

IGFOA Utility Billing Regional Seminar

June 27, 2019

9:00 AM – 3:30 PM

NIU-Naperville

AGENDA

8:30 – 8:50 AM **Check-in and Networking**

8:50 – 9:00 AM **Welcome and Introductions**

9:00 – 10:15 AM **Responding to Hostile and Violent Interactions**

Be prepared and organized to appropriately respond to hostile or threatening customer interactions and violent incidents. Knowing the accepted response or steps can be the difference in the outcome and keep you protected and safe.

Speakers: **Officer Sandra Martinez, City of Aurora Police Department**
Officer William Sullivan, City of Aurora Police Department

Learning Objectives: Participants completing this session will be able to:

- Learn proactive strategies to utilize during hostile/violent incidents;
- Understand how advanced preparation and organization are crucial to positive outcomes;
- Discuss reasons and statistics behind active shooters and other violent events; and
- Review currently accepted response methods for keeping you and others safe.

10:15 – 10:30 AM **Break**

10:30 – 11:15 AM **Roundtable – Best Practices in Payment Collection**

How do you turn your accounts receivable aging report into an obsolete report? Be prepared to discuss your successes, failures, and best practices for collections. Topics include how changing customer payment preferences are impacting the payment landscape, how to best implement payment plans, how various outside service firms can assist with collection efforts, and the impact of technology on collections.

Speakers:

Learning Objectives: Participants completing this session will be able to:

- Gain an understanding of the rapidly changing payment environment;
- Understand strategies you can implement to improve your customer collections; and
- Discuss pros and cons of various payment service offerings to customers.

11:15 Am – 12:00 PM **Striving for Excellence in Customer Service**

Providing great customer service is an essential part of the utility billing position. Explore how body language, active listening and organization can result in excellent customer service experiences for your customers and you!

Speakers: **Allen Altic, Assistant Finance Director, Village of Bloomingdale**
Jennifer Phillips, 311 Citizens Services Manager, City of Elgin
Beatrice Torres, Assistant Finance Director, City of Aurora

Learning Objectives: Participants completing this session will be able to:

- Explore fundamental skills necessary for excellent customer service;
- Create a more positive experience when responding to customer inquiries and complaints; and
- Develop strategies for creating high expectations for customer service in the workplace.

12:00 – 1:00 PM

Networking Lunch

1:00 – 1:45 PM

Roundtable – Best Practices in Customer Adjustments & Shutoffs

Share and deliberate with other attendees your successes, failures and best practices in fee waivers, consumption or rate adjustments, customer delinquency notifications, shutoff procedures, water reconnection procedures, and fee charges.

Speakers:

Learning Objectives: Participants completing this session will be able to:

- Learn how other communities navigate customer delinquency;
- Understand successful strategies for improving the customer adjustment and shutoff experience; and
- Discuss pros and cons of various delinquency notification and water disconnection procedures.

1:45 – 2:00 PM

Break

2:00 – 3:30 PM

Legal Aspects of Utility Billing

If you have a utility billing legal questions, we have answers. An attorney with extensive knowledge in local government Utility Billing legal affairs will address common legal concerns encountered by utility providers. Topics to be covered include bankruptcy, Red Flag Rules, tenant/landlord responsibilities, and collections.

Speaker: **James V. Ferolo, Partner, Klein, Thorpe and Jenkins, Ltd.**

Learning Objectives: Participants completing this session will be able to:

- Avoid legal pitfalls;
- Avoid getting in the middle of tenant/landlord disputes;
- Explore the legal opportunities available to improve collection efforts;
- Understand methods to improve policies, procedures and ordinances as it relates to utility billing and collection;
- Understand responsibilities under the Red Flag Rules
- Learn about common legal issues encountered during the utility billing process, including but not limited to bankruptcy, collection, tenant/landlord rights, and utility account holder identity verification and protection

3:30 PM

Closing Remarks