

This winter, electricity and gas suppliers in Northern Ireland have committed to providing extra support for Small Business Consumers.

We want to encourage consumers to talk to their supplier if they are concerned about paying their bills. If you are worried that you cannot afford to make a payment, get in touch as soon as possible. Your electricity and gas supplier will treat you with empathy and respect and will consider reasonable repayment plan options. All suppliers have trained staff who are happy to help. Whether you're worried about paying your bills, or you are in debt to your energy supplier already, if you engage with your supplier they will work with you.

Between 1 November 2025 and 31 March 2026, suppliers have voluntarily committed to supporting you in the following ways

- 1 Electricity and gas suppliers will engage with consumers who are in payment arrears. As a minimum, they will remain open to discussions and engagement around the consumer's individual circumstances and consider reasonable repayment plan options. Suppliers will also be open to engaging with consumers to discuss contract renewal and tariff options that may be available (where such changes can be facilitated contractually).
- 2 Prior to issuing any letters referencing disconnection, electricity and gas suppliers will use best endeavours to engage with consumers in debt to discuss alternative options.
- 3 Electricity and gas suppliers will ensure that correspondence issued to consumers, particularly in relation to debt, is written in a manner that is encouraging, enabling engagement and demonstrating an openness to providing assistance and advice.
- 4 Electricity and gas suppliers will have a specialised individual or team lead as a key contact for third sector, advice bodies, consumer bodies and the Utility Regulator.
- 5 Electricity and gas suppliers will have processes in place to provide consumers who are experiencing affordability difficulties with their energy bills or are in need of additional support, with relevant information and support including signposting to relevant advice-giving organisations.
- 6 During their interactions with consumers in payment difficulties, electricity and gas suppliers will provide practical advice to consumers on energy efficiency measures that could help customers reduce their energy bills.
- 7 Electricity and gas suppliers will develop and maintain an accessible, regularly updated FAQ section on their websites specifically aimed at Small Business Consumers. This section will address common concerns around billing, tariffs, debt support, and contract terms.
- 8 Electricity and gas suppliers will ensure that relevant key staff, including customer service and account management personnel, undertake training on the specific challenges faced by small businesses experiencing affordability difficulties.



For advice and information for small and micro-businesses in Northern Ireland, including energy advice, please visit Consumer Council for Northern Ireland's webpage below:
[How we can help businesses | Consumer Council](#)



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