



Family Violence Policy

Version 1

ERM Power Limited

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1. Introduction

1.1 Introduction

The purpose of this Family Violence Policy (the Policy) is to formalise and document ERM Power Limited's (ERM Power's) approach to ensuring that it, and its staff, comply with all applicable laws and regulation as they relate to the family violence obligations under the Victorian Retail Code.

ERM Power's ongoing Victorian retail licence is contingent on the company successfully implementing and maintaining an effective Family Violence Policy meeting the minimum standards of conduct relating to:

- training
- account security
- customer service
- debt management
- external support
- evidence.

This Policy is intended to focus on compliance outcomes and not necessarily process, however some attention to developing processes will be required.

The Policy is supported by a broader compliance management framework developed by Regulatory Affairs, which incorporates:

- procedures for monitoring and reporting on performance indicator and compliance data
- compliance obligations registers
- compliance reference materials
- training manuals and a training program

ERM Power is committed to assisting customers affected by family violence and who are finding it difficult to manage their energy usage bills.

1.2 Ongoing review

ERM Power will review this Policy every two years to ensure that it is operating effectively and whether any changes are required to the Policy.

2. Family Violence Definition

Family violence meaning has been defined in Victorian Energy Retail Code given in section 5 of the Family Violence Protection Act 2008 (Vic)

- (a) behaviour by a person towards a family member of that person if that behaviour—
- (i) is physically or sexually abusive; or
 - (ii) is emotionally or psychologically abusive; or
 - (iii) is economically abusive; or
 - (iv) is threatening; or

(v) is coercive; or

(vi) in any other way controls or dominates the family member and causes that family member to feel fear for the safety or wellbeing of that family member or another person or

(b) behaviour by a person that causes a child to hear or witness, or otherwise be exposed to the effects of, behaviour referred to above.

In the context of ERM Power, family violence support is extended to an affected customer who is a former or current small electricity business who is identified as being affected by family violence.

3. Policy

3.1 Purpose

This policy outlines our approach to ensure that all customers regardless of their circumstances will not face judgement and will be treated with understanding and respect at all times.

ERM Power recognises the need for staff to be sensitive to any customer experiencing violence or abuse in their family life. We are aware of the impact family violence may have on the ability of some small business customers to pay their electricity usage bills and will assist those experiencing financial difficulties as a result of family violence.

ERM Power will provide information and advice about appropriate community services and support e.g. counselling, legal, police.

We invite our customers experiencing family violence to contact us so we can assist them as early as possible to find a workable solution that is fair and equitable whilst ensuring their privacy in accordance with the Family Violence Protection Act.

3.2 Customers

Customers have the right to expect and receive confidential and respectful conversations and be assured that all personal information will be kept confidential in line with relevant legislation. We encourage any small business customer having difficulty paying their electricity usage bills as a result of family violence to contact us to have a confidential conversation on ways in which we may assist them.

We will:

- assess customers on a case by case basis based on a meaningful two-way communication.
- ensure contact information and personal details of customers experiencing family violence is secure including from joint account holders.
- will agree on a safe method of communication with affected customers.
- ensure processes are in place so customers avoid having to repeatedly disclose their experience of family violence.
- work with affected customers on the best way to manage payment difficulties.
- take into account the impact of debt recovery on affected customers
- provide affected customers with information on the availability of external family violence support services on our website

- commit to the continual review of our policy. This policy is scheduled to be reviewed no later than every two years from the date of Board approval.

3.3 Training

All customer service staff and their managers will be trained in awareness of family violence and where a customer is identified as experiencing family violence the relevant staff will handle their requests sensitively and confidentially and in accordance with this policy.

Training will cover:

- The nature and consequences of family violence
- ERM's Family Violence Policy; and
- How to identify the affected customers; and
- How to engage effectively and appropriately with a customer affected by family violence.

Policy Information

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