

# Family and Domestic Violence (Customer) Policy – Internal (v1.0)

## VERSION HISTORY

Rev No.	Date	Revision Description	Approval
1.0	4 October 2022	First Version of Policy v1.0	Chief Executive Officer, 5 October 2022

## AUTHORISATIONS

<b>Prepared By</b>	Lead Compliance Advisor	July 2022
<b>Reviewed by:</b>	Residential Squad Lead - YES	July 2022
	Revenue Protection Partner	July 2022
	Residential Operations Manager	August 2022
<b>Endorsed by:</b>	Chief Operating Officer	10 August 2022
	Company Secretary/General Counsel	24 August 2022
<b>Approved by:</b>	Chief Executive Officer	5 October 2022
<b>Next review due:</b>	3 yearly	October 2026

## CONTACT FOR ENQUIRIES

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## 1. Introduction

This internal policy addresses approvals and decision making relating to the day to day management of customers experiencing Family and Domestic Violence that impacts their ability to manage their energy affordability.

Management of these customers is an integral part of energy retailer activities. This policy is written to ensure that Aurora Energy:

- protects its customers' welfare;
- provides a valued and customer focussed experience;
- protects its reputation;
- meets its regulatory requirements; and
- meets its financial obligations.

## 2. Scope

This policy covers all employees and contractors working at Aurora Energy.

## 3. Purpose

This Family and Domestic Violence (Customer) Policy is an internal Aurora Energy governance document for the management and support of customers experiencing Domestic Violence, including Family Violence and Elder Abuse resulting in energy affordability issues. The approach and directives outlined in this document highlight the manner in which Aurora Energy's obligation to these customers is directed and managed. Management implements this through subsidiary procedures, processes and supporting infrastructure.

Complementary to this Policy is the *Your Energy Support (YES) Program Policy*. This is the customer facing Policy that explains in clearly understood terms how Aurora Energy treats customers experiencing energy affordability issues and also meets all requirements set out in the *AER Customer Hardship Policy Guidelines* (Guidelines). In addition, Aurora Energy publishes a customer facing website that outline key information for customers who are experiencing Family or Domestic violence.

## 4. Policy

### 4.1. Support for Customers Impacted by Family and Domestic Violence

Aurora Energy prides itself on providing a specialised service to assist customers experiencing vulnerability that results in energy affordability issues. This policy has been developed to assist customers affected by Family and Domestic Violence through dedicated support from Aurora Energy's 'Your Energy Support' (YES) team.

All customers impacted by Family and Domestic Violence will be supported by:

- treating customers in a fair and responsible manner, taking into account all their circumstances;
- offered entry to the YES program or relevant payment plans;
- ensure customers are provided all relevant assistance available to them in a timely manner.
- providing clear information about the assistance Aurora Energy can provide, such as:
  - priority move in connections;
  - dedicated account management through the YES team;

- Bill Support (Fee waivers and Short term and long term Payment plans); and
- Hardship, YES program; and
- enhanced security of customer information.

#### **4.2. Referral Process**

Aurora Energy understands that customers will not always contact Aurora Energy directly for support but will seek support from external support services, Aurora Energy has put in place the following referral processes to ensure all contact points are captured:

- customer self-identification;
- internal Aurora Energy identification; and
- External Referral program for support services such as Salvation Army, Colony 47 etc.

#### **4.3. Identification of Family and Domestic Violence**

All initial customer claims of Family and Domestic Violence are taken on face value with no evidence required to be provided for support.

#### **4.4. Retrospective Support**

Retrospective support will be offered to customers for up to 6 months from the time they identified as experiencing Family and Domestic Violence.

#### **4.5. Staff Training**

Ongoing training and development for frontline staff to ensure appropriate skills are provided and embedded, including:

- how to identify customers experiencing Family and Domestic Violence;
- treatment of immediate risk scenarios;
- annual professional development (PD) training such as internal and external training exercises for frontline staff; and
- all training content reviewed annually (or as legislation or regulatory changes are released) and communicated to relevant staff in the annual PD training.

#### **4.6. External Website**

Customer facing website that provides the following key information to customers:

- **How Family and Domestic Violence may present in its many forms such as but not limited to:**
  - Emotional abuse
  - Psychological abuse
  - Sexual abuse
  - Elder abuse
  - Threatening or coercive behaviour
  - Financial Abuse
  - Stalking
  - Physical violence
- **Authorised agent risks**, including what access Authorised agents have, so victims of Family and Domestic violence are aware what they need to do should they need to remove them.

- **How we support our customers:**
  - information about the dedicated YES program including phone and online contact;
  - how we handle customers account information; and
  - security of personal information in particular phone numbers and addresses
- **External support contacts including:**

Support Service	Contact Number
Immediate threat	000
National 1800 RESPECT line	1800 737 732
Tasmanian DHHS Family Violence Counselling and Support Service	1800 608 122
The Elder Abuse Hotline	1800 441 196
Legal Aid Commission Tasmania	1300 366 611
Women's Legal Services Tasmania	(03) 6231 9466
Mensline Australia	1300 789 978
Huon Domestic Violence Service (HDVS)	(03) 6264 2222
Yemaya women's support service (Launceston)	(03) 6334 0305
Anglicare - Relationship Abuse of an Intimate Nature (RAIN)	1800 243 232

- An external facing version of the Family and Domestic (Customer) Violence Policy accessible to all customers.
- External Facing website has a quick close function and cache/browser history clearing.

## 5. Key Stakeholder Responsibilities

### 5.1 Chief Executive Officer

- (i) Approves changes to the Family and Domestic Violence (Customer) Policy.

### 5.2 Chief Customer Officer

- (i) Reviews and recommends changes of this policy to the Chief Executive Officer.
- (ii) Resolves the Family and Domestic Violence (Customer) Policy ambiguities.
- (iii) Reports breaches of the Family and Domestic Violence (Customer) Policy to the Chief Executive Officer.
- (iv) Approves amounts in accordance with the delegations set out in Section 5.6.1 of the Hardship Policy.

### 5.3 Customer Operations Manager

- (i) Reports breaches of the Family and Domestic Violence (Customer) Policy to the Chief Customer Officer and Lead Compliance Advisor.
- (ii) Approves amounts in accordance with the delegations set out in Section 5.6.1 of the Hardship Policy.
- (iii) Approves amounts in accordance with the delegations set out in Section 5.6.2 of the Hardship Policy.

### 5.4 Revenue Protection Lead, YES Squad Lead

- (i) Reports breaches of the Family and Domestic Violence (Customer) Policy to the Customer Operations Manager.

- (ii) Approves amounts in accordance with the delegations set out in Section 5.6.1 of the Hardship Policy.
- (iii) Ensures staff members comply with the requirements of the Family and Domestic Violence (Customer) Policy.
- (iv) Is responsible for the provision of information to support Regulatory Reporting for Family and Domestic Violence (Customer).
- (v) Is Responsible for providing information in relation to the reporting of payments and debt waivers.
- (vi) Provides training to the Credit team regarding the Hardship Policy and any amendments that may occur.

## **5.5 Team Member**

- (i) Read and understand the Family and Domestic Violence (Customer) Policy.
- (ii) Comply with the requirements of the Policy.
- (iii) Undertake the required training.

## **6. Non-compliance with this Policy**

All non-compliances with this Policy will be recorded in accordance with the Compliance Policy.

Any non-compliances that are risk-rated as Severe or Major will be escalated to the Board or a relevant Board Committee through Aurora Energy's non-compliance reporting processes.

Non-compliances that are risk-rated as Moderate or Minor will be reported to the Chief Executive Officer.

Incidents of wilful non-compliance with this Policy are considered to be serious and will be dealt with in accordance with Aurora Energy's normal performance management process, which may include dismissal.

A person who fails to report a known Breach of Policy (technical or non-technical) is also in Breach of the *Family and Domestic Violence (Customer) Policy*

## **7. Related Policies**

- Your Energy Support (YES) Program Policy.
- Aurora Energy's Code of Conduct.
- Hardship Policy
- Compliance Policy.
- Discipline Policy.
- Dispute Resolution Policy.
- Public Interest Disclosure Act Procedures (Whistleblowers).
- Small Customer Credit Risk Policy.
- Life Support Policy.
- Bad Debt Write Off Policy.

## **8. Precedence**

In the event of a conflict between policies, the following precedence will apply in this order to the extent of any inconsistency:

- Board approved Policy.
- CEO approved Policy.
- Business approved Procedure.
- Business approved Work Practice.

## **9. Policy Approval and Review**

The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for approving this Policy at least every 3 years, or earlier if a significant change occurs that may impact the policy.

## **10. Whistleblowing Statement**

In extreme circumstances an individual may be concerned that a serious breach of this policy has occurred but considers that it would be personally damaging to pursue it through normal channels. In such circumstances the individual should refer to Aurora Energy's Public Interest Disclosure Policy for information about how to report such a concern and to whom.

Aurora Energy's Public Interest Disclosure Policy ('whistleblower' policy) is based on the Public Interest Disclosures Act 2002. This Policy is available on both Aurora Energy's external website and its internal intranet.

Delegated Officers under the Public Interest Disclosure Policy will do all that is possible and practicable to ensure the identity of the individual and the identity of the person who is the subject of the disclosure are kept confidential.

## **11. Publication**

This Policy contains commercially sensitive information and is approved only for publication on Aurora Energy's intranet.

**Approved by the Chief Executive Officer on 5 October 2022.**



**Chief Executive Officer**