



## **STANDARD COMPLAINTS AND DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCEDURE**

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction made to us where a resolution or response is expected. The way CovaU working through complaints is based on our Standard Complaints and Dispute Resolution Procedure.

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## 1 Purpose

Customers to CovaU are our business. Without customers CovaU do not have a business. We are sincerely sorry if our customer has a complaint and aim to help them through the resolution process. The process used by CovaU aligns with the Australian Standard (AS ISO 10002:2006) Customer Satisfaction - Guidelines for complaints handling in organisations and our requirements as an energy retailer.

The purpose is to provide the customer with a point of contact to enable the complaint to be recorded, actioned appropriately, responded to in a timely efficient manner and resolved to the satisfaction of the customer.

## 2 Policy Statement

CovaU aims to provide the highest level of customer service, which includes the handling of complaints. The complaints handling policy was created to be able to provide a fair and efficient mechanism to handle customer complaints.

If the customer feels that a breach of the Competition and Consumer Act (CCA) had been committed, they are advised to raise a complaint on the matter. CovaU treats all such complaints very seriously and each complaint will be dealt with accordingly.

It should also be noted that an authorised representative or advocate may make a complaint on a customer's behalf. Such authority must be completed with the Customer Service team prior to the representative making a complaint on a customer's behalf. If customers have a disability, they may either call the Customer Service team or appoint an authorised representative to raise the complaint on their behalf.

No legal rights arise under this document.

## 3 Process

### 3.1 How to lodge a complaint

If our customer has a complaint or dispute with regards to CovaU, please contact us via:

- Phone: 1300 689 866 between 8am to 6pm (AEST/AEDT), Monday to Friday
- Email: [support@covau.com.au](mailto:support@covau.com.au)
- Post: PO Box R241, ROYAL EXCHANGE, NSW, 1225

### 3.2 What we will do

When customers speak to a CovaU Customer Service representative, the representative:

- will respond and allocate a Complaint Reference Number for use in any further communications relating to the complaint
- will request customers' details and record the complaint in a detailed manner
- will also make customers aware that this document is available on the CovaU website
- will review the complaint / dispute in a reasonable timeframe dependent upon the complexity and nature of the complaint. See below for the process for reasonable timeframes
- will keep customers informed on the progress of their complaint
- will consult with customers regarding resolution of the complaint where necessary and inform customers when the complaint has been resolved
- if possible, proposes changes to stop or reduce the possibility of the scenario reoccurring

CovaU representatives will always provide customers with their name and try to resolve the complaint on the spot. Written complaints will be acknowledged within five (5) working days unless the issue has been determined to be an urgent complaint in which case, a response will be given within two (2) working days.

An urgent complaint is a complaint where:

- a complaint is made by a customer who has applied for or has been accepted as being in Financial Hardship under the Hardship Policy and where the subject matter of the complaint can be reasonably be presumed to directly contribute to or aggravate the Financial Hardship of that customer
- disconnection of a service is imminent or has occurred and where due process has not been followed
- it involves a life support customer and their service for which they are receiving life support

CovaU prefers to deal with complaints and enquiries by phone as this provides a quicker response time.

If the complaint is not resolved to customer's satisfaction, they have the option to contact the ombudsman. Details of the ombudsman can be found in section 4 of this document.

### 3.3 Accessibility

All customers have the right to make a complaint and this may be in the form of verbal, email or post. The relevant contact points are detailed above.

For customers that require the national relay service, translation or interpretation service, the details can be found in section 4 below.

All details are also available on the CovaU website [www.covau.com.au](http://www.covau.com.au).

### 3.4 Responsiveness

All complaints will be responded quickly in a professional, courteous and fair manner, and we aim to resolve all concerns at the customer's initial contact. We will keep customers informed on the progress of their complaint either by telephone or in writing until the matter is resolved, and inform customers of the outcome of their complaint.

### 3.5 Objectivity

Each complaint will be addressed in an equitable, objective and unbiased manner.

### 3.6 Charges

Customers are not charged for lodging of a complaint or the complaints handling process attached to this complaint.

### 3.7 Confidentiality

All complaints are dealt with in a confidential manner and in line with CovaU policies and the Privacy Act.

### 3.8 Customer Focused Approach

CovaU is committed to the effective resolution of complaints and accepts feedback to our complaints handling process.

### 3.9 Resources

Our team is trained to handle complaints in effective and efficient manner. We always endeavour to resolve customer's concerns at the first point of contact. Depending on the complexity and nature of the complaint, this may be escalated to the Customer Service Manager.

### 3.10 Accountability

Numbers and details of complaints are recorded and regularly reported to relevant parties. These reports contain no details of the complainant and are used for the continual improvement process.

### 3.11 Continuous Improvement

Complaints will be recorded and classified. The results will be analysed in report form and used for the purpose of continual improvement. The information is then used to, where possible, reduce or eliminate reoccurrence of similar complaints.

## 4 Additional Information

If a complainant is not satisfied with the resolution or the investigation of the complaint, then they can request to have their complaint reviewed by a senior Customer Service representative. The senior representative will try to provide a resolution as quickly as possible.

If all avenues of addressing your complaint have been exhausted or the complainant finds that the resolution to the complaint is still unacceptable, they can contact the local energy ombudsman. Energy ombudsman offers free, independent and impartial dispute resolution services and can help complainant resolve their problems if CovaU has been unable to resolve their complaint to their satisfaction.

If possible, the complainant can include the Complaint Reference Number supplied by CovaU to ensure any disputes could be attended effectively.

### 4.1 Energy and Water Ombudsman

#### New South Wales

Energy & Water Ombudsman NSW (EWON)

- Telephone: 1800 246 545
- Website: [www.ewon.com.au](http://www.ewon.com.au)

#### South Australia

Energy & Water Ombudsman SA (EWOSA)

- Telephone: 1800 665 565
- Website: [www.ewosa.com.au](http://www.ewosa.com.au)

#### Victoria

Energy & Water Ombudsman Victoria (EWOV)

- Telephone: 1800 500 509
- Website: [www.ewov.com.au](http://www.ewov.com.au)

#### Australian Capital Territory

ACT Civil and Administrative Tribunal (ACAT)

- Telephone: (02) 6207 1740
- Website: [www.acat.act.gov.au/](http://www.acat.act.gov.au/)

#### Queensland

Energy & Water Ombudsman Queensland (EWOQ)

- Telephone: 1800 662 837
- Website: [www.ewoq.com.au](http://www.ewoq.com.au)

#### Tasmania

Energy Ombudsman Tasmania

- Telephone: 1800 001 170
- Website: [www.energyombudsman.tas.gov.au/](http://www.energyombudsman.tas.gov.au/)

### 4.2 Non-discrimination

CovaU will not discriminate against any person as a result of that person making a complaint or disputing any proposed resolution.

### 4.3 National Relay Service

For customers who may require the assistance of the National Relay Service:

- Voice Relay number: 1300 555 727
- Teletype (TTY) number: 133 677
- SMS Relay number: 0423 677 767

### 4.4 Translation and Interpretation

If customers require assistance in translating or interpreting the options available, please contact the Translator and Interpreter Service (TIS)

- TIS National: 131 450 and ask to be connected to the CovaU Customer Service team on 1300 689 866.