

Family Violence Policy

Purpose

The purpose of Simply Energy's Family Violence Policy is to outline how Victorian residential customers affected by family violence can get safe, supportive and flexible assistance to ensure their energy remains connected and that their personal and financial security are managed effectively.

Who is affected by family violence?

Every year, millions of Australians experience family violence. People who experience family violence can be from any socio-economic background, religion, education level, age, gender or sexual orientation.

The impact of family violence is far-reaching, causing social isolation, unemployment, homelessness, financial destitution and serious injury.

What is family violence

Family violence takes many forms. Examples can include, but are not limited to;

physical violence

- physically hurting or restraining
- sleep or food deprivation or forced feeding

sexual assault or sexually abusive behaviour

- unwanted touching or rape
- unwanted exposure to pornography
- sexual jokes or using sexually degrading insults

verbal abuse

- putting the person down and calling them names
- shifting the responsibility for abusive behaviour onto the victim

emotional or psychological abuse

- making the person feel afraid by using looks, actions and gestures
- making light of the abuse or saying the abuse didn't happen

stalking

- visiting at work in inappropriate ways
- sending repeated upsetting phone calls/emails/texts

financial abuse

- stopping the person from getting or keeping a job

- making the person ask for money or restricting their access to money, for example by managing any allowance they get

spiritual or cultural abuse

- preventing the person from practising their religion or ridiculing their religious beliefs or practices
- misusing spiritual or religious beliefs and practices to justify other types of abuse and violence

abuse or threatened abuse of pets

- threatening to harm or kill pets
- injuring, killing or abducting pets

damage to property or belongings

- threatening damage to property
- breaking, hiding or damaging belongings

technology assisted abuse

- using technology, such as smart phones, social media and apps to threaten, isolate, abuse, track or stalk victim
- using technology to control what the victim does, who they see and talk to, what they read

serious neglect where there is a relationship of dependence

- withholding access to the person's money or belongings
- not allowing services to help someone

behaviour by a person using violence that causes a child to be exposed to the effects of family and domestic violence

- using children to send messages
- using visitation rights to harass the victim or threatening to take children away

Get in touch

We understand that experiencing these challenges is difficult and know that every customer's experience is personal and sensitive.

To ensure we can provide the support you need, we do encourage all customers to contact us on 13 88 08, info@simplyenergy.com.au or via our webchat as soon as possible.

Our Customer Advocacy Team

Our Customer Advocacy Team are a specialist team, trained to provide you with support while you are experiencing or have experienced family violence. Some matters the team are trained in are as follows;

- How to apply our family violence policy, including financial impact that may require payment assistance options
- How to identify signs of family violence and how to engage effectively with a customer affected by family violence.
- Assist you in accessing specialist family violence services

NOTE: Once contact has been established and the account security settings have been implemented, we will assign you to a direct employee who will manage your account, end to end (until such matters are closed). This includes any notifications that may be required, such as invoicing, outbound etc. This approach will avoid you having to repeat disclosing instances of family violence.

Account security

We understand the importance of account security, which is why we have developed a process that ensures we safeguard your account and avoid any risk of the perpetrator gaining further information that may place you in harm's way. Once we have been made aware that your account is affected by family violence we will obtain and deliver;

- Pin identifier, that only allows the affected customer to access the account
- Preferred method of communication
- Alternative options of communication if preferred method is not practicable
- Compliance with this agreed method, including when giving effect to other parts of the Energy Retail Code and;
- Record keeping of these arrangements to improve transparency and accountability around the agreements we make with you.

Debt management

Once we have been made aware that you are affected by family violence, we will continue to provide support through our Customer Advocacy team by offering flexible payment arrangements that are aligned to our Hardship Policy, where you will receive your entitlements.

Please refer to our Hardship Policies by state;

[Victoria](#)

[New South Wales, South Australia, Queensland and the ACT](#)

[Western Australia](#)

Documentation

In the event that there is a request for a debt waiver, we may ask for documentation that would reasonably be required by us for the purposes of considering debt management and recovery. A debt waiver request may come directly from yourself or a support worker.

Some documents may include;

- Statutory declaration
- Police report
- Support service

Note: Simply Energy does not perform any debt waivers for an active account.

Additional Support Services

Below is a list of free support services available to you:

- 1800 RESPECT
- The Orange Door - <https://orangedoor.vic.gov.au/what-is-the-orange-door#heading3>
- Financial Counselling Australia - 1800 007 007 or <https://www.financialcounsellingaustralia.org.au/Corporate/Find-a-Counsellor>

Privacy

We will comply with all relevant privacy legislation in relation to your personal information. You can find a summary of our privacy policy on our website simplyenergy.com.au/privacy. If you have any questions, you can contact our Privacy Officer at privacy@simplyenergy.com.au

Policy Review

This Family Violence Policy is effective from 1 January 2020 and will be formally reviewed at least once every 2 years. This formal review does not preclude us from reviewing the policy at more regular intervals, should this be necessary. Following a review, an updated policy will be placed on the Simply Energy website simplyenergy.com.au

Note: The Energy Retail Code, which sets out retailers' obligations and minimum customer entitlements, takes precedence over this policy in all circumstances.

Feedback & Complaints

Simply Energy always takes feedback and complaints seriously. If a customer wishes to submit feedback or lodge a complaint this can be done by:

- Contacting our Customer Care team on 13 88 08
- emailing info@simplyenergy.com.au
- writing to us at PO Box 210, Balwyn, VIC 3103

For full information on Simply Energy's Dispute Resolutions please visit <https://www.simplyenergy.com.au/help-and-support/general-information/dispute-resolution>

If you are not satisfied with the outcome and would like to pursue the matter further, you may contact the Energy and Water Ombudsman Victoria.

Translation services

For TTY assistance, please use one of the following 24-hour relay call numbers:

- TTY/voice calls: 133 677
- Speak & Listen: 1300 555 727
- SMS relay: 0423 677 767