



Ampol Energy Family Violence Policy

Effective 28 April 2023

Our Details

Ampol Energy (Retail) Pty Ltd ABN 21 652 913 347

Call us: 13 14 04

Write to us: PO Box 568, East Melbourne, VIC 8002

Find out more: ampolenergy.com.au

**If there is an immediate threat to your safety or wellbeing,
please call 000 and relay your emergency situation.**



Ampol Energy Family Violence Policy

1. Family Violence Policy

At Ampol Energy, we are committed to providing confidential and respectful assistance to customers experiencing family violence. We recognise that Government, corporate and community sectors have a responsibility to work together to support those impacted by family violence. We support a collaborative and integrated approach to ensure that we can effect real change to the safety of our community and will prioritise any affected customer's safety over and above any terms of our contract with them that conflict with their situation.

If you are an Ampol Energy customer or former customer and you are affected by family violence, this policy may apply to you.

2. What is Family Violence?

Family violence may impact people across a variety of settings. While there are common understandings of some forms of family violence, family violence can exist across a wide variety of situations and relationships.

Family violence may include (but is not limited to) the following behaviour by a person towards a family member of that person:

- is physically or sexually abusive,
- is emotionally or psychologically abusive,
- is economically abusive,
- is threatening,
- is coercive, or
- in any way controls or dominates the family member to feel fear for the safety and wellbeing of that family member or another person.

Family violence can also refer to behaviour by a person that causes a child to hear or witness, or otherwise be exposed to, the effects of behaviours listed above.

Types of abuse:

Family violence is more than physical abuse, it can include many types of abuse which are unhealthy and harmful, such as:

- Controlling behaviour
- Emotional abuse
- Psychological abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Physical abuse
- Technology-facilitated abuse
- Elder abuse

Essential services such as electricity supply can be exploited by perpetrators of family violence in a range of ways, including:

- Gaining personal information on the victim, particularly updated address or contact details.
- Insisting an account be in a victim's name and refusing to contribute to the cost.
- Opening or changing an account so the service is in the sole name of the victim, potentially without their knowledge or consent.
- Refusing to pay an account so that disconnection may occur or threatening or actually proceeding to request a disconnection on an account.

The impact on affected customers can include:

- Affected customers being fearful of their inability to pay.
- Having utilities disconnected and the impact that not having services has upon individuals and families.
- A perpetrator harassing or threatening a survivor's personal safety at their new address.

If you are experiencing family violence, you can reach out to our trained customer service team, who will take steps to provide you the help outlined in this policy, by:

Calling us:

13 14 04 (Monday – Friday, 9am-6pm AEST)

Emailing us:

customeradvocacy@ampolenergy.com.au

3. Your Rights as a Customer if Impacted by Family Violence

If you're an affected customer, you can expect to:

- be treated in a respectful and professional manner by our trained staff,
- have your personal information protected in line with this Policy and our Privacy Policy,
- only have to tell your story to our staff once,
- be able to choose your preferred method of communication,
- as an energy customer, be granted entry into our Payment Difficulties (Victoria) or Hardship Program (NSW, SA, QLD), in the event of financial difficulty, and
- have your account status be reviewed and a personalised plan developed. As part of this review you may be offered, at our discretion and on a case-by-case basis, payment suspension, debt forgiveness or debt reduction.



4. Our Commitment to you

We will prioritise your safety and wellbeing:

- All our customer facing staff are trained to recognise customers that may be experiencing family violence and on our family violence policy and the various assistance we can provide.
- We have a separate team of trained staff that can specifically assist and help people that are affected by family violence.
- You have the right to have your information stored securely and confidentially and to determine in what circumstances this data can be accessed.
- We will not ask a customer experiencing family violence to provide documentary evidence to us as a precondition to us applying this Policy to their case.

Ampol Energy team members won't be able to offer counselling to a customer who discloses family violence, however they will:

- listen closely, with empathy and without judgement,
- acknowledge the person's disclosure,
- assist the customer regarding their initial query, considering any financial support they may be eligible for, and
- offer referral on to appropriate external support agencies.

If a customer has presented with serious risks relating to their personal safety, additional action may be considered, including immediate referral to emergency services, such as the police.

Ampol Energy will always take an affected customer's circumstances, including issues related to intersectionality, into account. We understand and recognise that different aspects of a person's identity can create compounding forms of discrimination or privilege.

Institutionalised systems of power mean that family violence can be more likely to occur for people who experience other forms of discrimination. As such, Ampol Energy always endeavours to have policies and processes that are accessible, inclusive, and non-discriminatory.

5. Family Violence Assistance Available

We offer a range of assistance measures to customers who are affected by family violence.

- Additional account security measures to protect personal and financial information.
- Ability to choose their preferred method of communication.

- Tailored customer interactions with our trained staff.
- Restrictions on certain debt management and collection activity.
- Waiver of late payment fees.
- Support in accessing our hardship program or payment difficulty framework.
- Information around external support available to individuals and families.

We also have informal arrangements with service providers that can assist in providing a range of options for people impacted by various forms of family violence.

6. Family Violence and Hardship

Ampol Energy acknowledges that family violence is likely to cause payment difficulties and hardship. Family violence often has a financial impact on one or more parties, and Ampol Energy recognises the interrelationship between family violence and payment difficulties.

If you're an affected customer and family violence situations are impacting you financially, our hardship program has a range of options available, including payment plans and debt restructuring. We will consider the impact of debt recovery on customers affected by family violence, in addition to the role of any other persons that may have contributed to the accumulation of an arrears amount.

For customers impacted by family violence, Ampol Energy extends all provisions of its hardship program, Ampol Energy Assistance. Ampol Energy will automatically offer protections under our hardship policy to any customers indicating that they are affected by family violence.

We will consider waiving or suspending debt of an affected customer where appropriate. We will not apply additional fees for family violence customers considered to be eligible for our hardship programs. Centrepay will be made available as a payment method for affected customers who enter into a payment plan.

7. Assistance Programs and Resources

In addition to supporting customers affected by family violence with their account, our specially trained staff can also provide information of external family violence support services where appropriate. Some of these external support networks and resources include:

Government Support Services

- Domestic and family violence QLD
- Domestic and family violence NSW



- Domestic and family violence Victoria
- Safe From Violence Tasmania
- Safe at Home Tasmania
- Domestic violence and sexual assault South Australia
- Family Violence – ACT Police

Other Support Services

- Domestic Violence Resource Service
- 1800RESPECT
- Lifeline
- DV Connect WomensLine
- DV Connect MensLine

8. Account Security

For customers affected by family violence, we will take additional steps to protect and safeguard your personal information. We have developed several processes and procedures to ensure that, where a person is affected by family violence, our staff:

- Do not disclose or provide access to confidential information about an affected customer to any other person without the consent of the affected customer.
- Take steps to ensure that the affected customer's preferred method of communication is utilised.
- Create a record of any arrangements reached around account security.

Confidential information is referred to as any information that may be used to identify or locate an affected customer, including information about their whereabouts, contact details, financial details or personal circumstances. Any other person includes a person who is or has been a joint account holder with any affected customer.

9. Language Difficulty

If we reasonably believe that a customer affected by family violence has a language difficulty, we will arrange for an interpreter to contact the customer directly.

10. Privacy

We will ensure that we respect your privacy and that you can raise a privacy complaint in line with the Ampol Energy Privacy Policy, which can be found on our website at ampolenergy.com.au.

11. Website

This Family Violence Policy will be available on the Ampol Energy website at ampolenergy.com.au/policies. It will also be provided to any customer on request.

12. Complaints

If you are affected by family violence and have a complaint in relation to your account, we will resolve the matter in accordance with our complaints process. You can find more information about our complaints process, as well as our complaints policy, at ampolenergy.com.au/complaints.

13. Review

The Ampol Energy Family Violence Policy will be reviewed no less than once every two years.

