

Sanctuary Energy Customer Hardship Assistance Program

1. Sanctuary Energy's Customer Hardship Assistance Program

Sanctuary Energy understands that our customer's circumstances change leading to financial difficulties. In these times we are committed to working with you to provide support and assistance to enable you to manage your electricity usage and make suitable payment arrangements on your electricity accounts.

2. Our commitment to you, our customer

This Customer Hardship Assistance Program outlines how we will respond quickly and sensitively to our customers who are experiencing genuine financial hardship, and to be fair in the terms of arrangements we agree. We will ask you during calls relating to any late payments if you are experiencing a difficult financial period and offer our assistance at the earliest possible time.

3. Why Sanctuary Energy cannot simply write off your debt?

Sanctuary Energy must pay for the electricity you have used and the companies that have brought the electricity to your premises. These bills constitute around 90% of your electricity bill which we must still pay on time.

4. What is a hardship customer?

Sanctuary Energy defines a "hardship customer" as a customer willing to pay their electricity account by the due date; however you do not have the financial capacity to do so within the normal payment timeframe.

Our program outlines two levels of hardship, detailed over the following pages:

A. short-term

B. long-term

A. Short-term hardship customers

Hardship customers under a short-term arrangement are customers that have experienced an unexpected change in living conditions such as sickness, sudden loss or reduction of income, unexpected costs from a death in the family or other temporary financial difficulties. For customers in these circumstances, Sanctuary Energy offers some flexibility and temporary assistance in the form of payment plans or an extension to the due date of your account.

All customers with Sanctuary Energy, including customers under the short-term arrangement will have access to the following:

i. Flexible Payment Options

We have a range of flexible payment options to suit your needs including:

- cash deposit / transfer at a Commonwealth branch or agency
- electronic funds transfer
- cheque
- Bpay
- Direct Debit from bank account or credit card

ii. Reminder Call

We will use our best endeavours to contact you by telephone to remind you of overdue accounts.

iii. Reminder Notices

We will send you reminder notices if your payments are overdue where we have not been able to contact you by telephone, or if you have not made account payments as agreed.

iv. Further Reminders

If we have had no response to our reminder notices we will use our best endeavours to contact you regarding the unpaid account. If Sanctuary Energy identifies that you may benefit from the hardship program we will discuss these options with you.

v. Contact us

We understand that your circumstances may change and therefore if you would like an extension of time to pay your account or believe you may be eligible for the hardship program, we encourage you to contact us to discuss the options available to you, preferably before your account due date.

vi. Alternative payment options

If you are experiencing short-term financial difficulties, to assist you we will offer you the following options within our credit policy guidelines:

- payment plans
- extension of time to pay
- pre-pay your future electricity accounts

vii. Pro-active Account Management

Where we have identified that you have had problems paying invoices on a number of occasions, Sanctuary Energy will recommend that you go onto a pre-payment plan, paying a little each fortnight or month to reduce your quarterly electricity bills.

viii. Government and Charity Payment Assistance Programs

State & Territory Governments have in place schemes to help with energy costs on a one-off short term basis. Please contact us for further details of these schemes, and the eligibility criteria.

B. Long-term hardship customers

Hardship customers under longer term financial hardship may require further assistance to pay their accounts. Customers in this category may have unexpected illnesses that are ongoing such as a disability and/or have low, fixed incomes and need longer, ongoing arrangements with Sanctuary Energy.

In addition to arrangements set out in the *Short-term hardship customers* section, for customers with genuine long-term financial difficulties we will offer you the following options to assist our customers:

i. Energy efficiency

We are committed to assisting you reduce your electricity bills and therefore we will provide you with verbal and written correspondence to help you make informed decisions about ways you can save electricity.

ii. Energy Audits

Sanctuary Energy recommends completing Home Energy Audits for all customers, so that you can identify ways to reduce your electricity bills by reducing energy you consume in your premises.

iii. Late payment fees

We will waive our late payment fees for our eligible hardship customers if you contact us prior to the due date and make payment arrangements to ensure that you do not have increased debts.

iv. Disconnection

While you are actively participating in our Customer Hardship Assistance Program we will not request that your supply be disconnected.

v. Reconnection

We will arrange for your electricity supply to be reconnected in accordance with the timeframes in your State or Territory's energy laws if you are a genuine hardship customer and agree to actively participate in our Customer Hardship Assistance Program.

vi. Government and Charity Payment Assistance Programs

State & Territory Governments have in place schemes to help with energy costs on a one-off short term basis. Please contact us for further details of these schemes, and the eligibility criteria.

vii. Confidential counselling services

For customers participating in our Customer Hardship Assistance Program, we will refer you to free and confidential financial counselling services that can assist you further with your finances.

viii. Our team

Our understanding team will listen to your needs and will arrange for you to be contacted in a timely manner to minimise any undue stress whilst we ensure we can provide the most appropriate level of assistance for your needs.

ix. Improvement of our hardship program

We are committed to providing you with the highest level of service and therefore we will regularly review and tailor the program to our customers' needs.

5. Information about our Customer Hardship Assistance Program

If you have any questions or you would like further information on the Customer Hardship Assistance Program, please contact Sanctuary Energy's Customer Service Centre by:

- Telephone **1800 109 099**
- Facsimile (02) 4351 5533
- Email info@sanctuaryenergy.com.au
- Letter to: Sanctuary Energy
Att: Customer Relations Manager
PO Box 3378
Tuggerah NSW 2259

6. Interpreter service

Should you need an interpreter service we provide an interpreter service for you or alternatively, we will arrange an interpreter when we contact you to provide assistance.

若你需要口譯員，請致電 **131 450** 聯絡翻譯和口譯服務署 (TIS National)，要求他們致電 1800 109 099 聯絡 Sanctuary Energy。我們的工作時間是 Mon-Fri 9:00am-5:00pm。

Αν χρειάζεστε διερμηνέα, παρακαλείστε να τηλεφωνήσετε στην Υπηρεσία Μετάφρασης και Διερμηνείας (Εθνική Υπηρεσία TIS) στο **131 450** και ζητήστε να τηλεφωνήσουν Sanctuary Energy στο 1800 109 099. Οι ώρες λειτουργίας μας είναι Mon-Fri 9:00am to 5:00pm.

Si necesita intérprete, llame al Servicio de Traducción e Interpretación - Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National) al **131 450** y pídale que llamen a Sanctuary Energy al 1800 109 099. Nuestro horario de atención es Mon-Fri 9:00am to 5:00pm.

Nếu cần thông ngôn viên, xin quý vị gọi cho Dịch Vụ Thông Phiên Dịch (TIS Toàn Quốc) qua số **131 450** và nhờ họ gọi cho Sanctuary Energy qua số 1800 109 099. Giờ làm việc của chúng tôi là Mon-Fri 9:00am to 5:00pm.

إذا كنتم بحاجة إلى مترجم، الرجاء الاتصال بخدمة الترجمة الخطية والشفهية (TIS National) على الرقم **131 450**، والطلب منهم الاتصال بوكالتكم على الرقم 1800 109 099. أوقات عملنا هي Mon-Fri, 9:00am to 5:00pm.