



## **Independent Distribution Connection Specialists Ltd's**

### **Customer Code of Practice and Security of Supplies Statement**

**To support Standard Licence Conditions 8, 9 & 10**

**Effective from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024**

This Statement has been prepared  
in a form approved by Ofgem

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## Introduction

Independent Distribution Connection Specialists Ltd (IDCSL) is a licensed distribution network operator responsible for the safe delivery of electricity through its networks to properties across Great Britain.

This statement is prepared in accordance with the requirements of IDCSL's distribution licence issued under the Electricity Act 1989 (as amended by the Utilities Act 2000) and sets out our approach to Standard Licence Conditions (SLC) 8, 9 & 10 in particular:

- SLC 8: Safety and Security of Supply Service
- SLC 9: Arrangements for Access to Premises
- SLC 10: Special Services

This statement is available to customers in different media options, which are suitable for the communication needs of all persons. This will accommodate needs for the blind, partially sighted or persons with hearing difficulties. We will, when requested, use our best endeavours to assist any person in understanding this statement including those whose first language is not English.

A copy of this statement will be provided free of charge from our website or by email. It will also be made available in different formats (paper or electronic), foreign language versions, large print, Braille etc. upon request.

IDCSL will review this statement annually to ensure that the document remains current with the latest licence conditions.

## Further Information

All reports and enquiries received in accordance with this statement, whether made by telephone, in writing, or in person, will be processed in a prompt and efficient manner and in accordance with any relevant guaranteed and overall standards of service set from time to time by Ofgem.

If you have a non-urgent enquiry and you would like to contact us during office hours our details are:

Write to: Eden House, 454 New Hythe Ln, Aylesford ME20 7UH  
Call: 01622 933 399  
Emergency Security of Supply 0800 640 6345  
E-mail: [regulation@idcsl.co.uk](mailto:regulation@idcsl.co.uk)

Additionally, we will take all reasonable steps to inform each Authorised Electricity Operator (predominantly your electricity supplier to whom you pay your energy bills) that uses our service of any change to the postal or email addresses, website or telephone numbers as soon as practicable but before the change becomes effective.

Whilst IDCSL are responsible for the electricity network that delivers electricity to customers' homes and business premises, your energy supplier sends you a bill for your electricity and is responsible for your electricity meter. Details of your energy supplier can be found on your latest electricity bill.

## **SLC 8: Safety and Security of Supply Service**

We will provide, operate and maintain an emergency enquiry service facility where any person can contact us to receive information, guidance or advice on any matter or incident that relates to the security and integrity of their electricity supply or any relevant incident that requires our urgent attention.

The emergency enquiry service is continuously staffed and can be contacted 24 hours a day, 365 days a year by calling **0800 640 6345**. Please bear in mind that urgent reports are best made by telephone. The service is **free** at the point of use.

Reports made by post or in person should be restricted to events of a non-urgent nature.

### **Unplanned Loss of Supply**

If the electricity supply to your home is interrupted, we recommend that you follow these instructions as appropriate and refer to Appendix 1 of this Statement for advice on how to cope in the event of a loss of supply:

- If you have a prepayment meter, check that it is in credit. If not, you will need to contact your electricity supplier (to whom you pay your energy bills). We are unable to apply credit to prepayment meters.
- Check to see if your neighbours have lost their supply or, in hours of darkness if there are streetlights, that these have also gone out. If not, the problem could be with your own fuses.
- Check your trip switch to see if it is in the 'off' position. If it is try to reset it to 'on'. If the switch trips again then there may be a problem with your installation or with one of your appliances.
- If the trip switch is not in the off position, and you can find no other reason, there may be a problem with the electricity supply in your area.
- To report a loss of supply, or if you depend on electrical equipment for medical needs and you are experiencing difficulties, please call the National Emergency Number 105, or contact us directly on **0800 640 6345**
- If there is a fault on the network, we will try to restore electricity supplies as quickly as possible. However, if you rely on electricity equipment for medical needs, it is essential to have made alternative arrangements such as a back-up battery supply to help you in an emergency. Your doctor, hospital or medical equipment manufacturer should be able to advise.

## To Report an Emergency

As a Licensed Electricity Distribution Network operator we are responsible for the safety and maintenance of the equipment (electricity cables feeding in to your meter, substations, distribution fuse etc.) that connects the electricity supply to your premises.

To report a loss of supply or a concern about the safety of our cables or substations, call the National Emergency Number 105 or call us directly on **0800 640 6345**

In addition to receiving reports concerning the electricity distribution system, the service may be used by any person to enquire about the likely extent or duration of supply emergencies. Every effort will be made to provide precise and up-to-date information. However, if such emergencies are widespread this may not be possible and customers may be referred to other sources, including local radio, for periodic updates.

Our emergency enquiry service operates 365 days a year, 24 hours a day, **FREE OF CHARGE**.

Our emergency enquiry service staff are trained to provide non-technical advice for the avoidance of danger from the distribution system and from loss of supply. They have the necessary skills in communication and customer contact, but may be assisted by other non-technical staff during widespread emergencies. If technical advice or assistance is required, the enquiry will be passed to an appropriate specialist.

The reporting arrangements set out above are made available to other utilities, local authorities, and emergency services.

## Planned Loss of Supply

Sometimes we have to switch off the electricity supply to carry out essential planned maintenance of items on our electricity network or to connect new customers. We will either write to you or deliver a card showing the details of the times of interruption at least 2 days in advance, ensuring that customers have adequate warning if we have to interrupt the electricity supply to their home or business premises. However, we aim to provide at least 5 working days' notice.

Please note that where the interruption of supply is caused by an issue outside of IDCSL's control e.g. emergency street works that require a cessation of electricity or a fault on another organisation's network that is connected to ours, we will endeavour to inform you within 2 days of receiving the advance notification ourselves.

Our written notice delivered directly to your home will provide a telephone number to use if you wish to call us to obtain further details or to advise us of any other specific problems.

Please note that it is not possible to guarantee a constant supply of electricity and it is essential that you have alternative arrangements to fall back on. Please speak to your doctor or local health authority for advice.

## **SLC 9: Arrangements for Access to Premises**

### **Entering Your Premises**

From time to time we may need to visit your home to inspect or maintain our electrical equipment. Visits will either be made by one of our staff or a contractor working on our behalf, and we will do our best to adhere to any appointments that we make with you.

We have the right to enter your premises under the authority of a warrant obtained under the Rights of Entry (Gas and Electricity Boards) Act 1954 but will only request access to restore supply or maintain our equipment in your property (or other security of supply purpose).

Wherever possible, all IDCSL employees and/or contractors will have an identity card showing their company name, their own name, a colour photograph of the individual and a contact number in the event that you have any concerns. Always check a visitor's identity card before letting them into your home.

- We can also arrange for a password (chosen by yourself) that can be tested on the engineer to ensure their authenticity. Please refer to our Priority Service Register service section below.
- IDCSL or their contractors will be able to give you explanations and information on matters relevant to the purposes of their visit.
- IDCSL will take steps to ensure that all ID cards are returned when an employee leaves the company.
- IDCSL engineers or their contractors will be appropriately qualified and fully trained for the purpose of the visit and will be courteous at all times in their dealings with you, giving clear and accurate explanations as well as respecting your premises.

**If you have any doubts about whether a visitor is genuine, do not let them into your home.**

## **SLC 10: Special Services - The Priority Services Register**

If you are a domestic customer who has special requirements, it is important that we are aware of what these may be. Your energy supplier is obligated to keep a register of customers who they have been advised are:

- Blind
- Deaf or hard of hearing
- Disabled
- Dependent on electrical equipment for medical reasons
- Chronically sick
- A person whose first language is not English
- Living with an elderly person or minor or
- Someone who qualifies for the service (your energy supplier will be able to advise on who can qualify for the service).

These details will then be securely passed to us so that we can bear in mind any special requirements you may have should we need to visit your home or whether there is an unplanned or planned outage.

You can register your details by:

- Contacting your energy supplier, who can also register you for their Priority Services Register. Their number is on your latest bill. Your energy supplier will then securely pass your details on to us.
- By contacting us using the details in 'Further Information' on page 4. Please tell us your name, address, telephone number, details of any medical equipment you use in your home and how regularly you use it and additional information on your specific requirements e.g. a password to use when visiting your premises.

Once we place you on our Priority Services Register you may choose a password so that if we need to visit your home, you can be confident that the person entering your home is a IDCSL employee or contractor acting on our behalf.

Your details will be kept in strictest confidence and only passed on to other organisations for energy-related purposes. Assuming consent, we will securely pass your details onto your energy supplier but you have the right to ask us not to forward on your details.

We will let you know in advance of a planned interruption to your electricity supply and we will try to keep you informed of expected restoration times in the event of a power failure. You can also give us or your energy supplier the name of a friend or relative to act on your behalf in the event of a supply interruption or planned interruption.

Please note that it is not possible to guarantee a constant supply of electricity and it is essential that you have alternative arrangements to fall back on. If a constant supply is essential for you, please speak to your doctor, local health authority or medical equipment provider for advice if your electricity supply goes off either planned or unexpectedly.

## **Guaranteed Standards of Service**

IDCSL aims to at least meet the Guaranteed Standards of Service that are required by Ofgem and laid out in [The Electricity \(Standards of Performance\) Regulations 2015 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk). We will be happy to provide you with a copy of the Statutory Instrument upon request.

These standards have been set to guarantee a level of service that is reasonable to expect licensed distribution network operators to deliver in all cases.

Payments under the guaranteed standards compensate for the inconvenience caused by loss of supply. They are not designed to compensate customers for subsequent financial loss.

The guaranteed standards cover key service areas, including supply restoration, connections and voltage quality. If we do not meet a standard, we will, subject to certain exclusions, make a payment to you. Please refer to the table below regarding compensation areas and prescribed sums.



Regulation	Description	Prescribed Period	Prescribed Sum Domestic	Prescribed Sum Non Domestic
5(2)(a)	Supply failure - normal conditions	12 hours	£95.00	£180.00
5(2)(b)	as above - each 12 hours thereafter		£40.00	£40.00
6(2)(a)	Supply failure - more than 5000 customers	24 hours	£95.00	£180.00
6(2)(b)	as above - each 12 hours thereafter		£40.00	£40.00
7(4)(a)	Supply failure - Cat 1 severe weather	24 hours	£85.00	£85.00
7(4)(b)	as above - each 12 hours thereafter		£40.00	£40.00
7(5)(a)	Supply failure - Cat 2 severe weather	48 hours	£85.00	£85.00
7(5)(b)	as above - each 12 hours thereafter		£40.00	£40.00
		Calculated by formula for each distributor		
7(6)(a)	Supply failure - Cat 3 severe weather			
7(6)(b)	as above - each 12 hours thereafter			
8(2)	Supply failure - rota disconnection	24 hours	£95.00	£180.00
10(1)	Multiple interruptions		£95.00	£95.00
11(3)	Distributor's fuse failure	3 hours - working day	£35.00	£35.00
11(3)	Distributor's fuse failure	4 hours - any other day	£35.00	£35.00
12(4)	Failure to notify shutdown to customer	2 days	£35.00	£75.00
12(5)	Failure to notify shutdown to other distributor	5 days	£35.00	£75.00
12(6)	Failure to notify customer of upstream shutdown	2 days	£35.00	£75.00
13(2)	Voltage outside limits	7 working days	£35.00	£35.00
13(4)(a)	as above - failure to visit		£35.00	£35.00
13(4)(b)	Voltage outside limits - failure to explain	5 working days	£35.00	£35.00
17(3)	Failure to offer an appointment		£35.00	£35.00
17(4)	Failure to keep an appointment		£35.00	£35.00
19(4)	Failure to make a customer payment or to other distributor for onward transmission to customer	10 working days	£35.00	£35.00
19(5)	Failure to make a customer payment or to the electricity supplier for onward transmission to customer	10 working days	£35.00	£35.00

## Complaints and Customer Satisfaction

Our members of staff are trained to listen carefully to your complaint in a polite and understanding way and may ask you further questions to assist them in fully understanding your complaint or query.

If you are dissatisfied with IDCSL for any reason, please feel free to contact us, using the contact information provided in the Further Information section on page 4.

IDCSL will respond to all forms of contact within 10 working days. Should we fail to respond within this deadline, we will provide you with a compensation payment in accordance with Ofgem's Guaranteed Standards.

### Escalating your Complaint

If you are not happy with your initial response or any decision made by IDCSL in resolving your complaint, you can, at any time, escalate the matter further.

Firstly, contact our Head of Regulations and Compliance explaining why you remain dissatisfied. They will endeavour to resolve your complaint promptly. However, should they fail to do so, they will escalate the complaint directly to director level.

In the unlikely event that you are still not satisfied with IDCSL's response, you may then refer the matter to The Citizens Advice Consumer Service (CACS). They offer free, independent advice and will look at your complaint, but they do expect us to try to resolve it first.

To contact CACS:

- Call an adviser for help or advice on 0808 223 1133
- Find your nearest Citizen's Advice by visiting their website at <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/> and entering your postcode
- If you cannot speak or hear on the phone, they also offer a Relay UK service where you can type what you want to say. Dial 18001 followed by 0808 223 1133
- You can use an online form or chat to an adviser online by visiting their website at <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/>

## Appendix 1 – How to Prepare in the Event of an Outage

### How to prepare for a Planned Outage

- Keep a mobile phone fully charged, and also a portable power bank if possible.
- For major incidents, particularly when caused by severe storms, tune a battery-operated radio to national radio which will help keep you informed
- Keep a torch and batteries handy. We don't recommend using candles but if you choose to please take extra care
- Only use alternative forms of heating, lighting or cooking if you can do so safely
- Make sure you and your vulnerable relatives/neighbours have a charged mobile phone with important numbers easily accessible in case help is needed
- Keep important documents and essential telephone numbers somewhere accessible
- If the weather is cold, ensure you have a good supply of warm clothing and a blanket close to hand
- Fill a vacuum flask and a hot water bottle. Ensure you have some food and drink available that doesn't need heating, or prepare it and keep fridge and freezer doors closed to preserve their contents.
- If you have a stair lift, avoid using it up to 30 minutes prior to a planned power cut
- Regularly back-up work and important files on your computer before a power cut.

### What to do in an Unplanned Outage

- Switch off all electrical appliances except fridges and freezers. It is estimated that food should keep for between 4-6 hours in the fridge and up to 48 hours in a full freezer (24 hours if half full) if you can avoid opening it.
- Leave a light on so you know when power is restored
- Check to see if your neighbours are OK
- If the weather is cold, keep blankets and warm clothing near you
- Stay calm, follow advice and sit tight – don't panic. We will get you up and running as soon as possible.

### Need of Electricity for Medical Reasons?

If you are medically dependent on electricity you may be familiar with the process and limitations of your equipment - as power cuts can occur from time-to-time during a typical year, including during severe weather. You may have backup power sources to keep your equipment powered for several hours during a power failure.

If you require a continuous supply of electricity for medical reasons and would need medical support during a power cut, please seek advice from your medical equipment provider and if you are having difficulties, contact your doctor or local health authority.