

Guideline: Electricity Bill Payment

1. Background

The distribution licensees, “Ceylon Electricity Board” and “Lanka Electricity Company (Private) Limited” have indicated the modes of payment and described various institutions authorized by them to accept electricity bill payments from consumers in their Supply Services Codes.

All tariff customers have the following rights as stated in the Statement of Rights and Obligations of Electricity Consumers (ROEC) with regard to the electricity bill payments they make to their service providers:

- 1.1 To be allowed a period of fourteen (14) days from the date of issuing the electricity bill, to settle the charges due with respect to a billing period, without being charged of any interest or issuance of a disconnection notice (E10 under Part II of ROEC).
- 1.2 To receive at least a ten (10) days’ notice prior to disconnecting the electricity supply of his/her premises (B.3 under Part II of ROEC).
- 1.3 To know all the modes of payment available to settle electricity bills and the time taken to update the payments made through such modes, allowing the tariff customer to select his/her convenient mode of payment (E13 under Part II of ROEC).
- 1.4 To receive an acknowledgment containing the following details for the payments made to the licensees’ own bill payment collecting centers (6.3.4 of SSC):
 - Date of payment
 - Account number
 - Name of the account holder
 - Mode of payment
 - Amount paid
- 1.5 To receive an acknowledgement containing the following details for the payments made to all other bill payment collecting centers (E12 under Part II of ROEC).:
 - Date of payment
 - Account number
 - Amount paid

Inconveniences to tariff customers, such as disconnection of their electricity supply, occur mainly due to late realization of their payments by the licensees. To avoid such inconveniences, it is prudent for the licensees to make all endeavors to provide facilities for the tariff customers to pay their electricity bills conveniently and to realize such payments promptly to the respective billing accounts. Such facility not only enhances the cash inflow of the licensee, but also minimizes inconveniences to tariff customers.

2. Mode of Payment and Authorized Institutions

All distribution licensees have the obligation to keep their tariff customers informed about the modes of payment available to them and the institutions authorized by the licensees to collect such payments. Also, it is the responsibility of the licensees to realize all payments made by the tariff customers to their respective billing accounts promptly. However, in rural areas, the realization period shall not be more than five working days for the payments made to Post Offices and Sub Post Offices and shall not be more than three working days for the payments made to all other institutions authorized by the licensees. The tariff customers shall also be informed of the specific realization periods with respect to each institution authorized by the licensees to collect payments.

3. Disconnection Notices

The licensees may, providing the concessionary period of fourteen (14) days, issue the earliest disconnection notices of ten (10) days' commencing from the fifteenth (15th) day from the date of issuing the electricity bills to those tariff customers who failed to settle the charges due.

4. Disconnection Orders

The licensees may issue the earliest disconnection orders on the twenty fifth (25th) day and disconnect the electricity supply, if any tariff customer failed to settle the charges due on the twenty fourth (24th) day from the date of issuing the electricity bill. When processing disconnection orders, the licensees shall make provisions in their billing system to accommodate the payment realization periods of five working days for the payments made to Post Offices and Sub Post Offices and not be more than three working days for the payments made to all other institutions authorized by the licensees, so that disconnection orders shall not be issued to those tariff customers, who settled the charges due on the twenty fourth (24th) day from the date of issuing the electricity bill.

5. Date of Payment

The date of payment of any electricity bill paid by any tariff customer is the date that appear in the acknowledgement (receipt) issued by the licensees or by their authorized institutions collecting such payment and not the date of realization of such payment.

6. Dishonored Cheque

In any event, any cheque tendered by any tariff customer is dishonored and returned to the licensee by the bank, the licensees can recover the losses incurred to them (as approved by the Commission under Allowed Charges) due to such transaction from such tariff customer.

7. Dispute Resolution

Any dispute arising with regard to electricity bill payment can be forwarded to the respective Deputy General Manager of the Ceylon Electricity Board or Head of Operations of the Lanka Electricity Company (Private) Limited as a Dispute Resolution Officer under PART I of the Electricity (Dispute Resolution Procedure) Rules Published in Gazette Extraordinary No. 1951/1 dated 25th January 2016.

Where the parties to a dispute referred fail to reach a settlement which is acceptable to both parties, either party to the dispute may inform the Commission and call upon to resolve the same through mediation under Part-II of the above Rules.