

Resolution checklist

FOR

high-bill complaints

High-bill complaints can be costly to the utility and result in escalations or repeat callers. Contact center representatives should follow five steps to resolve customers' bill complaints on first contact.

1 Listen to the customer's concerns

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- Listen sympathetically
- Ask if the customer is worried about anything else on the bill
- Summarize the customer's concerns and ask if you're understanding correctly



2 See whether the meter reading was estimated or actual

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- If estimated, check it against past usage; find out why there was no actual reading, and schedule one if necessary
- If actual, check it against past usage; if you're not sure the numbers are accurate, schedule another reading



3 Assess nonseasonal effects

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- Find out whether the customer installed new appliances or has malfunctioning appliances
- Ask if the customer has more people living in their home



4 Assess seasonal effects

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- Consider the impact that extremely hot or cold weather had on the bill
- Consider whether seasonal changes in water use affected their bill, if applicable



5 Offer solutions

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- Suggest a pick-your-due-date, debt-forgiveness, budget-billing, or prepay program
- Enroll the customer in bill alerts
- Offer information about energy assistance
- Recommend an energy audit and other energy-efficiency programs
- Check if the customer could switch to a different rate to help lower energy costs
- Use smart meter data to find other customers who might be experiencing high energy use, and autoenroll them in payment arrangements

