



## FINANCIAL HARDSHIP POLICY

### PURPOSE:

At Slimtel Pty Ltd, we understand that from time-to-time customer's experience Financial Hardship and may need additional assistance and flexibility. Our Hardship Policy identifies and assists vulnerable customers to manage their mobile usage and costs.

### WHAT IS HARDSHIP?

Slimtel Pty Ltd defines hardship as customers who are willing to meet their financial obligations, but do not have the financial capacity to do so. In this policy we differentiate between two types of customer hardship: short- and long-term hardship.

### (ANGEL) SHORT TERM HARDSHIP:

Customers experiencing short-term hardship are undergoing a sudden change in circumstance, which has resulted in temporary financial difficulty. These customers generally require flexibility and temporary assistance, such as an extension of time to pay, or flexible payment arrangements.

### LONG TERM HARDSHIP:

Customer experiencing long term hardships are generally on low and/ or fixed incomes such as pensions or allowances. Hardships may have resulted from a combination of low incomes and a change in circumstances or in an unforeseen event. And may require more formalized case management approach and additional assistance over a longer period.

### EQUITABLE ACCESS AND TRANSPERANCY:

Slimtel Pty Ltd. Is committed to equitable access to our hardship policy. Our policy is transparent and applied consistently.

### CUSTOMERS RIGHTS:

Slimtel's team will inform customers entering our hardship program on their rights and obligations.

Slimtel Pty Ltd. considers as following as customers rights:

- To be treated sensitively
- To negotiate affordable plans
- To renegotiate the installment payments
- To receive information on grants and concessions
- To receive information from financial counselors
- To receive information on efficient mobile use.
- To not to be disconnected while participating in hardship program.

### **CUSTOMERS OBLIGATIONS:**

Slimtel Pty Ltd. considers the following as customer's obligations:

- To contact the Slimtel's customer services if experiencing the change in circumstances.
- To contact Slimtel Pty when unable to pay the payments according to agreed payment plan.
- To stay in touch with Slimtel Pty team.

### **HARDSHIP PROGRAMME:**

Slimtel Pty Ltd. approaches hardship with sensitivity and flexibility. We treat our Customers as individuals, recognizing that each customer has a distinct set of Circumstances, and responds differently to the multitude of stresses that result in Hardship. We employ proactive intervention strategies to identify customers in hardship and we respond with flexible payment options. Our Customers are directed to other avenues of support such as financial counsellors and Community groups. While participating in the program, our customers' financial plans are reviewed regularly.

In Slimtel Pty Ltd. Hardship program, customers who make agreements are Protected from further credit and collection activity while they adhere to the Agreement. We will advise customers in writing at the commencement of this Agreement what the terms of the agreement are and what will happen should they not Adhere to the agreement Slimtel Pty Ltd. will not disconnect any residential customer while they are actively participating in our hardship program.

### **HARDSHIP ASSISTANCE PLANS:**

Slimtel Pty Ltd. is committed to working together with customers to establish Payment plans that are flexible, affordable and sustainable. We will discuss all Payment options outlining their advantages and disadvantages, thereby allowing Customers to make informed decisions.

### **FLEXIBLE PAYMENT ARRANGEMENTS:**

Flexible payment arrangements are short-term extensions granted when a Customer advises they can't pay their current account on time. These Arrangements are usually offered to customers experiencing short-term financial difficulty as a result of an unexpected but short-term change in Income and/or expenditure. Payment extensions/arrangements allow the Customer the flexibility to pay-off the account in either a lump sum or Instalments prior to the next bill being issued. For example, customers can make payments at an amount they choose (Minimum payment amount is \$10) on a date they decide. We encourage Customers to make payments that at the least will cover their usage.

### **SLIMTEL PTY LTD. INSTALMENT PLAN:**

Slimtel Pty Ltd. Instalment Plan is a structured payment plan designed to encourage customers to budget for the cost of their energy use and any Accumulated arrears over a 2-3-month period. This will assist them to manage the peaks of their energy use, taking into account their capacity to pay.

### **YOU'RE OBLIGATIONS:**

You acknowledge the debt and your obligation to repay the debt you'll provide us with enough information for both parties to decide what constitutes a reasonable payment arrangement you accept responsibility for reducing your usage to a level that you are able to pay and, where relevant, you are

prepared to take up relevant restrictions on your use of the service to achieve this or you accept that the service will be disconnected you will make repayments to us as agreed under the financial hardship arrangement. If you experience any further financial difficulty, you'll tell us immediately and we'll review your situation.

### **MANAGING YOUR CLAIM:**

Managing your claim we may ask you to submit evidence to us to support your claim. Please refer to the Section in this policy that lists types of evidence that we may ask from you. We will take into account your circumstance and financial position to reach a financial arrangement that is suitable to both parties. Payment arrangements will be made with the view to cover any future use and reduce your debt.

We may suggest that some or all of your services be restricted or disconnected to prevent you falling further in debt whilst the arrangement is in place. We will attempt to contact you if this action becomes necessary and has not been discussed with you.

We will attempt to contact you should the arrangement not be kept by you prior to taking further credit management action.

If you require us to review your arrangement due to a change in your circumstance we will do so.

Whilst your payment arrangement remains in place we will not report your debt to a Credit Reporting Agency.

### **TERMINATION OF THE POLICY AGREEMENT:**

Termination of the policy agreement in the event the arrangement is not adhered to and we have not been contacted by you, we will take reasonable steps to contact you before taking further action. The agreement will be considered terminated after this time and credit management action will resume. In the event that you choose to cancel your account with Slimtel Pty Ltd, the arrangement will no longer be valid and normal credit management action will apply.

Failure to make the agreed payments on a regular basis may be viewed negatively and result in termination of the arrangement.

### **REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION TO SUPPORT YOUR CLAIM:**

Slimtel Pty Ltd. may ask for evidence to support your claim of financial hardship. Such evidence

May include:

1. Statement of financial position
2. Evidence that you have engaged a financial counsellor.
3. Statutory Declaration from a person that is familiar with your situation. (Family Doctor, Clergy, Bank Officer, etc.
4. Medical certificates from treating specialist or other medical professionals.

Email [info@slimtel.com.au](mailto:info@slimtel.com.au) or call 1300 7888 40 should you wish to apply or require any further Information.