

# Payment Difficulty.

## A new framework for managing energy debt.

To help households manage their energy debt, the Essential Services Commission has introduced a payment difficulty framework.

This new framework, which is now part of the Energy Retail Code in Victoria, offers people who are facing or at risk of payment difficulty three types of assistance:

1. Advice on how to better manage their debt with their energy retailer;
2. Support in paying for their on-going energy use, repaying their debt when they have missed a bill, and lowering their household energy costs; plus
3. Assurance that disconnection for non-payment of a bill will only be a last resort.

### What it means for energy customers

Customers facing payment difficulty now have clear assistance options, which can be tailored to their circumstances. As a result, customers should:

- a) avoid falling into payment difficulty (arrears) as easily;
- b) receive timely and tailored assistance from their energy retailer;
- c) better understand the cost of their energy usage, and how to lower their bills;
- d) know how to pay for their energy use in a way that helps manage their finances;
- e) understand how to repay any arrears in a timely and sustainable way;
- f) be aware of government and non-government support services they can access;
- g) be treated with respect by their energy retailer; and
- h) only be disconnected for non-payment of a bill as a last resort.



While this new payment difficulties framework provides clear options for managing energy costs and payments, it does not remove the customer's obligation to pay their energy debt.

### **Payment assistance options available to you**

Alinta Energy has a range of assistance options available to you, and can provide help and information on a broad range of services, including:

- additional time to pay;
- appropriate product offerings for your circumstances;
- flexible instalment plans;
- Government programs, grants and rebates, if applicable;
- financial counselling;
- energy audits; and
- payment options such as direct debit and Centrepay (if applicable).

Alinta Energy is committed to assisting our customers.

Full details of our payment difficulty framework are available in our Hardship policy and located at [www.alintaenergy.com.au/paymentassistance](http://www.alintaenergy.com.au/paymentassistance)

Alternatively, ask our friendly Customer Service Team to mail you a free copy.

If you are facing payment difficulties, or would like to discuss this further, please call Alinta Energy on **1300 403 202**

