

# GAS DISTRIBUTION CODE OF PRACTICE (LIFE SUPPORT REFORMS) AMENDMENT 2026

## Amendments made by the Essential Services Commission on XX/XX/2026

### 1 Nature and commencement of this instrument

This instrument amends the Gas Distribution Code of Practice.

Schedule 1 of this instrument comes into operation on 1 December 2027

### 2. Schedule 1 – Table of Amendments

#### Clause 1 – Introduction

In subclause 1.2, after ‘1 October 2024’, insert ‘and was last amended on 1 December 2027’.

After subclause 1.4.3(b), insert the following:

#### **1.5. Application to exempt distributors**

1.5.1. This *Code of Practice* applies to an *exempt distributor*:

- (a) as set out in Schedule 1A of this Code of Practice; and
- (b) where an *exempt distributor* is a *customer* of a *distributor*, to the extent that this *Code of Practice* confers any right or imposes any obligation upon a *customer*.

#### Clause 2 – Interpretation

In subclause 2.1, omit the definition of ‘*deregistration notice*’ and substitute ‘[not used]’.

In subclause 2.1, after the definition of *ESV*, insert the following:

***exempt distributor*** a person who is exempt from holding a license under Part 2 of the *Gas Embedded Networks General Exemption Order*.

In subclause 2.1, after the definition of Gas Distribution Code of Practice, insert the following:

**Gas Embedded Networks General Exemption Order** the Order in Council made under section 24(1)(a) of the *Act* and published in the Victorian Government Gazette No. S 69 on 25 February 2025 (as amended from time to time).

In subclause 2.1, after the definition of life support equipment, but before the definition of life support protections, insert the following:

**Note:** See Schedule 7 of the *Energy Retail Code of Practice*

In subclause 2.1, after the definition of *life support resident*, insert the following:

**life-threatening condition** a condition that a registered medical practitioner has identified in the relevant *medical confirmation* as being one where the *life support resident* would be at a high likelihood of death or permanent injury if the *life support equipment* used by that *life support resident* was to be without power during a prolonged power outage.

In subclause 2.1, omit the definition of '*medical confirmation*' and substitute the following:

**medical confirmation** a *medical confirmation form* in which all mandatory fields have been completed and which is signed and dated by a registered medical practitioner.

Note: For transitional arrangements for *medical confirmation*, see clause 1 of Schedule 4.

In subclause 2.1, omit the definition of '*medical confirmation form*' and substitute the following:

**medical confirmation form** the form titled "Medical Confirmation Form for Life Support Equipment" published on the Commission's website from time to time and to be issued by a *retailer* to a *relevant customer* to enable a *relevant customer* to provide (in hard copy or electronic format) *medical confirmation* to the *retailer*.

In subclause 2.1, in the definition of '*register of life support customers and residents*', omit '7.3' and substitute '7.4'.

In subclause 2.1, omit the definition of '*registered life support customer*' and substitute '[not used]'.

In subclause 2.1, insert the following:

***secondary contact person*** in relation to premises that have been, or are to be, registered as requiring *life support equipment*, means an additional person (which may, without limitation, be the *life support resident*) nominated by the *life support customer*, in a *medical confirmation form* or otherwise advised by the customer to a *retailer*, to be provided with information, notices or requests where such information, notices or requests are required to be given to a *life support customer*.

## **Clause 7 – Life support equipment**

In subclause 7.3, delete subclauses (a); (b); (c) in their entirety and substitute 'Deleted' for each subclause.

In subclause 7.3(d), after 'a person residing or intending to reside at the', insert '*small*'.

Delete subclause 7.4. Substitute the following:

### **7.4 Distributor obligations when advised by retailer**

Within one *business day* after being advised by a *retailer*, under section 48DI(4), 48DK(2) and 48DL(5), of the *Act* or clause 165(1)(d) of the *Energy Retail Code of Practice*, that a *life support resident* resides, or is intending to reside, at the *small customer's* premises, a *distributor* must record in a *register of life support customers and residents* the *life support customer details* provided by the *retailer* to the *distributor*.

Delete subclause 7.5 in its entirety and substitute 'Deleted' for.

Delete subclause 7.6 in its entirety and substitute 'Deleted'.

Delete subclause 7.7.1. and substitute the following:

- 7.7.1.** Where a *distributor* is required to register a *customer's* supply address in a *register of life support customers and residents*, the *distributor* has the following ongoing obligations:
- (a)** if the *small customer* contacts the *distributor* to provide updated *life support customer details* or details of any *secondary contact person*, inform the *small customer* that it is necessary for the *small customer* to provide that information to the *retailer* for the *register of life support customers and residents* to be updated;

- (b) within one *business day* after being advised by a *retailer* that the *retailer* has updated or included new information on its register of life support customers and residents, make the same update to, or include the new information in, the *distributor's register of life support customers and residents*;
- (c) except in the case of an *interruption*, not *disconnect* the supply address after the date the *life support equipment* will be required at the supply address;
- (d) in the case of an *interruption* that is a *planned interruption*, comply with clause 5.6; and
- (e) if the *small customer* contacts the *distributor* to advise that *life support equipment* is no longer required at the premises, the *distributor* must inform the *small customer* that for the premises to be *deregistered* the *small customer* must advise the *retailer* that the *life support equipment* is no longer required at the premises.

Delete subclause 7.7.2. and substitute 'Deleted'.

In subclause 7.8.1., in between 'a' and 'customer', insert 'small'. Omit 'permitted' and substitute 'required'.

Delete subclause 7.8.2. in its entirety and substitute 'Deleted'.

In subclause 7.8.3., omit 'or an exempt person'. In between 'a' and 'customer', insert 'small'. Omit 'update *life support customer details* entered in its *register of life support customers and residents* as required by clause 7.13' and substitute *deregister that customer's supply address.*

Delete subclause 7.10 in its entirety and substitute 'Deleted'.

Delete subclause 7.11 in its entirety and substitute 'Deleted'.

Delete subclause 7.12 in its entirety and substitute 'Deleted'.

In subclause 7.13., between 'be' and 'kept', insert 'maintained and'. Between 'kept' and 'by', insert 'up to date'.

In subclause 7.13(a), omit 'for registering and *deregistering life support customers*'. After

'clause 7', insert ', including for registering and *deregistering life support customers* and updating and including new information in the *register of life support customers and residents* based on information provided by *retailers*'.

In subclause 7.13(b), after 'date', insert 'based on information provided by *retailers*'.

In subclause 7.13(b)(i), between 'the' and '*customer*', insert '*small*'.

In subclause 7.13(b)(ii), between 'received' and 'from', insert 'by the *retailer*'. Between 'the' and '*customer*', insert '*small*'.

After subclause 7.13(b)(ii), insert the following:

- (iia) whether the *life support resident* has a *life-threatening condition*;
- (iib) the *life support equipment* used by the *life support resident*;
- (iic) contact details and communication preferences of the *customer* and any *secondary contact person*; and

In subclause 7.13(b)(iii), between 'the' and '*customer*', insert '*small*'. Omit 'and the reason for deregistration; and' and substitute a full-stop (.)

Delete subclause 7.13(b)(iv) and substitute 'Deleted'.

## **Schedule 1 – Civil Penalty Requirements**

In '*clauses specified as civil penalty requirements*', under '*Part 7 – Life support equipment*', omit '7.3' and substitute '7.3(d)'. Omit '7.6.1', '7.7.2', '7.8.2' and '7.11(e)'.

## **Schedule 1A – Application of exempt distributors**

After Schedule 1: Civil Penalty Requirements, insert:

# **Schedule 1A: Application to exempt distributors**

1. The following provisions of this *Code of Practice* apply to an *exempt distributor*:

### **Clauses applicable to exempt distributors**

Part 3 – Operation of a distribution system	3.1.
Part 4 – Connections and augmentation	4.1.1; 4.1.2; 4.1.3; 4.1.4; 4.1.5; 4.1.6; 4.2.1; 4.2.2; 4.2.3; 4.2.4; 4.3.1; 4.3.2.
Part 5 – Interruption	5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5, 5.6.
Part 6 – Disconnection, reconnection and abolishment	6.1.1; 6.1.2; 6.1.3; 6.1.4; 6.1.5; 6.3.1; 6.3.2; 6.3.3; 6.4.1, 6.4.4, 6.4.5.
Part 7 – Life support equipment	7.3(d); 7.4(a)-(b); 7.7.1; 7.8.1; 7.8.3; 7.9; 7.13
Part 9 – Non-compliance by distributors and customers	9.1.1; 9.1.2; 9.2.
Part 10 – Customer complaint handling	10.1.1; 10.1.2; 10.1.3; 10.1.4.
Part 13 – Other matters	13.1; 13.2; 13.3.

2. For the purposes of this Schedule 1A:

- (a) A reference to *distributor* in this *Code of Practice* is to be taken to be a reference to an *exempt distributor*.
- (b) A reference to a *distribution pipeline*, *distribution system*, or *shared distribution system* in this *Code of Practice* is taken to be a reference to the embedded network.
- (c) A reference to a *distribution delivery point*, *transfer point* or *receipt point* in the *Code of Practice* is taken to be a reference to a 'child connection point' as defined in the *Gas Embedded Networks General Exemption Order*.
- (d) A reference to a *metering installation* in this *Code of Practice* is taken to be a reference to a metering installation as defined in the *Gas Embedded Networks General Exemption Order*.
- (e) For the avoidance of doubt, clauses 6.4.1, 6.4.4 and 6.4.5 of this *Code of Practice* apply to an *exempt distributor* in respect of abolishments of child connection points in their embedded network, and are in addition to the requirements in clause 9 of the *Gas Embedded Networks General Exemption Order*.

### **Schedule 3: Gas distributor reporting obligations and performance indicators**

In 'Table 2: Type 1 breaches – gas distributors', omit '7.6.1' and '7.7.2'.

In 'Table 3: Type 2 breaches – gas distributors', under 'Part 7 – Life support equipment', omit '7.8.2' and '7.11(e)'.

### **Schedule 4: Transitional Arrangements**

After 'Schedule 3: Gas distributor reporting obligations and performance indicators, insert:

## **Schedule 4: Transitional Arrangements**

1. A *life support customer* that, prior to 31 December 2027, was registered and had provided *medical confirmation* in a form valid at the time they provided the *medical confirmation* is deemed to have provided *medical confirmation* for the purposes of this Code.