



Energy & Water  
Ombudsman NSW  
Free, fair and independent

# Experiencing family violence? Help is available.



**If you or someone you know is experiencing family violence, there are rules in place so you can receive safe and flexible assistance from your energy provider.**

There are rules that set out the assistance energy providers must offer customers impacted by family violence. The requirements apply to a wide range of circumstances, including residential and small business customers, and open and closed accounts. The rules cover family relationships, by blood or marriage as well as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander kinship rules and relationships with carers.

Telling anyone personal information can be confronting. Your retailer is not allowed to ask for proof that you have experienced a family violence situation and must do its best to help.

All energy retailers must have a family violence policy published on their website and many have an option that allows you to quickly close your computer screen, if required. The policy explains how the retailer will identify and assist you.

If you choose to tell a retailer about your circumstances or provide information that might indicate you're experiencing family violence, your retailer must make sure their staff are able to identify, understand and discuss it appropriately with you. Your retailer will:

- make your account easy to identify. This means you won't have to repeat your circumstances and will usually deal with the same team
- keep your information private and will not give it to anyone without your permission, including joint account holders or someone you may have previously given permission to
- recognise that your circumstances may cause payment difficulties and talk to you about how they can help
- record the best way to contact you and only use this method, or offer options if your preferred method is not possible
- consider how debt recovery will impact you if you have an amount owing on your account, and whether anyone else is responsible for the debt
- provide information on other support services that might be able to help you, in a safe way
- consider how disconnection will impact you if you are at risk of disconnection, and whether you are the only person responsible for the debt
- consider your safety and your current circumstances.

## Embedded networks

The rules for customers living in embedded networks can vary. If your retailer is not able to help you, please contact us.

## Water

Some water providers offer additional assistance and have family violence policies. Your water provider can work with you to keep your water on, make a payment arrangement and look at any financial assistance they might be able to offer.

## If you don't get the help you need, make a complaint or enquiry

<b>Freecall</b>	1800 246 545* Mon – Fri, 9am – 5pm
<b>Freepost</b>	Reply Paid 86550, Sydney South NSW 1234
<b>Interpreter</b>	131 450
<b>TTY/Voice</b>	133 677
<b>Online</b>	ewon.com.au
<b>In person</b>	Level 11, 133 Castlereagh St, Sydney

\* If you're calling from a mobile phone, let us know and we'll call you back.

## Other sources of help

Service	Phone	Website
<b>Utilities and services</b>		
<b>Telecommunication Industry Ombudsman</b> Complaints about telephone and internet services.	1800 062 058	<a href="http://tio.com.au">tio.com.au</a>
<b>Australian Financial Complaints Authority</b> Financial complaints such as credit, insurance, banking, investment and superannuation.	1800 931 678	<a href="http://afca.org.au">afca.org.au</a>
<b>NSW Fair Trading</b> Complaints relating to landlords.	13 32 20	<a href="http://fairtrading.nsw.gov.au">fairtrading.nsw.gov.au</a>
<b>Tenants Union NSW</b> Legal advice and information for tenants.	1800 251 101 (Mon 10am-1pm / Thu 2-5pm) Or call your local office for longer opening hours, details available on the website.	<a href="http://tenants.org.au">tenants.org.au</a>
<b>Support services</b>		
<b>1800 RESPECT</b> National counselling helpline, information and support 24/7.	1800 737 732 (1800 RESPECT)	<a href="http://1800respect.org.au">1800respect.org.au</a>
<b>Domestic Violence Line</b> 24/7 crisis counselling and referral service for woman including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and women from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse backgrounds.	1800 65 64 63	<a href="http://speakout.dcj.nsw.gov.au">speakout.dcj.nsw.gov.au</a>
<b>Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service</b> The peak body representing 29 individual services across NSW supporting women and their children who are experiencing domestic violence.	1800 938 227	<a href="http://wdvcasnsw.org.au">wdvcasnsw.org.au</a>
<b>NSW Rape Crisis Centre</b> 24/7 telephone and online crisis counselling relating to sexual assault.	1800 424 017	<a href="http://nswrapecrisis.com.au">nswrapecrisis.com.au</a>
<b>Men's Referral Service</b> Counselling, information and referral service for men looking to change their behaviour.	1300 766 491	<a href="http://ntvmrs.org.au">ntvmrs.org.au</a>
<b>Beyond Blue</b> 24/7 information, referral and support for people experiencing mental health issues.	1300 224 636	<a href="http://beyondblue.org.au">beyondblue.org.au</a>
<b>MensLineAustralia</b> Support for men with family and relationship issues.	1300 78 99 78	<a href="http://mensline.org.au">mensline.org.au</a>
<b>Aboriginal Legal Service</b> Culturally specific legal assistance for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander victims/survivors of family violence.	1800 733 233	<a href="http://alsnswact.org.au">alsnswact.org.au</a>
<b>National Debt Helpline</b> General information about debt and access to financial counsellors.	1800 007 007	<a href="http://ndh.org.au">ndh.org.au</a>
<b>Lifeline</b> 24/7 crisis support service for anyone experiencing a personal crisis.	13 11 14	<a href="http://lifeline.org.au">lifeline.org.au</a>
<b>Elder Abuse Help Line</b> Support services for people who experience or witness the abuse of an older person.	1300 651 192	<a href="http://eapu.com.au">eapu.com.au</a>
<b>13 Yarn</b> Crisis support line for mob who are feeling overwhelmed or having difficulty coping.	13 92 76	<a href="http://13yarn.org.au">13yarn.org.au</a>