

What can I do if I have a complaint about my energy service?

Who to contact if you have a complaint

When to contact your energy retailer

Your energy retailer issues your electricity and gas bills. You can usually choose your energy retailer. Your retailer's contact details are on your energy bill. Contact your energy retailer if you:

- think your bill is wrong
- are having trouble paying your bill
- think your energy was disconnected by mistake
- have a problem with your meter
- signed up to a new offer and no one told you that you had 10 business days to change your mind
- want to complain about their marketing or salespeople.

When to contact your energy distributor

Your distributor is the business that operates the gas and electricity networks, including the electricity poles and wires and gas pipelines. They also read your energy meter. There is only one distributor in your area—you cannot choose your distributor. Your distributor's contact details are on your energy bill, usually under 'faults and emergencies'. Contact your distributor if there is:

- a blackout or the supply is bad, for example, your lights go dim a lot
- an issue with distribution network assets
- a fault or emergency, for example, an electricity pole is down.

Steps to follow to make your complaint

Step 1: Contact your retailer or distributor

- Contact your retailer or distributor as quickly as possible to explain the problem and the outcome you want.
- Be clear, persistent, calm and polite.
- Keep a note of the phone call, including the date and name of the person you spoke to.

- If the person you spoke to can't help you, go to Step 2.

Step 2: Ask to speak to senior staff

If the problem has not been resolved in Step 1:

- Ask to speak with a supervisor, senior officer or manager.
- Discuss what options are available.
- Write down the name of the person you spoke to and what you discussed and agreed.
- You may want to put your complaint in writing if it is still unresolved.

Some tips for putting your complaint in writing.

- Address your letter to the manager or the company's head office.
- Write down your complaint and the outcome you want.
- Ask for a response within a specified time.
- Include copies of supporting information (such as your gas or electricity bill).
- Keep a copy of your letter or email.

Step 3: Contact the Ombudsman

If your complaint is still not resolved, you can contact the energy Ombudsman in your state or territory.

Ombudsman schemes offer a free and independent dispute resolution service. Ombudsman schemes can investigate complaints about:

- disputed accounts and high bills
- debts and overdue amounts
- disconnection of supply
- reliability and quality of supply
- connection issues
- poor customer service.

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Energy Ombudsman contacts

Queensland

Energy and Water Ombudsman Queensland

Telephone: 1800 662 837

www.ewoq.com.au

New South Wales

Energy and Water Ombudsman NSW

Telephone: 1800 246 545

www.ewon.com.au

Australian Capital Territory

ACT Civil and Administrative Tribunal

Telephone: 02 6207 1740

www.acat.act.gov.au

Victoria

Energy and Water Ombudsman Victoria

Telephone: 1800 500 509

www.ewov.com.au

South Australia

Energy and Water Ombudsman SA

Telephone: 1800 665 565

www.ewosa.com.au

Tasmania

Energy Ombudsman Tasmania

Telephone: 1800 001 170

www.energyombudsman.tas.gov.au

The role of the Australia Energy Regulator

The Australian Energy Regulator (AER) does not resolve disputes between energy customers and their retailer or distributor.

The AER:

- makes sure retailers and distributors follow the energy laws
- receives reports on complaints and disputes from energy businesses and the Ombudsman schemes and uses this information to monitor compliance.

More information

AER General Enquiries 1300 585 165

AER website www.aer.gov.au

Energy Made Easy www.energymadeeasy.gov.au

Other contacts

For information in languages other than English call 13 1450 and ask for 1300 585 165

Speak and Listen users phone 1300 555 727 and ask for 1300 585 165

TTY users phone 13 3677 and ask for 1300 585 165

Internet relay users connect to the National Relay Service www.relayservice.com.au and ask for 1300 585 165

Australian Competition and Consumer Commission

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Important notice

The information in this publication is for general guidance only. It does not constitute legal advice or other professional advice, and should not be relied on as a statement of the law in any jurisdiction. Because it is intended only as a general guide, it may contain generalisations. You should obtain professional advice if you have any specific concern.

The ACCC has made every reasonable effort to provide current and accurate information, but it does not make any guarantees regarding the accuracy, currency or completeness of that information.

ACCC12/21_1039