



**COMMUNITY
POWER**



**Code of Practice on
Vulnerable Customers**

Vulnerable Customers

At *Community Power* we value all our customers and where possible, aim to tailor our service to provide extra help and support to those customers who need it. This code of practice outlines the systems and services that *Community Power* have in place to protect and assist customers registered on our special and priority service registers. It also explains how you can register on our special and priority service registers.

Definition of a Vulnerable Customer

Irish Energy Regulation (as cited by CRU) defines a vulnerable customer as a household customer who is:

- * **critically dependent on electrically powered equipment**, which shall include but is not limited to life protecting devices, assistive technologies to support independent living and medical equipment, or
- * **particularly vulnerable to disconnection during winter months** (1st November – 31st March) for reasons of advanced age or physical, sensory, intellectual or mental health.

CRU consider advancing age to mean a person of pensionable age (66 years or above) living alone or with another vulnerable person or with minors.

Domestic customers who fulfil the criteria above are welcome to register on our *Community Power* Special Services and or Priority Services register. Once registered you will receive eligible support services both from *Community Power* and ESNB.

How do I register on the Special Service or Priority Service Registers?

- * Please contact us to request a **Special Services/Priority Service Register Application Form**. You can also download an application form from our website at www.CommunityPower.ie
- * We will email or post you the relevant service application form.
- * Please complete and sign the form and return it to us by email or post, free of charge.
- * We may ask you for evidence of your eligibility to register such as medical documentation or personal identification.
- * Once we have a returned, signed Service Application Form from you, we will add you to our Special/ Priority services registers.
- * If you are registered on our Priority or Special Services Register, we will pass your details to ESB Networks Ireland for inclusion on the industry register.

It is critical that we receive a signed form from you in order to confirm full registration on our Special/ Priority Service register/s. If you provide verbal notification of vulnerability but fail to complete or return completed and signed registration forms, *Community Power* will make repeated attempts to contact you to receive a returned form.



Our Priority and Special Service Registers

Managing our priority and special service registers is extremely important to *Community Power*. We update and engage with our customers on a regular basis ensuring that our registers are accurate and aligned with ESB Networks. We understand that life circumstances change and consider it important to remind all our customers about this code of practice on an annual basis so that they can contact us to update their details if required. You can expect to receive information about our vulnerable customer COP including our priority and special registers, both at sign up and on annual basis on your bill.

We will ensure that customers registered on either our special or priority service registers avail of the most economic tariffs available to them for their preferred payment and billing method.

Special Services Register

Our Special Services Register provides protection to customers who would be particularly vulnerable to disconnection during winter months. If registered on the Special Services Register you will not be disconnected during the Winter months for non-payment of bills. Once registered, we will notify ESB Networks for inclusion on the industry register. Customers are eligible to register for the following reasons:

- * Deaf or Hard of Hearing
- * Customer aged 66 years or over who lives alone and/or lives with minors or others aged 66 or over
- * Blind or Partially Sighted
- * Mobility Difficulties
- * Language Difficulties
- * Speech Impaired
- * Learning Difficulties
- * Mental Health issues
- * Dexterity Difficulties



Customers who register on our Special Services Register can avail of the following services below:

Special Communication Services

1. Large Print Communications

If you are registered on our Special Service Register for visual impairment, we are happy to provide certain information to you in large print. The layout will differ to that of the standard documentation.

2. Talking Bills and Telephonic Communication

If you are registered on our Special Service Register for being blind or with visual impairment, we are happy to provide a talking bill service. This involves us calling you when a bill is due for issue with the details of the bill. The paper bill would be sent to a nominated contact to ensure a durable form of communication. We will also facilitate other methods of communication and billing if requested by you such as braille or text messaging/video communication services, free of charge.

You are also able to avail of the talking service for communication of the following information: bills and statements, our customer charter and codes of practice, changes to your tariff/prices/services, our terms and conditions, outage notifications, leaflets required by CRU, inserts to customers required by the CRU.

3. Online/Offline Written Communication

If you are registered on our special service register for hearing impairment or speech impairment, we would be happy to engage through email or letters.

4. Nominated Contact/Third Party Representation.

We support you electing a nominated contact such as a friend, relative or agency operating on your behalf, if you require additional support due to hearing or visual impairment or any other communication need. All that is required is a call from the account holder and third party to confirm their agreement. Please ring us on +353 67 56005 to complete the registration.

Priority Services Register

If you or someone in your home relies on home medical equipment, we would like you to register on our Priority Services Register. Once registered we will notify ESB Networks for inclusion on the industry register. This will ensure ESB Networks are able to identify customers who would be most vulnerable during an electricity supply disruption.

Once registered on the Priority Services Register, you will not be disconnected due to non-payment of bills. If you are experiencing difficulty paying your bills, we are happy to engage with any third parties (on your request) such as registered charities.

You are eligible to register on our Priority Service Register if you are critically dependent on electricity and use either Life Supporting or Non-Life Supporting medical equipment. Please note, we may ask for proof of eligibility to register on the Priority Service Register in the form of medical certs and other relevant evidence.



Life Supporting equipment includes:

- * Home dialysis
- * Oxygen concentrator
- * Peg tube feeding pump
- * Personal suction machine
- * Total parental nutrition machine
- * Ventilator

Non-Life Supporting equipment includes:

- * Electric hoist
- * Electric pressure relieving mattress
- * Household lift
- * Nebuliser
- * Other electrically powered life supporting equipment that you specify on the Priority Services registration form.

Our commitment

Our aim is always to provide the best possible service to you. If, however, we do not meet any of the above commitments within this code, you are entitled to apply for compensation under the terms of our customer charter, setting out why you believe we have not followed this code.

Where we agree that you are entitled to receive a Charter payment, the amount will be credited to your electricity account within one billing period.

If you are no longer an account holder with *Community Power*, we will arrange an alternative method of awarding your charter payment within 10 working days.

CRU sign-off

This Code has been approved by the Commission for Regulation of Utilities (CRU) on 15.11.2019.

Data protection

Community Power respects the rights of our customers under GDPR legislation. Please view our privacy policy on our website www.CommunityPower.ie. We will only ever use personal information for marketing purposes in accordance with this Code and in alignment with your marketing preferences.

Contact us

Please contact us at the below details if you have any query or concern in relation to our code of practice.

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