

# Municipal Account Dispute Guide

## DISCLAIMER:

This guide and template is for informational purposes only and does not constitute legal or financial advice. Municipal procedures, timelines, and dispute resolution mechanisms may vary between municipalities. Always confirm the correct process with your local municipal office. Bilnor Staffing Solutions accepts no liability for decisions made based on this guide or template.

## Municipal Account Dispute Guide

Managing municipal accounts can sometimes be challenging. Errors in water, electricity, rates, or refuse charges are not uncommon. This guide explains how South African residents can **dispute a municipal account** in a structured and legally compliant way.

### Step 1: Review Your Account Thoroughly

Before lodging a dispute, carefully check your municipal account for:

- Meter readings (water, electricity)
- Billing periods and dates
- Service charges, levies, or rates
- Previous payments or credits applied
- Estimated vs actual usage

**Tip:** Keep copies of all previous municipal statements and proof of payment for reference.

### Step 2: Gather Supporting Evidence

Collect documents and evidence to support your dispute:

- Meter readings or photographs of the meter
- Proof of previous payments
- Correspondence with the municipality
- Any other supporting documents, such as faulty meter reports or notices

A strong case relies on clear, verifiable evidence.

### Step 3: Contact the Municipality

- Call the **customer care or billing department** to explain the discrepancy.
- Request an official **dispute form** if required.
- Provide all supporting evidence and **note the date, time, and name** of the representative you spoke to.

#### Examples by City

- **City of Tshwane:** [customercare@tshwane.gov.za](mailto:customercare@tshwane.gov.za), 012 358 9999, or [e-Tshwane portal](#).
- **City of Johannesburg (Joburg):** [joburgconnect@joburg.org.za](mailto:joburgconnect@joburg.org.za) or fax 011 381 9377; for water billing issues, [regionbvenue@joburg.org.za](mailto:regionbvenue@joburg.org.za). **Online:** Lodge a query via the [e-Joburg portal](#).
- **City of Ekurhuleni:** Call Centre 0860 543 000 or their "Report It" page.
- **City of Cape Town:** **Online:** You can contest a bill through the [City of Cape Town website](#).

**Tip:** Many municipalities prefer disputes in writing or via email for record-keeping.

## Step 4: Submit a Formal Written Dispute

If the issue is not resolved via phone:

1. Draft a formal letter or email including:
  - Your account number and property details
  - Clear description of the disputed charges
  - Supporting evidence
  - A request for review or correction
2. Address it to the **municipal billing or accounts department**.
3. Keep a copy for your records.

**Make use of our “Formal Written Dispute Template” provided below.**

## Step 5: Follow Up

- Request a **written acknowledgment** from the municipality
- Ask for an estimated **timeline for resolution**
- Keep a record of all communication, including emails, letters, and notes from phone calls

## Step 6: Escalate if Needed

If the dispute is not resolved:

- **Lodge a complaint with the Municipal Manager** of your local municipality
- **Contact the provincial [Department of Cooperative Governance & Traditional Affairs \(COGTA\)](#)** if the municipality fails to respond
- Consider approaching the **[Municipal Ombud / Public Protector](#)** if the issue remains unresolved but make sure that you have exhausted all available avenues before contacting them.

## Step 7: Continue Paying Undisputed Charges

- While disputing specific items, continue to pay any **non-disputed portions** of your municipal account to avoid penalties, interest, or service disconnections.
- Clearly **label the disputed portion** when making partial payments, if allowed.

## Tips for a Successful Dispute

- Be **polite and professional** in all communication
- Provide **accurate and complete evidence**
- Keep detailed **records of all interactions**
- Know your **rights under the Municipal Finance Management Act (MFMA) and local municipal by-laws**

## How to Use This Municipal Account Dispute Template

1. **Fill in your personal and account details** at the top of the letter (replace all information in brackets with your own).
2. **Clearly describe the disputed charges** in the body, specifying dates, amounts, or meter readings.
3. **Attach supporting documents** such as proof of payment, meter readings, or previous correspondence.
4. **Send the letter** to the municipal billing department via email, registered post, or in person.
5. **Keep a copy** of the letter and attachments for your records.
6. **Follow up** if you do not receive an acknowledgment or resolution within the expected timeframe.

This ensures your dispute is **documented, clear, and traceable**, increasing the likelihood of a timely correction.

### Checklist for Submission

- Attach all supporting documents (meter readings, proof of payment, correspondence)
- Keep a copy of the letter for your records
- Send via email or registered post for proof of delivery

# Municipal Account Dispute Letter

**[Your Full Name]**

ID Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Property Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Account Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** [DD/MM/YYYY]

**To:**

The Municipal Manager

[Name of Municipality]

[Municipality Address]

**Subject:** Dispute of Municipal Account – Account Number [Insert Account Number]

Dear Sir / Madam,

I am writing to formally dispute charges on my municipal account referenced above for the billing period [Insert Billing Period]. Upon reviewing the account, I have identified the following discrepancies:

- [Describe the disputed item(s), e.g., “Excessive water consumption charges that do not align with my meter readings”]
- [Include any other discrepancies, e.g., estimated electricity readings, incorrect refuse collection fees, or property rates errors]

**Supporting evidence** for this dispute is attached:

1. [Proof of meter readings / photographs]
2. [Previous payments and account statements]
3. [Any correspondence with municipal staff regarding the issue]

I kindly request that your office **review the disputed charges** and **adjust my account accordingly**. I also request a **written acknowledgment of this dispute** and an **expected timeline for resolution**.

While this dispute is being resolved, I will continue to pay any undisputed amounts on my account to avoid penalties or service interruptions.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you require any further information.

Yours sincerely,

**[Your Full Name]**

Signature (if submitting in print)