

Family Violence Policy

Background

This policy sets out the standards of conduct undertaken by Alinta Energy in assisting any customers affected by family violence.

We recognise that family violence is a serious and prevalent occurrence in Australian society. We aim to provide customers affected with entitlements to safe, supportive and flexible assistance.

We are committed to managing customers who are experiencing family violence with empathy, sensitivity and with the utmost consideration to customers' account security and individual financial circumstances.

Definitions

Family violence can be defined as violent, threatening or abusive behaviour by a person against a member of the person's family or household.

Family violence may include, but is not limited to:

- (a) physical
- (b) sexual
- (c) emotional or psychological
- (d) verbal
- (e) spiritual or cultural
- (f) economic or financial

Our Training

We provide appropriate training to all our staff who:

- (a) engage with customers
- (b) are managers of staff who engage with customers, and who are responsible for how this engagement occurs
- (c) are responsible for the development of products, processes and systems

Our training considers the nature of consequences of family violence, how to identify the signs of family violence, how to engage effectively and appropriately with affected customers and how to apply this policy.

We review and update our training regularly and as required.

Your Account Security & Privacy

We are committed to the security of your personal information and will engage with you to determine your preferred methods of communication.

We will also work with you to provide you with flexible and alternative options of communication if the preferred method is not practicable.

You can ask a support person to contact us, such as:

- (a) a financial counsellor
- (b) someone who helps you manage your energy bills
- (c) any one else you deem appropriate



We need your permission to talk to your support person, so if you wish to have them act on your behalf on an ongoing basis, you will need to provide us with a written 'Letter of Authority' that confirms this. We will then work with them in line with any instructions that you have provided.

If you wish to have our 'Letter of Authority' form sent to you via email or in the post, please contact us on **1300 55 77 41** or email us at **CustomerAdvocacyCommunications@alintaenergy.com.au**.

Once completed, please return this form to us.

Customer Service

Due to the complex and sensitive nature of family violence, we will manage your circumstances via a specialised team. This seeks to ensure that you are provided with the best assistance possible to suit you, provides safe and secure engagement and limits the need for repeated disclosure of circumstances.

We will not request documentary evidence from you for you to access family violence assistance.

Managing Debt and Payment Difficulty

We understand that financial difficulty can affect anyone. We believe in treating our customers with respect, empathy and in a non-judgemental manner.

We also understand that your circumstances are unique and will work with you to identify the type of assistance that best suits your situation.

Our specialised team will be available to discuss all applicable options to suit your individual circumstances in relation to managing debt and payment difficulty.

Our options are designed to assist you, whether you are in arrears or not. We can assist you to manage your ongoing cost of energy or to regain control of your energy debt by providing you with specific support and relief.

We monitor accounts which are overdue as part of our normal business operations, which helps us identify who may need some extra support. Whilst this assists in the early identification of potential need of assistance, we encourage you to contact us as soon as possible so we can help you understand what we can do to support your situation.

There's lots of ways we can help, including:

- (a) Arranging more time for you to pay.
- (b) Setting up instalment payment plans or alternative payment options such as Centrepay and direct debit.
- (c) Referring you to external organisations that will be able to provide you with financial counselling.
- (d) Assisting you with obtaining access to relevant Government utility assistance programs.
- (e) Providing practical energy efficiency advice on how best to reduce your ongoing energy usage.

Disconnection

Disconnection will only be considered as a last option and where all other opportunities to assist you have been exhausted. We don't want this to happen so please contact us as soon as you can so we can help you.



External Support Services and 24 Hour-Helplines

There are many agencies and support services that can also assist if you are experiencing family violence. Below is a list of important contacts:

Support Services	Contact Number and Information
Emergency	000
1800RESPECT The National Sexual Assault & Domestic Family Violence Counselling Service	1800 737 732 A telephone helpline, information and support service - 24/7. Also, a free advice and counselling line for professionals responding to domestic violence.
Safe Steps	1800 015 188 A family violence response service for women and children. Provide information on specific family violence support services, legal rights and accommodation options – 24/7.
Elizabeth Morgan House Aboriginal Women's Family Violence Services	03 9482 5744 Crisis accommodation and supports for Aboriginal women and spouses of Aboriginal men.
The Lookout	www.thelookout.org.au/sector-info/service-directory An online regional service directory and resources aimed at preventing and responding to family violence.
WIRE - Women's Information & Referral Exchange	1300 134 130 Provide free and confidential support, information and referrals on any issues, for Victorian women.
Lifeline	13 11 14 Lifeline is a national charity providing crisis support and suicide prevention services - 24/7.
Suicide call back service	1300 659 467 Provides professional counselling for people feeling suicidal or people worried about someone else at risk of suicide – 24/7
MensLine Australia	1300 78 99 78 MensLine Australia is a professional telephone and online support and information service for Australian men – 24/7
Kids Help Line	1800 551 800 Support and information for children up to age 25 – 24/7.
InTouch Multicultural Centre Against Family Violence	1800 755 988 Statewide provision of services, programs and responses to family violence in CALD communities.
Beyondblue	1300 224 636 Raising awareness and working towards reducing the impact of anxiety, depression and suicide. Empowering people to seek supporting.
National Disability Abuse and Neglect Hotline	1800 880 052 An Australia-wide telephone hotline for reporting abuse and neglect of people with disability – 24/7.
National Financial Counselling Service	1800 007 007 Offer free information and advocate for extreme financial circumstances – 24/7.

