



Northern Ireland Residential Electricity Customers

Code of Practice on Provision of Services

for persons of Pensionable Age
or Disabled or Chronically Sick

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This Code of Practice outlines our policies in relation to the provision of special services to those customers who require them. This Code applies to our Northern Ireland residential electricity customers only.

Electric Ireland's objective is to provide the best service possible to all of our customers. In particular, we are concerned about those customers who require special services, for example, those with special requirements and the elderly. In this Code of Practice, we have set down our commitments to providing those special services. These special services for persons of Pensionable Age or Disabled or Chronically Sick are provided by Electric Ireland free of charge.

We will provide a registration service for those customers who require special services covered by this Code. Registration details will be requested during the sign-up process for a new contract, or can be provided by contacting us at any time, if there is a change in customer requirements. We will contact our customers on an annual basis to advise them of the existence of this register.

We will ensure that our staff are trained to implement this Code of Practice.

We will work closely with organisations representing customers with special needs, to ensure that we are providing the appropriate services.

Any customer can nominate a friend, relative or carer to liaise with Electric Ireland on their behalf and receive their electricity bills if required. Please call us on LoCall 0345 600 5335 (Monday to Friday, 8:30am–7pm) to arrange this service.

Electric Ireland will provide where available, free of charge reasonable adjustments or special controls and adaptors for persons of Pensionable Age or Disabled or Chronically Sick who have difficulty accessing or using their meters or other electrical appliances in their home.

Vision, hearing, speech or mobility impaired customers

We offer a range of services for customers who have a visual impairment, have hearing/speech difficulties, or mobility difficulties. To avail of these services, customers must register their details with us. Details for persons of Pensionable Age or Disabled or Chronically Sick who register will be forwarded to NIE Networks for inclusion in the Industry Register with data protection provisions.. Special services include:

Braille bills – we can provide braille bills to people who are braille readers.

Talking bills – we can provide talking bills to people who are blind or have a visual impairment. When a bill is due for issue, we will telephone the customer, or a nominated contact person, with the details. The paper bill is then posted to them.

Large print bill – for people with visual impairment.

Redirecting bills – for persons of Pensionable Age or Disabled or Chronically Sick we can send the bill to a nominated friend or relative, by agreement if requested to do so.

Minicom facility – we offer a text phone service for people who have minicom equipment in their homes.

These facilities are also available to our customers who may wish to make enquiries or complaints about any service provided by Electric Ireland.

Customers with mobility problems

If a customer has a mobility difficulty or cannot read their meter or wishes to have their meter re-located, he/she should contact us on LoCall 0345 600 5335 (Monday to Friday, 8:30am–7pm) to discuss their needs and we will advise on the most suitable options available.

Meter Readings

Should our customer or any other person occupying their premises be unable to read the electricity meter, we will arrange to have the meter read at least once each quarter and we will inform the customer of the reading.

Elderly customers

In the case of elderly customers (defined as those over pensionable age) who are registered with us, Electric Ireland will pass on the customers' details to NIE Networks for inclusion in the Industry Register with data protection provisions.

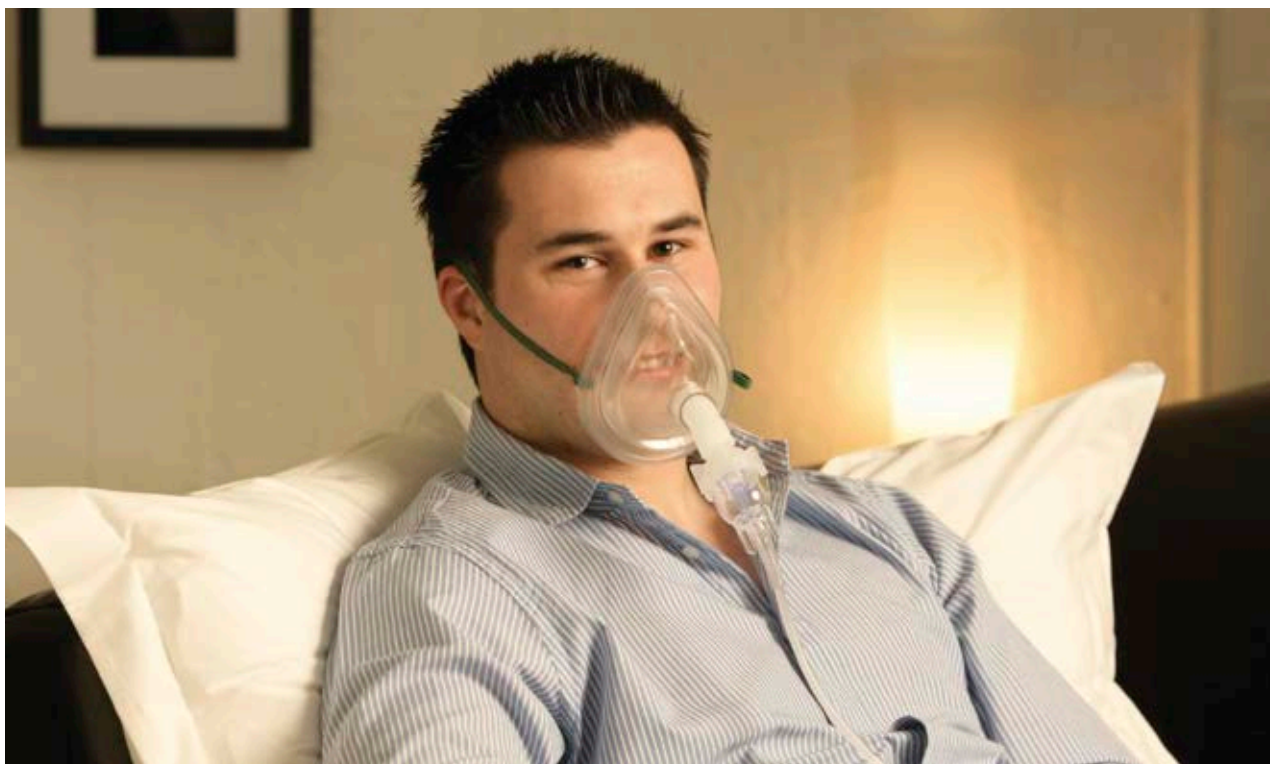
Payment difficulties

Customers who are finding it hard to pay their energy bills should arrange to contact us immediately. We promise to deal with all customers in a sensitive and professional manner.

Further details on our policies may be found in our Code of Practice on Payment of Bills. We will take all reasonable steps to not knowingly disconnect the energy supply of any customer (or occupant of a customers premises) of pensionable age, disabled or chronically sick between 1st of October and 31st of March. If you are of pensionable age, disabled or living with a chronic illness and are having problems paying your bills, let us know so that your supply is not disconnected and we can find a suitable repayment arrangement for you.

Energy Efficiency Advice

We also provide energy efficiency advice to all customers to enable them to reduce electricity consumption, avoid waste and reduce costs. More information is available in our Code of Practice on the Efficient use of Electricity.



Registration for customers dependent on medical equipment

We offer a registration service for customers who are reliant on home medical equipment, both life supporting and non-life supporting. This equipment includes home dialysis, oxygen concentrators, nebulisers, stair lifts, bath hoists etc.

Details of customers who register will be forwarded to NIE Networks for inclusion in their Critical Care Register with data protection provisions. This will enable NIE Networks to identify those customers who are particularly vulnerable to an energy supply interruption, to provide priority support to them and to update them on the expected duration of any power cut.

NIE Networks can be contacted directly on 034 57643643 at any time in relation to the Critical Care Register, power cuts, or supply quality.

Confidentiality

The details of customers who register with us for priority service or special service needs must be passed to NIE Networks with data protection provisions to enable them to provide you with additional services to suit your customer category.

Identifying Officers

Any officer attending a customer's premises will carry with them photographic ID bearing their name, issue date/expiry date, and a contact telephone number, which can be called to verify their identity. If NIE Networks call out to a customer's premises on our behalf, they will also carry photographic ID.

If you are unsure of any caller, you can also call the Quick Check service on Freephone 0800 0132290 to check if the caller is genuine. The Quick Check operator will inform the PSNI if information provided appears suspicious.

We also operate a password system whereby the Customer can advise us of a password, which can be used to identify any company officers or representatives who may call to the customer on behalf of Electric Ireland.

General advice for our vulnerable customers is also available from the Consumer Council – see contact details below:

The Consumer Council
Floor 3
Seatem House
28-32 Alfred Street
BELFAST
BT2 8EN

Tel: 028 9025 1600

Fax: 028 9025 1663

Email: complaints@consumercouncil.org.uk

Web: www.consumercouncil.org.uk

If we fail to meet any of the commitments outlined in this Code, then you will be entitled to compensation under the terms of our Customer Charter.

Copies of our Customer Charter and other Codes can be obtained in the following ways:

By phone: LoCall 0345 600 5335 (Monday to Friday, 8:30am–7pm)

By post: Electric Ireland
1st Floor, 1 Cromac Quay,
The Gasworks,
Belfast
BT7 2JD,
Northern Ireland

By email: customerservice@electricireland.com

Online: www.electricireland.com

