



# Vulnerable Customer Code of Practice

# Table of Contents

**Code of Practice on Vulnerable Customers**

- Introduction.....2
- Definition of a Vulnerable Customer.....2
- Our Commitment to you.....2
- Collection of Vulnerable Customer Data.....2
- Priority and Special Services Register.....3
- PAYG Meter.....3
- Special Communication Services.....3
- Third Party Representation.....4

**Further Information**

- Data Protection.....4
- Contact Details.....4



## **1.Introduction**

This Code of Practice outlines the systems and processes that we have put in place which protects registered vulnerable customers from being disconnected, during set time periods.

If we break any of the guarantees and our standards contained within this or any Code of Practice, you're entitled to a payment of €30 from us. This will be credited to your account within one billing period.

## **2.Definition of a Vulnerable Customer**

A vulnerable customer is defined in legislation as a household customer particularly vulnerable to disconnection during winter months for reasons of advanced age and is critically dependent on electrically powered equipment, which shall include but is not limited to:

- life protecting devices
- assistive technologies to support independent living
- medical equipment
- of advanced age or physical, sensory, intellectual or mental health.

Advancing age is taken to be a person of pensionable age (66 years or above) living alone, with another vulnerable person or with minors. Any household customer who fulfils these criteria and has registered with Panda will be deemed a vulnerable customer on either our Priority Services Register or Special Services Register.

## **3.Our Commitment to you**

- You will receive a friendly representative or agent when you contact us.
- We will maintain and regularly update the register of our vulnerable customers particularly those who are vulnerable to natural gas or electricity disconnection during winter months.
- Once you register with us on our vulnerable customers register, you will be on the best rate for your chosen payment method and billing format.
- For customers with hearing or visual impairment, you can avail of a number of communication options to suit your needs.
- Customers registered as critically dependent on electricity will not be disconnected for non- payment of account.
- Customers registered as particularly vulnerable to disconnection during winter months will not be disconnected for non-payment of account in winter months (1st November – 31st March)
- The vulnerable customer COP will be brought to the attention of our customers at least once a year and on sign up.

## **4.Collection of Vulnerable Customer Data**

To be included on the register,you will have to inform Panda. Once you contact us, we will send out an application form and make note of your circumstances. If you provide verbal notification of vulnerability but fail to complete or return completed and signed registration forms, Panda will send a reminder letter. If you are critically dependent on electricity, we will then give you an additional form to fill in. As soon as we receive your forms, we will begin the registration process. We may require you to demonstrate eligibility for inclusion on the register, which may include medical confirmation.

## **5. Priority & Special Services Register**

**Priority Service Register:** Customers who are registered as critically dependent on electricity are listed on the Priority Services Register.

Any customer who is reliant on electrical home equipment, both life supporting and non-life supporting are included on the list, once self-registered.

This equipment includes:

- Oxygen Concentrator
- Personal Suction Pump
- Home Dialysis
- Peg Tube Feeding Pump
- Electric Hoist
- Total Parental Nutrition Machine
- Ventilator
- Nebuliser
- Electronic Pressure Relieving Mattress
- Household Lift

Customers on this list will not be disconnected for non-payment of account.

**Special Services Register:** Customers who are particularly vulnerable to disconnection during winter months for reasons of advanced age or physical, sensory, intellectual or mental health are included on the special services register.

The following customer can self-register to be on the list:

- Deaf
- Hard of hearing
- Blind
- Partially Sighted
- Elderly (Aged 66 or over, living alone or with other persons over 66 or with minors mobility Impaired).

Customers on the special services register shall not be disconnected or de-energized during the winter months for reasons of non-payment of bills.

If you are not registered on the Priority List or Special Services Register, we will pass your details to ESB Networks and Gas Networks Ireland for inclusion on the industry register.

## **6. PAYG Meter**

- Panda will implement adequate and efficient processes to ascertain the suitability of PAYG meters for vulnerable customers. There will be no penalty fee on PAYG customers who terminate a contract of supply where the PAYG meter is no longer suitable for use due to their vulnerability.

## **7. Special Communication Services**

We have special communication services for customers with hearing and visual impairments. Upon request our special communications services include for all requested communications (See list Of Communications Below):

- Braille communications - we can provide Braille communications to people who are Braille readers.

- Telephone communications – we can provide full support for people who are blind or have a visual impairment through our call centre and all standard customer queries can be dealt with through this method. We will give training to our call centre agents to provide this service.
- Large print communications – for people with visual impairment
- Online communications – for people with hearing impairment.
- Redirecting communications – for people who request it, we can send communications to a friend or relative.

The following is a non-exhaustive list of communications that is available in non-standard format for vision and hearing impaired customers.

- Customers' Bills
- Household Customer Terms & Conditions
- Customer Charter
- Customer Codes of Practice
- Household Tariff Information
- The energy bill and the energy statement
- Personalized Household Customer Communications
- Outage Notification (standard format to designated address)
- Any letter to a customer informing them of a change in services or tariff
- Any insert to customers that has been required by the CRU

Nothing in this COP shall oblige Panda to make expenditure and this requirement does not oblige us to pay for software or hardware to the customer.

### **8. Third Party Representation**

We provide a simple method for customers to register a third-party representative on their account where necessary. All that is required is a call from the account holder and third party to confirm their agreement.

## **Further Information**

### **Data Protection**

Panda take GDPR and customer data very seriously. For more information about our GDPR practices, please visit the Panda privacy statement at [www.panda.ie](http://www.panda.ie). The database that contains information on all customers registered on our vulnerable register – whether priority register or special services register, will comply with relevant Data Protection requirements.

### **Contact Details**

Please see our details below:

- Phone: 01 829 8992
- Email: [CustomerCare.Energy@panda.ie](mailto:CustomerCare.Energy@panda.ie)
- Address: Head Office, Ballymount Road Upper, Ballymount, Dublin 24
- Website: [www.panda.ie](http://www.panda.ie)

**\*\*Please note that to maintain the highest level of customer service we may monitor and record calls\*\***