



MTA Energy

FAMILY VIOLENCE POLICY (VIC)

2024

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1. INTRODUCTION

MTA Energy Pty Ltd (MTA Energy) is committed to providing a safe and supportive environment for customers who may be experiencing family violence. As a responsible retailer regulated by the Victorian Essential Services Commission (ESC), we recognize the importance of addressing family violence and ensuring that affected customers receive appropriate support and assistance.

Note: MTA Energy provides services exclusively to commercial and industrial customers. This policy refers solely to small business customers consuming less than 40 MWh per annum. MTA Energy does not supply services to residential customers.

1.1 Definition of Family Violence

MTA Energy understands that family violence can occur to any person and may include behaviours that are physically, sexually, emotionally, psychologically and/or economically abusive, threatening, coercive, or in any other way controlling or causing fear to a family member.

Refer to section 5 of the *Family Violence Protection Act 2008 (VIC)* for a full definition of family violence.

1.2 Purpose

The purpose of this Family Violence Policy is to outline the procedures and support mechanisms available to small business customers who may be experiencing family violence in accessing and maintaining essential services in accordance with the ESC Energy Retail Code of Practice. MTA Energy is committed to providing safe, supportive, and flexible assistance to our customers when managing any personal and/or financial security.

2. APPLICATION

2.1 MTA Staff Training and Awareness

MTA Energy will provide training and resources to any staff members or persons acting on the company's behalf (e.g. agents or contractors) to increase awareness and understanding of family violence issues.

All company staff will receive general training to ensure an understanding of this policy. This includes a basic knowledge of the nature and consequences of family violence, identifying affected customers and responding in an appropriate manner to ensure support and protection for any customer experiencing family violence.

Any customer-facing staff will receive more frequent and thorough training on identifying family violence and implementing the appropriate strategies to ensure customer safety and support.

Updates and variations to this policy will be communicated to all staff as soon as possible.

2.2 Support Options Available to MTA Customers Experiencing Family Violence

- I. **Confidentiality/Security:** MTA Energy recognizes the importance of maintaining confidentiality and privacy for customers experiencing family violence. MTA Energy will not disclose or provide access to confidential information regarding an affected customer to any other person without the consent of the affected customer. This refers to any information that may be used to identify or locate an affected customer, including any information that may disclose:
 - Location
 - Contact details
 - Financial information
 - Personal circumstances

Any personal information or data pertaining to a customer experiencing family violence will be treated as highly sensitive and will only be accessible to staff members directly involved with the case.

- II. **Customer Service:** MTA Energy will take the appropriate steps to identify a safe method of communication with any affected customer as selected by the customer or work to find a suitable alternative if the customer's preferred method of communication is not practicable. A singular point of contact management system will be established with the affected customer to ensure that a customer only has to explain their situation once. Our staff will give affected customers as much time as necessary to consider options and make decisions regarding their personal circumstances.
- III. **Flexible Payment Arrangements:** We will provide the option of flexible payment arrangements to manage any affected customer's energy bills. Such arrangements will be tailored to the customer's individual circumstances and may include deferring payments, extending due dates, or establishing payment plans (in accordance with MTA's Hardship Policy).
- IV. **Disconnection Safeguards:** We will implement safeguards to prevent the disconnection of services for customers experiencing family violence, where appropriate. This may include placing a hold on disconnection notices or temporarily suspending disconnection actions until the customer's safety and well-being are ensured.
- V. **Referral to Support Services:** Where appropriate, we will endeavour to provide information and referrals to appropriate support services for customers experiencing family violence, including local shelters, counselling services, legal assistance, and community resources. If

there is a perceived threat of immediate risk or harm to any customer, we will escalate the matter to the appropriate authorities.

3. OUR COMMITMENT TO EMPLOYEES

MTA Energy strives to maintain a supportive and safe work environment for all employees who may be experiencing family violence. We encourage any employee affected by family violence in any way to seek assistance and support from management. Our senior staff members will treat any disclosure of information with the utmost discretion and confidential assistance will be provided in a manner suitable to the situation and circumstances of the individual.

We understand that the effects of family violence may cause significant and lasting consequences and may affect performance or their capacity to work. We are committed to providing flexible working arrangements for any one of our staff experiencing family violence.

We also acknowledge that any staff dealing with family violence customers may be deeply affected by these interactions. As such, we will monitor and regularly review any staff dealing directly with family violence customers to ensure lasting employee wellbeing. This will be performed in a confidential manner (for both staff and customer) to ensure the appropriate standard of privacy is upheld at all times. Relevant support and care will be provided or referred if required by any member of staff.

4. COMPLIANCE WITH LEGAL OBLIGATIONS

MTA Energy is committed to complying with all relevant laws and regulations pertaining to family violence, including the Family Violence Protection Act 2008 (Victoria). We will work collaboratively with government agencies, regulatory bodies, and community organizations to fulfill our legal obligations and support affected customers.

Applicable Laws and Regulations Include:

- Family Violence Protection Act 2008
- Stalking Intervention Orders Act 2008
- Occupational Health and Safety Act
- Fair Work Act 2009
- Equal Opportunity Act 1995
- Victorian Equal Opportunity Act 2010
- Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission
- Act 1996
- Information Privacy Act 2000
- Victorian Charter of Human Rights
- National Energy Retail Rules
- Energy Retail Code of Practice (Victoria)

5. EXTERNAL SUPPORT RESOURCES

Assistance	Agency	Hours of Operation	Contact Information
Emergency	Police/Fire/Ambulance	24/7	000
Personal Crisis	Lifeline	24/7	13 11 14
Counselling and Support	1800 RESPECT	24/7	1800 737 732 www.1800respect.org.au
Family Violence Support, Accommodation and Housing Referral	Safe Steps	24/7	1800 015 188
Support for kids (5-25 yrs)	Kids Helpline	24/7	1800 55 1800
Children in danger	Child Protection	5pm-9am M-F 24/7 - w/ends	13 12 78
Support for Indigenous Australians	Aboriginal Family Domestic Violence Hotline	24/7	1800 019 123
Adult male victims	Victims of Crime Helpline	8am-11pm	1800 819 817
Counselling for men (victims or perpetrators)	No To Violence Men's Referral Service	8am-9pm M-F 10am-6pm S-S	
Sexual assault support	Sexual Assault Crisis Line	24/7	1800 806 292
Financial and debt counselling	National Debt Helpline	9am-5pm M-F	1800 007 007

6. REVIEW AND IMPROVEMENT

This Family Violence Policy will be reviewed in accordance with any regulatory changes or otherwise every two years to ensure its effectiveness and relevance. Prior to approval, all staff will be invited to review and provide feedback. Following approval, the amended policy will be communicated to staff members and stakeholders, and appropriate training will be provided as necessary.

For further information or assistance regarding our Family Violence Policy, please contact:

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