



Credit Management Policy

Bendigo Telco has a defined and reliable credit management process in place to maintain an acceptable level of credit risk for both our customer and our company.

Our credit management process follows requirements under the *Telecommunications Consumer Protections Code (TCP Code)*, the *Telecommunications (Financial Hardship) Industry Standard 2024*, *Part IIIA of the Privacy Act 1988* and *Privacy (Credit Reporting) Code 2014*.

Credit Assessments

Prior to establishing your account, a credit assessment will be undertaken to determine your creditworthiness. Please refer to our Privacy & Credit Reporting Policy for further information.

Bendigo Telco will only provide services to you if you meet our credit approval criteria. In line with our Standard Form of Agreement (SFOA), should you fall under this approval criteria, Bendigo Telco reserves the right to review your circumstances and may provide services with restricted or conditional access, or undertake the process of obtaining a security bond or guarantor, in lieu of a failed credit assessment.

Credit Control – TCP Code

Standard Treatment Plans

All treatments are based on the Customer's account within our billing system. Notices are issued in the same manner as the customer receives their monthly invoice.

At request of you (the customer), Bendigo Telco will agree to review any decision to restrict, suspend or disconnect any services and inform you at the time of your request of the decision. If the review is not completed at the time of request, Bendigo Telco will advise the customer of a time that this review will be completed.

After a review has been completed and customer has been advised, if the customer is still not happy with the outcome of review, we will advise you on how you can make a complaint. See our Customer Complaints and Feedback Policy for further information.

If there is a disputed amount, we will not suspend or disconnect those services in dispute until this has been rectified, however Bendigo Telco will still issue standard treatment notices in relation to services not in dispute.

Reminder Notice

Reminder Notices are issued **4 days** after the due date of an invoice has passed. This reminder notice gives you up to 7 days to pay the overdue amount before any Suspension Notice is issued.

Suspension Notice

Suspension Notices are issued **11 calendar days** after the relevant invoice due date. This suspension notice gives you up to 7 days to pay the overdue amount before any Disconnection Notice is issued. Our suspension notice will also notify you that any on-going or additional charges will still apply during Suspension.

Disconnection Notice

Disconnection Notices are issued **25 calendar days** after the relevant invoice due date. Disconnection is a permanent action and when applied to certain telecommunications services may result in loss of access to emergency service numbers and could also result in loss of the customers' telecommunications service number e.g. – Phone number.

Payment Plan

If you have an agreed payment plan and you fail to maintain that payment schedule your service will revert back to the standard treatment plan notifications and suspension or disconnection may apply.

Credit Control – Financial Hardship

Where you have not met your obligations for payment under the agreed arrangement for financial hardship, we will within a 10-day period of this failed payment contact you by two of the following methods each time (SMS, Email or Phone) to discuss the matter and offer to review the arrangement. We will do this by:

- At **1 day overdue** of a missed payment, issue you with two of the following methods (phone call, a reminder SMS, or email) that your agreed payment has been missed and ask if you need to discuss this payment arrangement.
- At **day 5 overdue** we will issue you with a second reminder by two of the following methods (phone call, a reminder SMS, or email) that your agreed payment is still outstanding and seek to discuss the financial hardship agreement and payment options.
- At **day 10 overdue** we will issue you with a third reminder by two of the following methods (phone call, a reminder SMS, or email) that your agreed payment is still outstanding and seek a final opportunity to discuss the financial hardship agreement and payment options and advise that if unpaid, we may cancel your financial hardship arrangement and that this may result in credit management action being applied.
- If you have failed to communicate with us within the above **10-day period**, Bendigo Telco will issue you a Suspension Notice, requiring payment within **7-day period** to avoid suspension of your services.
- If your service is suspended and remains unpaid or no payment plans have been put in place, Bendigo Telco will issue you a Disconnection Notice requiring payment within **7-day period** to avoid disconnection of your services.

Written notice via email will include:

- a) what action is being taken;
- b) when the action is due to occur;
- c) reasons for the decision to take credit management action;
- d) explaining all charges that may apply;
- e) impacts that the action may have on any other telecommunications products Bendigo Telco supplies;
- f) include contact points for enquiries, including details for the TIO and financial counselling services.

Credit Default – Debt Collection

If after numerous attempts to seek payment of any outstanding amount and the amount outstanding remains unpaid, Bendigo Telco will seek formal debt collection with formal letters of demand issued. Failure to respond to these formal letters of demand may result in a default listing against your credit file.

We will do this by:

- a) a notice has been sent to you at your last known address informing you about the overdue payment and requesting payment
- b) a second notice has been sent to you at least **30 days** later informing you that if you do not make a payment that Bendigo telco intends to disclose the information to our Credit reporting agency, Equifax.
- c) after **14 days** of issuing of the second notice, but no more than **3 months** after issuing the second notice, Bendigo Telco can list the default.