

# Domestic and Family Violence Policy – Stay Connected Program



## Introduction

Jacana Energy understands that customers may experience difficulties managing their prepaid meter credit or paying their electricity account due to domestic and family violence.

Domestic and family violence is any behaviour that makes you or your family feel scared or unsafe.

We recognise all types of domestic and family violence, including physical, emotional, or financial abuse and is covered by this policy.

Jacana Energy has a domestic and family violence (DFV) policy to provide extra support to our customers going through DFV.

*If there is an immediate threat to your safety, call emergency services on 000.*

This policy explains:

- what we do to help if you are affected by DFV;
- how we consider your circumstances when working out how we can assist; and
- our commitment to providing you with a supportive and sensitive service to manage your prepaid meter or account and hardship needs.

You can ask a support person to contact us, such as:

- a financial counsellor; or
- someone who helps manage your energy account; and
- we need your permission to talk to your support person.

This policy is to be read in combination with our **Hardship Policy - Stay Connected program**, which provides more detail about this program. It is available on the Jacana Energy website at [www.jacanaenergy.com.au/stayconnected](http://www.jacanaenergy.com.au/stayconnected).

## What this policy includes

### DFV Relationship

The *Domestic and Family Violence Act 2007* ("the Act") has the following definitions and is included in this policy:

Domestic relationship can be people who live or have lived together; having a relationship as: family members, carers, guardians, their ward, been in a family relationship with the child of the other person, or intimate personal.

Family relationship includes spouse, de facto partner, stepchild, step-parent, aunt, cousin, half-brother, mother-in-law or aunt-in-law. A relative as considered in Aboriginal tradition or contemporary social practice.

### Types of DFV

This policy includes any type of DFV as defined in the Act. This includes violence in the form of physical, emotional, financial, intimidation, stalking or damage to property.

# Domestic and Family Violence Policy – Stay Connected Program



## Stay Connected Program - Domestic and Family Violence

Family violence and financial hardship can be related. This is why our DFV policy forms part of our hardship policy. We apply our hardship policy through our Stay Connected Program.

If you are on our Stay Connected program because of DFV, you will receive:

- confidential, respectful, and non-judgmental assistance;
- collaborative support with yourself, community partners and us;
- referral to financial, and domestic and family violence counselling services;
- fair and equitable access to a tailored payment arrangement;
- extra financial support if needed;
- Prepaid meter customers will be given support to access temporary credit; and
- information on how to access hardship assistance programs;
- waiver of electricity connection fees if you need to move-house due to safety concerns;
- a language interpreter service free of charge by contacting 08 8999 8506, if required.

## Who is it for?

The Stay Connected program may be right for you if you:

- Have an outstanding amount on your Jacana Energy residential account;
- Cannot purchase credit for your prepaid meter;
- Are experiencing financial difficulty;
- Can make payments toward your electricity account;
- Have difficulty getting on top of your electricity account;
- Are willing to work with Jacana Energy and support agencies to address financial issues;
- May be going through hardship or domestic violence.

When it comes to customers experiencing DFV, making payments or keeping your prepaid meter in credit may not be possible in the short-term. We will work with you and your financial counselor or support person on the most suitable solution for your situation.

## How do we identify if it applies to you?

We will review if the Stay Connected for DFV applies to you if:

- you tell us you are having trouble paying your account or topping up your prepaid meter and going through DFV;
- you are referred to our Stay Connected program by a financial counsellor or other community worker; or
- we are concerned that you may be experiencing financial hardship.

All Jacana Energy employees, contractors and agents are trained to understand the nature and consequences of family violence and to identify signs and engage appropriately with residential customers who may be affected by DFV. We may ask you if we suspect this applies to you.

# Domestic and Family Violence Policy – Stay Connected Program



We may refer you to our Stay Connected team once we identify that you are experiencing hardship and/or DFV.

## How our Stay Connected Team assists

Our Stay Connected and Customer Care Team are trained on how to assist customers undergoing hardship, social and community issues (including DFV) and details of the Stay Connected program.

Through the Stay Connected Program for DFV, we can provide you with:

- respectful, sensitive and non-judgmental communication;
- access to extra financial support;
- fair and equitable access to a tailored payment arrangement or prepaid meter management plan;
- referral to financial, and domestic and family violence counselling services; and
- a language interpreter service free of charge by contacting 08 8999 8506, if required.

When we manage your electricity account or prepaid meter, we will:

- keep your circumstances confidential;
- discuss your options for authorisation on your account. Such as, removal of contacts that may compromise your safety;
- place an alert or note on your account to avoid the need for you to repeatedly disclose or refer to your experience of domestic and/or family violence;
- not require you or a third party acting on your behalf to provide any evidence of your situation when seeking support or assistance;
- confirm your preferred method of communication to consider your safety;
- review any debt related to your domestic or family violence circumstances; and
- approve a new connection as required and will not disconnect your electricity supply while you are participating in the Stay Connected program;
- assess your current electricity needs, including any arrears, on a case-by-case basis; and
- not take any legal action or refer your account to a debt collection agency.

## Working with Community Partners

We understand that the impact of DFV has many aspects, and it may be difficult for you to safely communicate with us. This is why we work very closely with welfare agencies and financial counsellors in the Northern Territory when assisting customers experiencing DFV.

If you come directly to us, we may refer you to one of our partner agencies who offer free services. They will be able to provide detailed advice about your finances, temporary housing, and access to any other support you may need to ensure yours and your family's safety.

When you choose an agency to represent you, we will discuss with them the best possible outcome that considers your situation. They may provide us details about yourself and your circumstance to assist in this. This will reduce or avoid the need for you to repeatedly disclose details which can be quite stressful.

# Domestic and Family Violence Policy – Stay Connected Program



## Keeping your information secure

Any information you provide us will be kept secure and used to assess your eligibility to participate in the Stay Connected program. Jacana Energy's Privacy Policy is available on our website at [www.jacanaenergy.com.au/privacy](http://www.jacanaenergy.com.au/privacy).

## Review

If you are not satisfied with the assessment of your eligibility to participate in the Stay Connected program, you may request a review of the decision by contacting our Complaints team through [resolutions@jacanaenergy.com.au](mailto:resolutions@jacanaenergy.com.au).

## Contact us

### For Stay Connected enquiries

Phone: 1800 JACANA (1800 522 262)

Post: Att: Stay Connected

Jacana Energy

GPO Box 1785

Darwin, NT, 0801

Email: [stayconnected@jacanaenergy.com.au](mailto:stayconnected@jacanaenergy.com.au)

## Further support

**1800RESPECT** (1800 737 732) offers confidential online and telephone counselling, information and referral services, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

There are many not-for-profit financial and community support available. We have listed some on our website to you get started. <https://jacanaenergy.com.au/your-home/billing-and-payments/financial-support>

You may speak to our team for more options.

## Privacy Notice

Jacana Energy respects your rights to privacy and complies with the requirements under the *Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)* and the *Information Act (NT)* in relation to the collection and handling of your personal information.

Our Privacy Policy (available at [www.jacanaenergy.com.au/privacy](http://www.jacanaenergy.com.au/privacy)) explains how we collect and manage personal information in accordance with our legal obligations.