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Penang to end water bill payments at post offices from January



GEORGE TOWN: People in Penang will no longer be able to pay their water bills at post offices from January and through three other third-party collection agencies from March.

Penang Water Supply Corporation (PBAPP) chief executive officer Datuk K. Pathmanathan said payments at Pos Malaysia would cease from Jan 2, while Paylink and MobilityOne would stop accepting payments from March 3 and payments through MBF would end from March 31.

He said this followed a directive from the National Water Services Commission (SPAN) disallowing third-party agencies from charging bill collection commissions to water consumers.

"In February, SPAN told PBAPP that Penang water consumers cannot be directly charged for bill collection commissions.

"Despite several appeals throughout the year, PBAPP was told on Nov 25 that the appeal had been rejected," he said today.

Pathmanathan said SPAN had ruled that PBAPP must absorb the commission costs if it wished to continue allowing water bill collections through third parties that charge such fees.

"In the interest of payment convenience, PBAPP has worked with these agencies for many years.

"However, PBAPP does not earn a single sen from third-party bill collection. These commissions were charged independently and directly to consumers."

In 2024, the four agencies handled 836,444 Penang water bill transactions, accounting for 27 per cent of the total transactions recorded by PBAPP.

Commission charges range from 50 sen to 90 sen per transaction.

Pathmanathan said Penang's average domestic water tariff of 86 sen per cubic metre for the first 35 cubic metres of monthly consumption was the lowest in Malaysia.

"From July 1, 2026, this rate will be reviewed to 93 sen per cubic metre, making it the second lowest in the country.

"In 2024, PBAPP's total domestic water subsidy amounted to RM80 million."

He said PBAPP could not further subsidise domestic water bills without affecting funding needed for urgent new water supply projects, adding that there was also uncertainty over whether third-party agencies might increase their commission charges in the future.

He said consumers would continue to have 14 commission-free payment options from 2026, including platforms like the myPBA mobile app, myPBA portal, JomPay, Maybank2U and EasyPay.

Consumers can also make cashless payments at PBAPP Customer Care Centres, including in Balik Pulau, Bayan Baru, Bukit Mertajam, Jawi, Kepala Batas, Komtar, Prai, Rifle Range and Taman Selat.

"For those who prefer face-to-face transactions, PBAPP operates nine Customer Care Centres."

Pathmanathan apologised for any inconvenience caused by the discontinuation of the four payment options.

"However, as a water supply operator licensed by SPAN, PBAPP must comply with directives issued by the commission."