



**National
Customer Code**
Knock to Stay Connected
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National Customer Code

Knock to Stay Connected

The Knock to Stay Connected Customer Code is a nationally consistent, customer-led approach aimed at keeping customers connected to their energy. Retailers, networks and community organisations have worked together to deliver information to customers on where they can get support to keep their energy on. National trials have demonstrated that up to 80% of disconnections can be avoided through this human-centered approach.

What is the Customer Code?

Energy plays a vital role in everyone's lives. It lights homes, keeps us cool and warm and powers businesses. It is important that energy is affordable, available and can meet customer and community needs now, and into the future. Energy disconnection is a last resort once the energy retailer has completed all the required steps to contact the customer and seek payment.

The purpose of this Customer Code is to help customers stay connected to their energy when times may be tough. We understand that non-payment of energy bills is overwhelmingly driven by circumstances and not by choice, that's why this initiative encourages customers to seek support through their energy retailer.

This Customer Code covers a simple knock on the door through the energy distributor or, if account holder is not there, a letter-drop for when the energy is at risk of disconnection. We will let customers know that assistance is available and encourage them to contact their energy retailer straight away.

Engaging with their energy retailer can have positive outcomes as the customer can access their range of supports along with external referral services.



What are the customer benefits?

We know that disconnection usually occurs within the context of other difficulties being experienced by a household. This initiative gives customers who are experiencing payment difficulties an opportunity to get in touch with their energy retailer and get assistance when disconnection is imminent and energy is front of mind.

The knock at the door or leave behind information lets customers know about services through the community or their energy retailer that they may not be aware of. Keeping verbal and written communication plain and easy to understand helps accessibility.

Having a customer team member who is understanding, respectful and ready to help should enable open and effective conversations for customers. In this way, we are looking to build ongoing engagement and help customers with sustainable ongoing support.

What are the principles of this Customer Code?

- **Customer centricity** – Put customers at the centre of our business and make decisions with them to help drive better outcomes in circumstances where they are at risk of disconnection for not being able to pay energy bills. We will treat each customer with dignity, respect their privacy and behave in a non-judgmental way to help empower the customer to sustainably manage their energy
- **Safety** – Ensure safety for customers as well as for our crew when visiting homes or small business premises and ensure our crew have been provided appropriate and consistent training. Customer teams consider each customer's needs by creating an environment where they are comfortable sharing with us, and we can work collaboratively to build sustainable outcomes
- **Sustainable support** – Provide relevant and accessible information through the energy retailer including any available assistance programs or entitlements. We will ensure that the customer is treated fairly and offered programs to help pay for their energy in a way that is sustainable, and may also offer advice on reducing energy usage as well as offering ongoing support and referral to external services when needed
- **Responsiveness** – Apply available energy support programs in a way that is driven by individual needs, capacity to pay and preferences. We will be responsive and take prompt, appropriate action if a customer makes an enquiry or complaint to ensure our continuous improvement.



How does joining this Customer Code help my business?

Energy retailers, networks and suppliers are welcome to be part of this Customer Code.

Signing up is voluntary. By working together, we can support more customers to engage with their energy retailer and find ways to manage their energy costs more sustainably.

You can:

- Differentiate your business by publicly committing to help keep customers connected
- Be part of a caring community that goes the extra mile to help our customers
- Improve your reputation and standing
- Demonstrate practically to stakeholders that you are working in the customer's best interest
- Strive for industry best practice within your business
- Improve customer retention
- Improve customer relations
- Improve the 'customer ecosystem', helping to reduce customers switching to new retailers with accumulated debts from a previous disconnection
- Reduce expenditure by helping customers sustainably manage their energy.

Collaborating with other signatories

Another benefit of signing up to the Customer Code is collaborating with signatories to help resolve customer issues and industry roadblocks to streamline operations. Working together means you can:

- Collaborate with other signatories to drive outcomes that benefit customers
- Network with other signatories to develop better processes to keep customers able to pay their energy costs
- Be part of a cohort who are aligned in their values and have a voice to call out actions which go against the principles of the Customer Code
- Join regular industry roundtables and guest speaker information sessions
- Work with the independent administrator who runs the day to-day activities and with the Customer Code Council that includes energy distributors, energy retailers and customer representatives.

How do I join or find out more?

Visit the [Knock to Stay Connected page](#) or contact the Code Administrator, Anne Whitehouse, at awhitehouse@salesassured.com.au.

