



Fact Sheet

Contact us

Energy
Ombudsman
Tasmania

1800 001 170

Level 6
86 Collins St
Hobart

Are you having difficulty paying electricity bills?

If you are having difficulty paying an electricity bill, if your bill is overdue, or you have received a reminder notice, you should contact your energy retailer immediately to discuss your payment options.

- ▣ Contact your energy retailer immediately if you are having difficulty paying your bill
- ▣ Payment plans may be able to be arranged to assist you to make your payments

Don't ignore the notice.

You can either ask for extra time to pay, a formal payment plan, or to be assessed for the hardship program.

Payment plans

A payment plan is a formal payment arrangement between you and your energy retailer. If you keep to an agreed plan, you'll avoid late payment fees and won't have your supply disconnected. Your energy retailer should discuss a suitable payment plan with you based on:

- your capacity to pay
- your energy usage
- the amount owing on your account.

At a minimum your payment plan should cover your usage. You can ask your provider to calculate this for you.

If you fail to make a payment, the payment plan may be cancelled and your energy retailer could take collection action, including disconnecting your supply. So if you can't afford to make a payment, or your payment plan is no longer affordable, call your energy retailer before the due date to discuss other options.

If your energy retailer is not willing to offer you an affordable payment plan, you can call us for advice or to make a complaint.



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Your energy retailer is required to offer a minimum of two payment plans within a 12 month period and to provide longer term help through a hardship program.

If you don't keep up with payments twice within the 12 months, your energy retailer is not required to offer you further plans.

You should not agree to a payment plan that you cannot pay. If you can't afford the standard payment plan amount, ask to speak to your provider's hardship team.



Hardship plan

Hardship programs are designed to help you if you are facing ongoing financial hardship, protect you from disconnection and manage arrears on your account. All energy retailers are required to offer hardship programs. For example, Aurora Energy's hardship program is called the YES Program. If you're on a YES Program, Aurora Energy will review your contract and talk to you about any discounts, incentives or other help they can offer, such as a home energy audit.

Aurora Energy may ask you to:

- agree to a payment plan to cover your usage
- work towards reducing your energy usage
- respond to their attempts to contact you
- participate in a regular review of your payment plan
- seek financial counselling to independently assess your ability to pay.

If you are actively participating in your energy retailer's customer hardship program, your retailer cannot disconnect you.

REMEMBER – Making regular payments on your account without an agreed payment plan may not protect you from collection action or disconnection.

Financial Counselling

If you are not sure how much you can afford to pay or need help negotiating a payment arrangement with your energy retailer, you can contact a financial counsellor for assistance. To find a financial counsellor in your area visit www.fcat.org.au.

Contact us



**Energy Ombudsman
Tasmania**

Call us on 1800 001 170

Email us energy.ombudsman@ombudsman.tas.gov.au

Visit us at Level 6, 86 Collins Street, Hobart

Annual Electricity Concession

The annual electricity concession provides a daily discount to eligible customers at a cents per day rate. To receive the concession, you need to provide your concession card details to your energy retailer.

Eligible cards are:

- Pensioner Concession Card (Services Australia or Veterans Affairs)
- Health Care Card
- ImmiCard (Bridging Visa E)
- Tasmanian Concession Card (issued by Department of Premier and Cabinet).

You also need to tell your energy retailer if there are any changes to your concession card, such as a new expiry date. Your energy retailer is not required to backdate your concession if you have not provided your correct concession card details. If you haven't received your rebate due to an error by your energy retailer, contact them to get it fixed or contact us.

Do you need more information?

- ▣ Contact us on 1800 001 170.
- ▣ Visit our website www.energyombudsman.tas.gov.au.
- ▣ Contact your energy retailer directly.