



ELECTRICITY
ASSOCIATION
OF IRELAND

THE ENERGY ENGAGE CODE

Helping to ensure Irish
energy suppliers and their
customers stay connected





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Energy Engage Code 2023

For customers concerned about paying electricity and gas bills

About this Code

Energy suppliers have put this Code together to help customers who are concerned about paying their energy bills – both electricity and gas.

The Code tells you how we will help and support you to manage your energy bills. You may need help because you:

- ▶ have fallen behind in paying your bills
- ▶ are concerned you may fall behind on managing your bills.

The following energy suppliers are members of the Electricity Association of Ireland and have put this Code together. All these suppliers will promote this Code to their customers.



Bord Gáis
Energy

electric
ireland

energia



Pinery

Prepay
Power



sse
Airtricity

yuno
energy

Notes on words we use

In this guide we refer to:

- ▶ **‘we’ or ‘us’** – these mean energy suppliers as a group or your particular energy supplier.
- ▶ **‘arrears’** – this means a bill from your supplier which is either fully or partially overdue for payment.
- ▶ **‘payment plan’** – means a tailored schedule of payments agreed with your supplier to pay back arrears owed, over an agreed period of time.

If you pay using a Pay As You Go (PAYG) meter, then your meter must be topped-up with credit to ensure your energy supply continues.

Our Aim

The aim of this Code is to:



Encourage you to communicate with us as your energy supplier



Tell you more about how we assess your circumstances



Tell you more about other supports available to you

This will help you:

- ▶ manage your payment plan
- ▶ avoid arrears
- ▶ avoid disconnection of your energy supply.



Who can the Energy Engage Code help?

We hope this Code helps all customers who may need some help with their electricity and gas bills. This includes customers who may:

- ▶ be concerned about paying their bills, or
- ▶ have fallen into arrears and need support from their energy supplier, and
- ▶ be engaging already with their energy supplier.



This Code will cover how we will help to support you if you actively engage with us.

Who is an Engaged Customer?

You are an engaged customer if you actively communicate with us directly or through a third-party representative to manage your energy bills.

You can work with us to manage your energy bills by:

- ▶ signing up to 'Level Pay' to budget throughout the year, if your supplier offers this option. (This means your bill will be a set amount).
- ▶ following a payment plan, or
- ▶ agreeing to have a PAYG meter installed if this suits your needs.

A third-party representative could be:

- ▶ a charity like the St Vincent de Paul, or
- ▶ a debt advice service like MABS (the Money Advice Budgeting Service).

How to avoid becoming a Non-Engaged Customer

- ▶ Pay attention to communications from us about arrears – do not ignore them.
- ▶ Contact us if you need to make a new payment plan.
- ▶ Actively communicate with us and genuinely try to stick to a payment plan.

If you communicate and work with us, you can avoid building up arrears and manage your arrears if they arise.

If you fail to communicate with us, you will be at risk of having your energy supply disconnected. Our contact details are on page 5.

Five key promises to customers

Below are the promises that we as energy suppliers make to you, regardless of whether you are already in arrears or not.

- 1 We promise we are here to help no matter your circumstances as long as you actively engage with us.
.....
- 2 We promise to take the time to explain all the options available to help you manage your energy costs.
.....
- 3 If you are not in arrears but are concerned about your bills, we promise we will offer you:
 - ▶ guidance and support on how to manage your bills
 - ▶ information on energy efficiency measures.

If you are in arrears, we promise we will find a solution for debt that works for you and us.
.....

- 4 We promise we will give you information about other agencies who can also support you, and ways to contact them.
.....
- 5 If you engage with us actively and genuinely, we promise we will not disconnect you.
.....



How to contact us

Your first step is to contact us.

This helps your energy supplier to direct you to dedicated teams who work with customers who need some extra assistance.

If you find it difficult to talk to us, then you can nominate a named person who can deal with your account on your behalf.

Your energy supplier contact details can be found below

Supplier	Phone number	Web address
Bord Gáis Energy	01 611 01 01	www.bordgaisenergy.ie
Electric Ireland	1800 504021	www.electricireland.ie
Energia	0818 642 642	www.energia.ie
Flogas	041 214 9554	www.flogas.ie
Pinergy	0818 363 749	www.pinergy.ie
Prepay Power	1800 911 977	www.prepaypower.ie
SSE Airtricity	0818 812 220	www.sseairtricity.com
Yuno Energy	1800 710 021	www.yunoenergy.ie

If you prefer not to call or if this is difficult for you, there are other ways of contacting us like:

- ▶ website contact forms
- ▶ email
- ▶ webchat
- ▶ social media.

Your energy supplier's website has more information on these.



What you can expect when you engage with your energy supplier

If you have temporary or long-term concerns or difficulties about paying your energy bills, you may be concerned about contacting your energy supplier. However, it is important that you contact us as soon as you can. We want to work with you to find a suitable plan that works for your circumstances.

All suppliers of the Energy Engage Code have trained staff able to assist you and guide you through the process. Below is a handy guide explaining the steps that you can expect when you make contact with us and request support.

Step 1: Talk to us

Contact us

Contact us if you are already struggling to pay your bill or you are concerned about the cost of your bills.

All energy suppliers have dedicated staff who work every day with customers in difficulty or who have payment concerns. They are trained to work with you to understand your best options.

You can phone or use one of the other forms of contact on page 5.

Details to hand

Have your account number and MPRN (electricity) or GPRN (gas) on hand. You can find these at the top right-hand corner of your bill as seen here.

⚡ Your MPRN Number is			
M	10004436854		
	DG	MCC	Profile
	DG1	MCC01	01
⚡ Your GPRN Number is			
G	0176284		
	Meter No.	AC Band	A
	GB0000082849		

Ask about options

Tell the agent that you are concerned about paying your bills and that you'd like to speak to someone about what options are available.

We suggest that before you contact us you think about your overall income and your day-to-day expenses. That way we can support you with a repayment plan that you can manage.

Step 2: Review

We will review your account history over the phone.

This will include reviewing:

- ▶ any amount you owe on the account
- ▶ your payment history
- ▶ ways you can save on your energy use.

We will then discuss the available repayment options. These include manageable repayments you can make either on a weekly or on a monthly basis.

This may include installing a PAYG meter if this suits your needs.

Step 3: Agree a repayment plan

After we have discussed your options, including a payment plan tailored to your personal circumstances, we will summarise what we have agreed.

This will include the:

- ▶ repayment amount in euros
- ▶ how often repayments will be made.
- ▶ length of time of the repayment plan.

We will write to you confirming all this information.

We will also let you know that if circumstances change and you feel that the repayment plan is not sustainable, it is important to call us back as early as possible so we can reassess the plan.

Step 4: Reflect

Life events, both big and small can be a source of mental and financial distress. If your circumstances have changed and you are finding it difficult to make your agreed repayments, please contact our customer support team as early as possible and explain what's happened.

We can:

- ▶ review your individual circumstances and find a solution that suits you
- ▶ arrange for you to talk to an agency like the Money Advice and Budgeting Service (MABS), who can work on your behalf – this service is free.

Further support

Energy supplier supports

Different energy suppliers have different supports available for customers with concerns about paying their bill.

This may include things like:

- ▶ repayment holidays – these are short breaks from repayments
- ▶ flexible repayment plans
- ▶ financial help from hardship funds.

These supports are offered on a supplier-by-supplier basis. If you are eligible, your supplier will discuss these with you.

- ▶ **The CRU**

The energy regulator, Commission for Regulation of Utilities (CRU), requires energy suppliers to protect customers. You can read the details in your supplier's Customer Charters and Codes of Practice on your supplier's website.

This Energy Engage Code has been developed by energy suppliers working together and is in addition to these regulatory requirements.

- ▶ **MABS**

You can get financial information and support from the Money Advice and Budgeting Service (MABS). MABS is a free, independent and impartial agency that works with people to help manage their finances.

Contact MABS Monday to Friday on 0818 07 2000.

► The Department of Social Protection (DSP)

You can apply for support through the following payments:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| ► Additional Needs Payment | 0818 607 080 |
| ► Exceptional Needs Payment | 0818 607 080 |
| ► Fuel Allowance Payments | (071) 915 7100 or 0818 200 400 |
| ► Households Benefits Package | (071) 915 7100 or 0818 200 400 |
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► Vulnerable Customer Register

Your supplier also has a Code of Practice on Vulnerable Customers that sets out the full information on services and protections. You can find this Code of Practice on your supplier's website. Please contact your supplier to see if you are eligible to register as a vulnerable customer and benefit from extra protections, which can include protection from disconnection once registered.

If you, or someone in your house is critically dependent on electricity for medical equipment, please contact your supplier to ensure you are on their priority services register.

Vulnerable customers can be those who are particularly vulnerable to disconnection during winter months for reasons of:

- age – 66 or over and live alone, with minors or other older people
 - physical, sensory, intellectual or mental health needs.
-



How to make your home cosy

Improving your home's energy efficiency is the best way to reduce your energy bills and increase the comfort of your home. Your energy supplier may also be able to help you with the energy efficiency of your home through:

- ▶ advice including a BER (Building Energy Rating) assessment
- ▶ grant information
- ▶ installation of new windows, solar panels or other measures.

You can apply for grant aid from the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI).

Check out www.seai.ie for more information.



Notes

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www.eaireland.com





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Pinery	0818 363 749
Prepay Power	1800 911 977
SSE Airtricity	0818 812 220
Yuno Energy	1800 710 021




**Plain
English**
Approved by NALA