

City Of Johannesburg's Expanded Social Package Rebates 2025/2026

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INTRODUCTION

The City of Johannesburg has released its draft policy for the 2025/2026 financial and it is due to take effect from 1 July 2025 if approved by the municipal council without amendment.

The City of Johannesburg ("the City") recognises the need to provide relief to vulnerable consumers such as unemployed persons, the elderly, persons with disabilities, women, youth, children and child headed households, and displaced persons who are owners/occupants of properties within the jurisdiction of the City.

Therefore, the City has implemented the Expanded Social Package (ESP), which is a variety of services provided by the municipality at no cost or a discounted cost, to assist consumers who are suffering immense hardship and need some support with lower property rates, as well as the availability of social welfare services.

WHAT BENEFITS DOES THE ESP OFFER TO RESIDENTS?

The ESP aims to assist qualifying citizens with property based benefits and social services in terms of a tiered system based on the level of poverty of the consumer concerned. In the case of property-based charges, the ESP allows for rebates on water, electricity, refuse and sewer charges.

In addition to the ESP rebates, indigent persons may also apply for social interventions such as food parcels, social worker visits, home visitation for frail/bedridden patients, skills development training and children's services.

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QUALIFYING CRITERIA

In order to qualify for the ESP, the individual or household must:

- Be a South African citizen;
- Reside within the City's jurisdiction;
- Be unemployed or derive a monthly income of less than R 7 503.01 (inclusive of pension funds, investments, off-shore accounts and other financial resources available to applicant) ; and
- Have a property where the market value does not exceed R 500 000.

The City is at liberty to conduct background checks on applicants with various institutions such as credit bureaus, Home Affairs, SARS and CIPC. Therefore applicants whose conditions have improved and who no longer meet the ESP requirements, must inform the City timeously to be de-registered from the ESP benefit. The City may also de-register an applicant of its own accord if it comes to the knowledge that the applicant no longer meets the ESP requirements.

DOCUMENTS REQUIRED FOR REGISTRATION

Customers can approach their nearest walk-in centre for an application form, alternatively the application form can be obtained online and completed electronically on the following link: <https://share.hsforms.com/18UOtrr69T8exh4600r1bWQ469tI>

Along with the application form, the customer must submit the following supporting documentation:

1. Certified copy of Identity document;
2. Proof of income;
3. A certified copy of the customer's SASSA card;
4. Certified copy of bank statements from the last three months or a sworn affidavit that the applicant does not have a bank account or a source of income;
5. Proof of residence;
6. Copy of City's rates and taxes account for the property;
7. Copy of Eskom account/ prepaid meter number;

8. Copy of City Power Account/ Prepaid meter account for the property;
9. Johannesburg Water Account/ prepaid meter number for the property.

According to the City's ESP rebate policy, applicants who wish to receive the continued ESP benefit must reapply every 6 months and are encouraged to apply between the 1st and 15th of the month to receive benefits in the following month. Applications made between the 15th and 30/31st day of the month will benefit in the subsequent month. It is doubtful whether the City has the capacity to process these applications with this speed, but this is the City's official stance on the matter.

FREE WATER AND ELECTRICITY

Resident who qualify for an ESP benefit will also be able to obtain a certain allocation of free water and electricity to their households.

Subject to an applicant being scored against the COJ's poverty index (0-100), an household may be entitled to receive up to 15kl of free water per month if they apply for an ESP.

A household receiving ESP benefits may also qualify for a 150 kWh allocation of electricity per month, again dependent on the household's level of poverty. This would reflect as a credit on accountholder's municipal invoice.

CONCLUSION

In the midst of increased tariffs and rates being imposed for the new financial year starting 1 July 2025, residents and owners who qualify for the ESP benefits are encouraged to apply for their benefits timeously to ensure that they are not unduly financially pressured by the imposition of property-based charges that they cannot afford.



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