debits

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### INTRODUCTION

HBGSchindlers has recently been inundated with requests for assistance by confused members of the public who have received invoices from the City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality ("the COJ") this month (June 2024) including a line item on the front page, with the notation "Refund", but including a correlating debit charge. An example is as follows:

Account Number: [REDACTED]		PIN CODE: [REDACTED]	
Previous Account Balance		154,200.65	
Less: Income Payment (Last Payment Made 2024/05/09)		- 160,000.00	
Refund		17,470.72	
Sub Total		11,671.37	
Interest on Arrears		55.54	
Current Charges (Excl. VAT)		72,114.24	
VAT @ 15%		10,817.14	

### WHAT IS THIS WEIRD CHARGE?

HBGSchindlers contacted the City to ask what this charge was. The COJ advised that this line item was correctly debited to certain customer accounts because in the past few months the City had erroneously granted certain customers a double credit in respect of one of their payments. The same payment that was previously double credited by mistake, is now being debited, to undo the effect of the erroneous double credit.

If a customer has indeed been double credited in the past few months with the same amount that COJ is now reversing in this "Refund" line item, then the customer's account will be correct, as COJ would now have simply reversed the effect of the incorrect double credit.

### WHAT IF I HAVE NOT PREVIOUSLY RECEIVED A DOUBLE CREDIT?

If you have not received a double credit and you are now being debited, then your account may be incorrect. It is not a guarantee that your account is incorrect – you will have to have it audited by an expert to ascertain the accuracy of your account if you are uncertain.

You can contact the Public Law Department at HBGSchindlers if you require legal assistance with municipal law disputes on [public@hbgschindlers.com](mailto:public@hbgschindlers.com).



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