

# Financial Hardship Policy

(ACT, NSW, QLD & SA)

EnergyAustralia  
EnergyAssist



**Easy English**



**EnergyAustralia**  
LIGHT THE WAY



## Hard words

This book has some hard words.

The first time we write a hard word

- the word is in **blue**
- we write what the hard word means.

## You can get help with this book



You can get someone to help you

- read this book
- know what this book is about

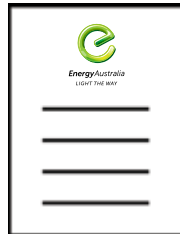


- find more information.



## About this book

This book is written by Energy Australia.



This book is about our  
**financial hardship policy.**



Our financial hardship policy

- helps us follow laws and rules
- is for customers who find it hard to pay their energy bills
- says how we can help our customers
- says how we decide who needs extra help
- says what **rights** our customers have.



In this book we will call it the policy.



Rights are things everyone should

- get

- have

- do.



This policy is for customers who live in

- the Australian Capital Territory

- New South Wales

- Queensland

- South Australia.

## What is EnergyAssist?



EnergyAssist is our program for customers who find it hard to pay their energy bills.



If you find it hard to pay your energy bills

- you can tell us



- you can get an **advocate** to tell us.

An advocate could be

- a financial counsellor
- a family member or friend who helps with your energy bills.



If you want an advocate to talk to us, you **must**

- tell us over the phone

or



- send us a signed letter.

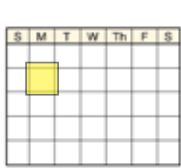
## Who can use Energy Assist



We will tell you about EnergyAssist if

- you ask us for information
- we think the program will help you
- a financial counsellor has told us about you.

To see if you can use EnergyAssist we will check things like



- if you have paid your energy bills late



- if you have **not** paid your energy bills



- if you have told us it is hard to pay your energy bills



- if your energy has been turned off because you have **not** paid your energy bills.



We can also help you if

- you have emergency assistance from the government



- you have experienced family violence

- there has been a **change in circumstances.**



A change in circumstances could include

- the death of a family member
- the loss of a job.



If you can use EnergyAssist we will tell you within 2 days.



If you **cannot** use EnergyAssist we will let you know why.

## Our staff



Our staff will

- help you



- give you information

- ask questions to see what is best for you



- **respect** you.

Respect means

- we understand that everyone is important

- we will use good manners



- we will listen to you.

We make sure our staff are trained to help you.

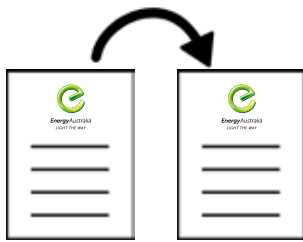


## What we will do for you



If you can use EnergyAssist we will

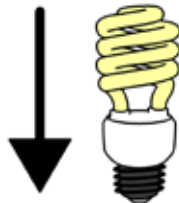
- tell you about the best energy plan we have for you



- change you to the better plan if you want to



- tell you about options that could help you pay your energy bill



- tell you how you could use less energy



- tell you about free financial counselling



- make sure your energy does **not** get turned off while we work with you.

## Different ways you can pay



If you find it hard to pay your energy bills you can talk to us about a **payment plan**.

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT

- once a week

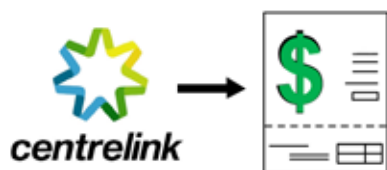
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT

- once a fortnight

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S

- once a month

- with **Centrepay**.



Centrepay is where money from your Centrelink payments goes straight to your energy bills.

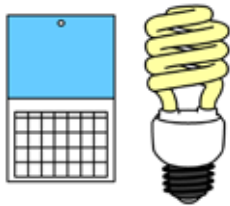
You can choose if you want to use Centrepay.

To see if you can use a payment plan we will check things like



- how much money you can pay

- how much money you owe



- how much energy we think you will use in the next year.

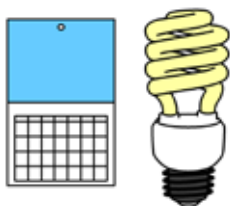


We will make sure your payment plan

- is at a price you can pay

- will work for you for a long time

- will cover how much you owe



- will cover how much energy we think you will use in the next year.

After we decide on a payment plan we will give you information about



- who you can talk to for more help

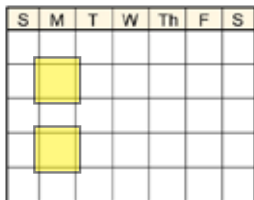


- how long your payment plan is for



- how much you will pay each time

- how many times you will need to pay



- how often you will need to pay

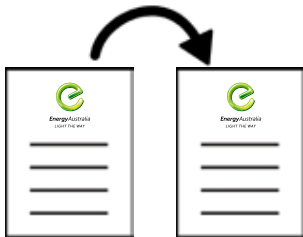
- how we decided what you will have to pay.

## If you miss a payment



If you miss a payment we will

- ask you if you need help
- remind you to make a payment
- check to see if your payment plan is still right for you



- change your payment plan if we need to.



We might stop helping you if you do **not** tell us

- that it is hard to make your payments
- that your contact details have changed.



If you have had 2 payment plans cancelled

- we do **not** have to give you another one
- we might turn off your energy.



## Fees



Sometimes we can take away some of the fees or charges you owe.



If you are our customer we will **not**

- charge fees if you pay your energy bill late



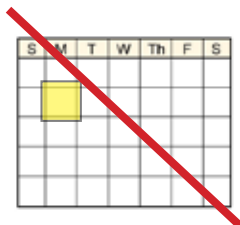
- change your plan unless you say **yes**

- make you pay a **security deposit**.



A security deposit is money you give us to keep safe in case

- you do **not** pay a bill



- you do **not** pay a bill on time.

## After your payment plan ends

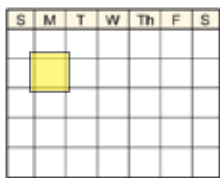


Energy Assist aims to help you to look after your energy bills yourself.



You will leave the EnergyAssist program when you can show us

- you can look after your energy bills
- you can pay your energy bills on time.



## Other ways to get help



If you find it hard to pay your energy bill you might be able to

- talk to your state government about grants



- use a concession card to get more help.

## Privacy

We will follow the law to keep your **personal information private**.



Personal information can include

- your name



- your address



- your date of birth.

Private means we will **not** tell anyone your personal information unless we have to.



# Complaints

You have the right to make a **complaint**.



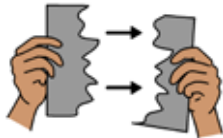
A complaint is when you

- are **not** happy

and



- tell someone why you are **not** happy.



We will try our best to fix your complaint.

If you are still **not** happy you can talk to the Energy **Ombudsman** who will look at the complaint again.

The Ombudsman

- works for the government
- listens to complaints
- makes sure public services are fair.



## More information

For more information contact  
Energy Australia



Call 1800 558 643



Website [www.energyaustralia.com.au](http://www.energyaustralia.com.au)



Email [energyassist@energyaustralia.com.au](mailto:energyassist@energyaustralia.com.au)

## If you need help to speak or listen

Contact Energy Australia through the  
National Relay Service or NRS.



Call the NRS help desk  
1800 555 660

Go to the NRS website  
[communications.gov.au/accesshub/nrs](http://communications.gov.au/accesshub/nrs)



## If you need an interpreter

Call 1300 622 718



**If you need to make a complaint**

Call 133 466

**If you need to talk to the Ombudsman**

Australian Capital Territory

Call 02 6207 1740

Website [www.acat.avt.gov.au](http://www.acat.avt.gov.au)



New South Wales

Call 1800 246 545

Website [www.ewon.com.au](http://www.ewon.com.au)



Queensland

Call 1800 662 837

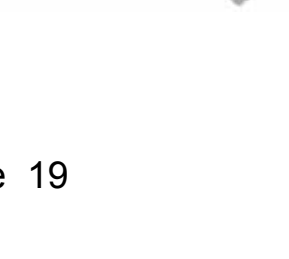
Website [www.ewoq.com.au](http://www.ewoq.com.au)



South Australia

Call 1800 665 565

Website [www.ewosa.com.au](http://www.ewosa.com.au)



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Scope's Communication and Inclusion Resource Centre wrote the Easy English version in August, 2019.

To contact Scope call 1300 472 673 or visit [www.scopeaust.org.au](http://www.scopeaust.org.au)

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EnergyAustralia Pty Ltd

ABN 99 086 014 968

Locked Bag 14060, Melbourne, Vic, 8001

[www.energyaustralia.com.au](http://www.energyaustralia.com.au)

Effective date: 3 September 2019

