

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

No Compensation Payment Made to JPS Customers for Guaranteed Standard Breaches

(KINGSTON, Jamaica; 2021 January 26): Customers of the Jamaica Public Service Company Limited (JPS) who are owed \$75.2 million in payments for 34,535 breaches of the Guaranteed Standards during the 2020 April – June, and 2020 July – September quarters, have not yet been compensated.

Data contained in the latest Quarterly Performance Report for the 2020 July – September period published by the Office of Utilities Regulation (OUR), show that during the third quarter of last year, JPS' compliance report on its Guaranteed Standards' performance indicated that 18,556 breaches were committed. These breaches attracted compensatory payments of approximately \$40.2 million to affected customers. No payments have however been made as JPS has advised that it is awaiting the response from the Ministry of Science, Energy and Technology (MSET) regarding its request to suspend the Guaranteed Standards because of the island being designated a disaster area due to the impact of Covid-19 since 2020 March. The Guaranteed Standards relating to Estimated bills, Reconnection and Connection to Supply accounted for the highest incidents of JPS' breaches. These standards accounted for approximately 99% of breaches and compensatory payments, respectively.

Similarly, JPS' compliance report on its Guaranteed Standards' performance for the 2020 April – June quarter indicated that 15,969 breaches were committed. This represents an increase of 22% when compared with the preceding period. These breaches attracted compensatory payments of approximately \$35 million.

JPS and the National Water Commission (NWC) reported contrasting performance against their Guaranteed Standards during the 2020 July-September period, compared to the preceding quarter. JPS saw a 16% increase in the number of breaches committed, whereas the NWC is reporting a 23% reduction in breaches when compared to the preceding quarter.

The NWC's compliance report indicates that 583 breaches were committed during this quarter, with potential compensation of approximately \$2.2 million to affected customers. Actual payments amounting to approximately \$685,000 or 32% of total potential payments, were made by way of automatic credits to the affected accounts. The remaining 68% of total potential payments not made, represented those breaches for which the required claim forms were not submitted for validation.

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The Guaranteed Standards with the highest incidents of breaches for the NWC were: Access/Service Connection, Meter Installation and Estimated Bills. These three standards represented 93% of total breaches and potential payments.

The NWC had again applied to the OUR for the suspension of five (5) of its Guaranteed Standards. This followed an approval by the OUR to suspend four (4) standards between 2020 April 1 and 2020 June 30. While the OUR remains cognizant of the ongoing adverse impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, it has been mindful that the continued suspension of the Guaranteed Standards does not benefit the NWC's customers. As such, NWC's latest request was denied, and instead, approval was given for an adjustment to the timelines for each of the five (5) specified Guaranteed Standards from 2020 November 1 – 2021 January 31 as outlined in the table below:

CODE	DESCRIPTION	PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENT	AMENDED PERFORMANCE (2020 NOV. 1 – 2021 JANUARY 31)
WGS 1	Connection to Supply	Maximum time of ten (10) working days to connect supply and install meter after establishment of contract.	Maximum time of twenty (20) working days to connect supply and install meter after establishment of contract.
WGS 7	Meter Installation	Maximum of thirty (30) working days to install meter on customer's request.	Maximum of sixty (60) working days to install meter on customer's request.
WGS 8	Meter Installation	Maximum of twenty (20) working days to verify and repair or replace meter after defect is identified by or reported to the NWC.	Maximum of forty (40) working days to verify and repair or replace meter after defect is identified by or reported to the NWC.
WGS 10(a)	Meter Reading	Maximum of two (2) consecutive estimated bills (where company has access to the meter).	Maximum of three (3) consecutive estimated bills (where company has access to the meter).
WGS 11	Reconnection after payment of overdue amount	Maximum twenty four (24) hours to restore supply.	Maximum forty eight (48) hours to restore supply.

The OUR's Quarterly Performance Report for 2020 July–September can be found on its website: www.our.org.jm. -30-

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