2026/
2027



CITY OF JOHANNESBURG GROUP FINANCE

e-CLEARANCE AND PROPERTY TRANSFER

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What Property Owners and Conveyancers Need to Know



1. Purpose and Use of this Draft

This document consolidates customer-facing questions and proposed responses on the City of Johannesburg e-Clearance and property transfer process. It is intended for technical verification by the responsible Clearance Unit before publication or campaign use.

Important: Operational details that may change, or where current City webpages and older published material are not fully aligned, are expressly marked for confirmation. The final public version should only be released after technical sign-off.

2. e-Clearance and Property Transfer FAQs

1. What is the e-Clearance system?

The City of Johannesburg's e-Clearance system is an online facility supporting the municipal clearance process associated with property transfers. It allows transferring attorneys to manage and track aspects of the clearance certificate process electronically.

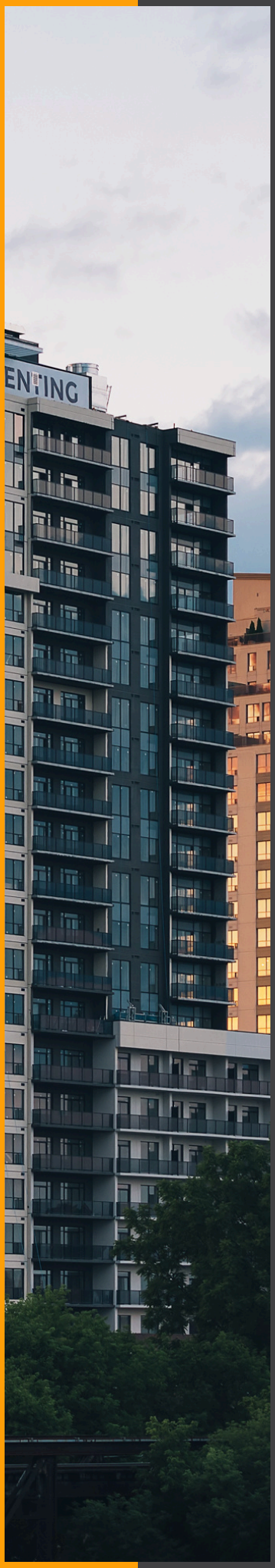
A municipal Clearance Certificate is required before a property transfer can be registered at the Deeds Office.

2.Why is a Clearance Certificate required when selling a property?

A Clearance Certificate forms part of the legal property-transfer process. It provides the municipal confirmation required for registration of transfer after the applicable clearance requirements have been satisfied. Property owners should therefore address municipal account problems as early as possible when they decide to sell.

3. Who applies for the Clearance Certificate?

The appointed conveyancing attorney lodges the clearance application with the City on behalf of the parties involved in the property transfer. The eClearance portal allows the conveyancers to track and trace the progress on the application and to give informed feedback on the application’s status.



4. Can conveyancers or attorneys use the e-Clearance system?

Yes. The City's e-Clearance platform is intended for transferring attorneys and individuals who want to manage and track the clearance process. A transfering attorney requires instruction from the Banks who holds the bond or who have approved the home loan of the purchaser. All the relevant property deals will accompany this instruction.

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5. How does a conveyancer apply?

The appointed conveyancer must register for and use the City's prescribed e-Clearance process and provide the required property, seller, purchaser and conveyancer information. Applications must be complete and accurate. Incomplete information, unresolved municipal account queries or discrepancies relating to the property may delay processing.

6. What documents are required?

The required documentation/information are the property details (erf number, portion, sectional title unit number, the Suburb and extension) South-African Identification documents/Passports of both parties (seller and purchaser) and the signed Offer to Purchase.

7. How long does an e-Clearance application take?

Online applications are issued immediately unless queries are identified and manual applications are processed within five working days without queries, if queries are identified in the application process (both online and manual) this could take up to 30 days as the Municipal Entities must first resolve the relevant queries.



8. What are clearance figures?

Clearance figures is a summary of arrear and current debt of the City's monthly municipal statement. This includes all service charges, levies, rates and taxes, water, electricity, sanitation, refuse removal and interest.

9. Why are future municipal charges included in the clearance figures?

Property transfers do not necessarily take place immediately after the application is submitted. The City's policy provides for an estimation of future charges for four months from the date the clearance figures are issued. The City's e-Clearance information similarly describes a 120-day forward projection for basic municipal services.

10. How long are clearance figures valid?

Customers and conveyancers should refer to the payment and validity requirements reflected on the clearance figures or payment schedule issued for the particular application. The City's policy states that the clearance process must be repeated where the clearance amounts are not paid timeously.

11. What happens if the clearance figures expire or are not paid timeously?

Where clearance amounts/figures are not paid within the applicable period, the clearance-figure application process must be repeated. Updated amounts will then be calculated, which can delay transfer. Conveyancers should monitor the applicable dates and arrange payment timeously.

12. How are clearance figures paid?

The City's approved Credit Control and Debt Collection Policy state that payment of clearance figures must may be made by cash or EFT from the trust account of the conveyancing attorney registering the transfer, with additional clearance time required for other payment methods.

13. What happens after the clearance amount has been paid?

Once the required payment has been received, cleared and correctly allocated, the City can proceed with issuing the Clearance Certificate, subject to all applicable requirements being satisfied.



Current City public guidance states that the certificate may be issued within 24 hours of payment.

14. How long is a Clearance Certificate valid?
The City's current Clearance Certificates page states that a Clearance Certificate is valid for 60 days from the date of issue. If transfer is delayed beyond that period, the conveyancer must reapply.
Certificates are valid for 60 days from date of issuance.

15. Can a Clearance Certificate be obtained if the municipal account is in arrears?
Outstanding municipal debt must be dealt with as part of the clearance process. The City calculates the applicable clearance amount in accordance with the relevant legislation and municipal requirements. Customers should not assume that entering into an ordinary payment arrangement automatically satisfies the requirements for a Clearance Certificate.

16. What happens to debt older than the statutory clearance period?
The City's published information explains that clearance figures are dealt with in accordance with section 118 of the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000. Historical debt falling outside the amount required for the statutory clearance certificate does not automatically disappear because the property has been transferred. Any remaining debt for which the seller remains legally liable may continue to be recoverable by the City.

17. Does obtaining a Clearance Certificate mean that all historical municipal debt has been written off?
No. A Clearance Certificate should not be interpreted as a general debt write-off. The clearance process determines what must be dealt with for purposes of issuing the certificate and facilitating transfer. Remaining municipal debt for which the previous customer remains liable may still be pursued in accordance with applicable legislation and City policy.

18. What should a customer with arrears do before selling a property?
Customers intending to sell should review their municipal account as early as possible. They should identify and resolve billing queries, estimated or disputed readings, incorrect property or account information, unexplained charges and outstanding municipal debt, and retain reference numbers for all queries lodged.



19. Can an ordinary payment arrangement be used instead of paying the clearance amount?

A normal municipal payment arrangement should not automatically be assumed to satisfy the requirements for issuing a Clearance Certificate. Clearance is a specific statutory process associated with property transfer.

Payment arrangements are not excepted for the payment of certificates, an arrangement can be entered into after the clearance figures are paid.

20. How can a conveyancer track an application?

The e-Clearance platform is designed to enable registered users to manage and track the clearance certificate process. The relevant application or reference details should be retained and quoted whenever the conveyancer follows up with the City.

21. Is a reference number issued?

The City's clearance application process makes provision for an application reference number. Conveyancers should retain this reference and use it in correspondence and follow-ups relating to the application.

22. Can the reference number be used to check the status of an application?

Yes. The relevant reference details should be quoted when tracking or following up on an application. Providing the correct reference assists the City in identifying the application and reduces the risk of duplicate enquiries. The e-Clearance platform stores all applications made by an attorney and this enables them to track the application.

23. What happens if the clearance payment has been made but is not reflecting?

The conveyancer should first confirm that the payment was successfully processed, that the correct amount and payment reference were used, and that sufficient time has been allowed for the payment to clear and be allocated. Proof of payment should be retained. If the payment still does not reflect, the matter should be referred to the City with the clearance application reference, municipal account number and proof of payment so that the payment can be traced.



24. What happens if additional municipal charges arise after clearance figures have been issued?

The clearance calculation includes projected municipal charges during the transfer process. However, the municipal account still requires proper management and finalisation. The seller should continue monitoring the account until transfer has been registered and the relevant account has been finalised. Remaining amounts for which the seller is legally liable do not automatically disappear because a-Clearance Certificate has been issued.

25. What can cause an e-Clearance application to be delayed?

Delays may arise from outstanding account queries, municipal arrears, The online platform has mandatory fields that must be completed by the conveyancer, this is automatically validated against the City's SAP-ISU Billing system. This avoids incorrect details being submitted.

26. Can an e-Clearance application be rejected or returned?

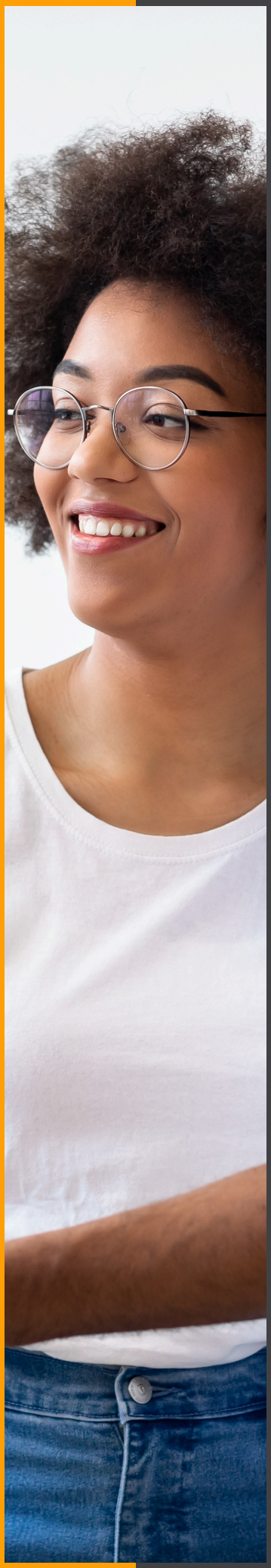
No. Information submitted electronically is validated to ensure that only the relevant property is being applied for.

27. What should a conveyancer do if the property information on the City's system is incorrect?

The discrepancy should be raised with the City for investigation and correction as early as possible. Supporting information should identify the property and explain the discrepancy. Depending on the issue, the matter may need to be referred to Billing, Property Rates units. The query reference number should be retained for follow-up.

28. Can a property owner apply directly for a Clearance Certificate?

For purposes of transferring a property, the City's published process states that the appointed conveyancing attorney must apply for the Clearance Certificate.. Individuals must follow up with the conveyancer that is dealing with the matter.



29. What happens if I disagree with the clearance amount?

A query should be lodged with the City where the customer or conveyancer believes that the clearance amount is incorrect. The query should identify the disputed amount and include supporting documentation where applicable.

Once the query is resolved, the application can be resubmitted or processed accordingly. Customers should retain the query reference number.

30. Do I still need to pay my normal municipal account while my property is being transferred?

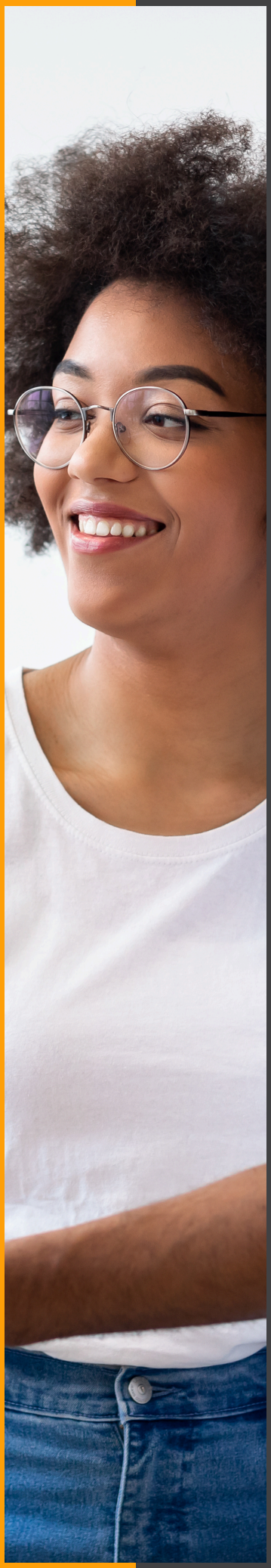
Customers should continue managing their municipal obligations during the transfer process and should not simply stop paying because clearance figures have been requested. The property remains subject to municipal charges until the relevant transfer and account-finalisation processes have been completed.

31. What happens to my municipal account after the property has been transferred?

The seller must ensure that the relevant municipal services and account are properly finalised. The City's published process requires the seller, or tenant where applicable, to complete the cancellation of consumer agreement process for water and electricity and to deal with any deposit or refund requirements.

32. What happens if there is a credit balance after the account is finalised?

Where an account has been finalised and legitimately reflects a credit balance, the customer may qualify for a refund in accordance with the City's refund processes and requirements. City policy allows arrears on other accounts of the customer to be set off against a credit balance before a refund is made.



33. Who can customers contact regarding clearance matters?

General City account and clearance-related queries can be logged through Joburg Connect on 0860 JOBURG / 0860 562 874 or joburgconnect@joburg.org.za. Customers should have their municipal account number and existing query/reference number available.

34. Can customers visit a Regional Customer Service Centre for clearance-related matters?

The City's current Customer Service Information lists clearance applications among services offered at Customer Service Centres. The Customer Service Centre can trace and update clients on the status of the applications.

3. Important Advice to Property Owners
Planning to sell your property?

Do not wait for the transfer process before checking your municipal account.

- Check your municipal account early.
- Resolve billing, meter and consumption queries.
- Address outstanding municipal debt.
- Ensure property and ownership information is correct.
- Keep all query and application reference numbers.
- Appoint a conveyancer and provide required information promptly.
- Continue monitoring the municipal account until transfer and account finalisation are completed.

Resolve early. Apply correctly. Track your application. Keep your reference number.

Contact Details

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