



Residential Consumer Care Policy

This policy is designed to meet the requirements of the Electricity Authority's Consumer Care Obligations. We will provide you with a copy of these guidelines when you sign up with us however they are also freely available here <https://www.ea.govt.nz/your-power/consumer-care-obligations/>



Residential Consumer Care Policy

Purpose and Commitment

Electricity is essential to the wellbeing of all households. As your electricity retailer, we are committed to:

- Treating all customers with respect, fairness, and care.
- Communicating clearly and accessibly.
- Working constructively with customers who face payment difficulties, with disconnection as a last resort.
- Supporting vulnerable and medically dependent consumers to ensure their safety and wellbeing.
- Ensure you have access to the data for your electricity consumption.
- Provide access to support when you need assistance.

Communication Standards

We will:

- Use plain language and avoid unnecessary jargon.
- Offer multiple communication channels (phone, email and online).
- Adapt our communications to customer needs, including accessibility options.
- Provide the ability for you to nominate a support person or alternate contact person if you wish. We will keep track of this information and communicate with them as needed.

Information and Transparency

We will provide clear, upfront information about:

- Our available pricing plans and how to choose the most suitable plan.
 - Fees, bonds, and conditional discounts.
 - How to access your electricity consumption data.
- We will publish this policy, and related resources, in the Consumer Care section of our website, alongside links to support agencies, financial mentoring services, and the Utilities Disputes scheme.

Helping Customers Manage Their Accounts

- We will contact you at least once a year to confirm your details, share this policy, and remind you that you can request consumption data.
- Invoices will use actual meter readings (whenever practicable) and clearly outline charges, due dates, and overdue amounts.
- Prepay customers will be notified when their balance falls below two days of typical usage.

Supporting Customers in Payment Difficulty

If you are experiencing or anticipate difficulties paying your bill, we will:

- Use best endeavours to engage with you early.
- Offer payment support plans tailored to your circumstances.
- Provide information on energy efficiency and available support agencies.
- Pause debt collection if you are working with a support agency and allow additional time where reasonable.

If you're struggling to keep up with your bill payments we can, with your permission, connect you with support agencies, who will help you with things like paying your bill. The following organisations may also be able to help with financial assistance and/or free budgeting advice:

Social agency assistance: You may be able to get extra assistance from Work and Income or another social agency. You can contact Work and Income on 0800 559 009, or jump online at www.workandincome.govt.nz

Budgeting advice: You may want to get some budgeting advice if you're finding it difficult to pay your bill. This friendly, helpful service is available for free from Money Talks. You can contact the financial helpline on 0800 345 123 or SMS on 4209, or visit online at www.moneytalks.co.nz



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Disconnection and Reconnection

Disconnection will only ever be a last resort and only after:

- At least five contact attempts and two written disconnection notices.
- Confirming no medically dependent consumers reside at the property.
- Offering and attempting to agree on a payment support plan.

We will never disconnect:

- For debts unrelated to electricity supply.
- While there is an unresolved complaint in progress with Utilities Disputes.
- On Fridays, weekends, public holidays, or during severe weather events.

Reconnection will occur as soon as practicable once issues are resolved, and immediately if disconnection was in error or affected a medically dependent consumer.

Medically Dependent Consumers

Customers can apply to be recorded as medically dependent if electricity is essential for critical medical support.

- We will advise medically dependent consumers to have an emergency response plan in case of outages.
- Medically dependent consumers will never be disconnected for non-payment.
- We will coordinate with distributors and other industry participants to ensure their needs are recognised.

- Provide the ability for you to nominate a support person or alternate contact person if you wish. We will keep track of this information and communicate with them as needed.

Information and Transparency

We will provide clear, upfront information about:

- Our available pricing plans and how to choose the most suitable plan.
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Fees, Bonds, and Discounts

- All fees will be cost-reflective, reasonable, and transparent.
- Conditional discounts (such as prompt payment discounts) will only reflect genuine savings.
- Bonds, if charged, will be reasonable, never exceed one billing cycle, and refunded after 12 months of on-time payments.

Continuous Improvement

We will regularly review this policy, including through customer feedback, complaints analysis, and industry updates, to ensure it remains fair, effective, and compliant with regulatory requirements.

Support and Contact Information

If you need help, contact our customer support team.

Email: support@aoteaenergy.com
Phone: +64 027 934 4439

Utilities Disputes is available, free of charge

Website: www.udl.co.nz
Phone: 0800 22 33 40