

A photograph of a person wearing a maroon sweater and blue jeans, sitting on a white radiator. A yellow mug is placed on the radiator next to their hand. The person's hand is resting on the radiator, and they are wearing a ring and have pink nail polish. The background is a window with a view of the outdoors.

Prepay  
Power

**Code of Practice:**  
Vulnerable Customers

# Code of Practice for Vulnerable Customers

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## Our Commitment to you

At PrepayPower, we recognise that a prepaid service for gas and electricity may not always be suitable for every customer. To ensure service continuity, Gas and Electricity prepayment products require customers to actively top up their meter. This may not be practical for all customers.

Our agents discuss your suitability for our PAYG service during your sign-up call. If your circumstances change once you are a customer, we encourage you to engage with us to discuss the continued suitability of a PAYG meter for you.

Our Code of Practice on Vulnerable Customers provides details on our policy in relation to vulnerable customers. In order to be classified as a vulnerable customer it is essential that customers register with us by completing our Priority Services and Special Services Customer Registration Form ([www.prepaypower.ie/sites/default/files/2022-10/Priority%20%20Special%20Service%20Customer%20Reg%20Form%20V2.pdf](http://www.prepaypower.ie/sites/default/files/2022-10/Priority%20%20Special%20Service%20Customer%20Reg%20Form%20V2.pdf)). We will in turn share this with ESBN and or GNI who require the information to assist them in recognising customers who may be at risk when there is interruption to your supply.

## 1. How does the CRU define a Vulnerable Customer

- A vulnerable customer is defined in legislation as a household customer who is:
  - Critically dependent on electrically powered equipment, which shall include but is not limited to life protecting devices, assistive technologies to support independent living and medical equipment (“Medical Reasons”),
  - or
  - Particularly vulnerable to disconnection during winter months for reasons of advanced age or physical, sensory, intellectual, or mental health.
- Further to the above definition, a Vulnerable Customer is a customer who has self-registered on our Priority or Special Services Register and in doing so has met the criteria of 1 or 2 above.
- We may at certain times request a customer to demonstrate their eligibility for inclusion on the priority or special services register. This may include requesting medical confirmation of vulnerability
- CRU considers the definition of advanced age to be a person of pensionable age (66 years or above) living alone or with another vulnerable person or with minors.

## 2. CRU rule for Continuity of Supply during winter months for Vulnerable Customers

- The CRU has put in place a rule whereby Vulnerable Customers cannot be disconnected for non-payment of their account during winter months. Winter months are defined as extending from 1st of November to the 31st of March.
- It is important that all of our customers, even those categorised as Vulnerable and held on our Priority or Special Services Register, understand that this rule cannot apply to them whilst on our PAYG supply for either gas or electricity. If you do not keep your PAYG meter in credit it will self-disconnect and cut-you off at any time of the year.
- This rule does however apply for disconnection of the ESBN or GNI Meter of record as a result of Non-Payment.
- Customers marked as vulnerable will not be disconnected for non-payment at the ESBN/GNI meter of record as per the CRU ruling.

## 3. Suitability of our PAYG Service

We consider that a prepaid service is not suitable for customers who are critically dependent on gas or electrically powered equipment. Our service is not suitable for customers with insufficient functional vision (defined as not being able to use our PAYG meter or is living alone without someone to operate the meter on their behalf). During our sign-up process, we follow assessment processes designed to enable our agents to identify your suitability for our products. Following the suitability assessment, our agents will advise you accordingly as to whether we recommend that you proceed with a PAYG meter service or not. Should you have any concerns about your suitability for our service please inform us at time of sign up and we will advise you on whether or not our service is suitable.

- If, as a PrepayPower customer, you become critically dependent on gas or electrically powered equipment during your time with us, please contact us immediately so that we can identify if our service is still suitable for you. Please contact us by any method listed at the end of this **Code of Practice** and we will discuss all options with you.
- If we believe that our service is no longer suitable for you, you will need to change to an alternative supplier. PrePayPower does not offer credit billed services to its customers so you will be required to move to another supplier. See the **Code of Practice on Billing** for details of how to close your account.
- Under these circumstances, no contract termination fees will be levied if your account has closed before the end of the contract initial term. The CRU has put in place a rule whereby Vulnerable Customers cannot be disconnected for non-payment of their account during winter months.

## 4. Registering with PrepayPower as a Vulnerable Customer

- During our sign-up call, we will discuss your suitability for our PAYG service. If you indicate that
  - You are a vulnerable customer; and
  - Our agent, following assessment considers our service suitable for you; and
  - You accept that you understand the CRU rule preventing disconnection of supply will not apply to you once on our PAYG service.
- We will ask you to complete our Priority Services and Special Services Customer Registration Form which can be found on website. ([www.prepaypower.ie/sites/default/files/2022-10/Priority%20%20Special%20Service%20Customer%20Reg%20Form%20V2.pdf](http://www.prepaypower.ie/sites/default/files/2022-10/Priority%20%20Special%20Service%20Customer%20Reg%20Form%20V2.pdf))
  - You can send the form back to us by any method listed at the end of this Code of Practice including post or email.
  - Once we receive the completed form, we will add you to our Priority Services Register and or Special Services Register.
  - Our Priority Services Register reflects customer data for those who are critically dependant on electrically powered equipment. Our Special Services Register reflects customer data for those customers who are particularly vulnerable to natural gas or electricity disconnection during winter months.
  - We will maintain and regularly update our Priority Services and Special Services Register to ensure it is accurate and up to date.
- All customers who are registered on our Priority and Special Service Registers will be notified to ESBN and GNI (relevant to the service supplied). This allows ESBN and GNI to maintain an industry register.
- We have an internal process to ensure that customers who have notified our sales agents at sign up of their vulnerability, but who do not return a priority & special services register form to us, are contacted. We cross reference agent logged vulnerability against received priority/ special services registration forms. We follow up with customers where there is a discrepancy between vulnerability noted on sign up call and returned forms to prompt you to return a form. The main focus behind this process is to ensure that the risk of failure to register you as a vulnerable customer is reduced. We are unable to notify ESBN or GNI of your vulnerability until we have received your returned signed form. It is in your interest to always return this form to us via email or post to ensure ESBN/GNI is notified of any vulnerability.

## 5. General

- Where you have registered as a vulnerable customer and are contained on our priority or special services register, we will provide you with our most economic tariff.
- We will notify you annually of our **Code of Practice on Vulnerable Customers** by including a reminder on our annual statement to you. We will also ensure that you are informed on the sign-up call that we have a **Code of Practice on Vulnerable Customers** and that it can be found on our website.



## 6. Alternative Communications

- As explained in our suitability of service section 3, we do not provide our PAYG service to customers whose functional vision is not sufficient to use our PAYG meter and they are the only resident able to operate the PAYG meter in the premises.
- If you have insufficient functional vision to operate our PAYG meter and nominate a third party on your account, we will provide service to you.
- For those customers whose visual impairment does not preclude sign up to our service, we offer you the option of an alternative person or agency who can assist you with the management of your account.
- We operate a full customer care via e-mail for any customer unable to call us at our call centre or who is hearing impaired. Please contact us at the email address provided at the end of this Code of Practice.
- As explained in our **Code of Practice on Billing**, we are a paperless billing company with our default method of billing communication being an annual statement via email or post (if email is not suitable).
- Our website provides details of all our policies, terms and conditions, codes of practise etc.
- If you wish, you can provide us with details of another person who can then contact us on your behalf to manage your account. Just contact us by any method listed at the end of this Code of Practice with your account details and we can add your selected third party.
- We are willing to accommodate alternative means of communication where convenient to our customers including email, voice, website letter etc.
- We will provide you (or your nominated agent) with the following communications which can be accessed within the context of all that is described in section 6.
  - a. Terms & Conditions
  - b. Customer Charter
  - c. Customer Codes of Practice
  - d. Household Tariff Information
  - e. Your Annual Energy Statement
  - f. Personalised Household Customer Communications (as approved by the CER)
  - g. Outage Notification
  - h. Notification of a change in services or tariff
  - i. Any insert to customers that has been required by the CER

## Get in Touch

If you have any queries regarding our Code of Practice on Vulnerable Customers please get in touch:



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**Email us:**  
COP@prepaypower.ie



**Write to us:**  
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