



ONLINE POWER & GAS

CONCESSIONS INFORMATION

Introduction

The Victorian Government offers a number of concessions designed to assist and improve the affordability of essential services for low-income Victorian households. This guide outlines how concessions can help you pay your domestic rates, water, energy and gas bills. You will find details about programs, eligibility criteria and how to apply for concessions.

Victoria - Department of Human Services (DHS)

- Website:

<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/for-individuals/financial-support/concessions>

Energy Concessions

- Annual Electricity Concession
- Excess Electricity Concession
- Controlled Load Electricity Concession
- Electricity Transfer Fee Waiver
- Life Support Concession
- Medical Cooling Concession
- Service to Property Charge Concession

Annual Electricity Concession

The Annual Electricity Concession is available to help ease cost of living pressures by providing concession cardholders with a discount of 17.5 per cent off household electricity bills. The concession is calculated based on the remaining account balance once electricity retailer discounts and/or solar credits have been applied.

The Commonwealth Government currently provides eligible cardholders with compensation towards energy costs, including the Energy Supplement. This compensation represents a subsidy of \$171.60 for electricity across the year and so for a concession cardholder's annual electricity bill the State Government concession will not apply to the first \$171.60. This is so that eligible households are not compensated by two levels of government for the same expense.

The AEC will be calculated at the current rate of 17.5% off usage and supply charges all year round, however an additional calculation step will be added which will reduce the concession amount by a daily rate of \$0.0823 (GST inclusive) or \$0.0748 (GST exclusive).

How to apply

Concession holder has to phone electricity retailer and give concession card details over the phone. Electricity retailer will check concession card details with Centrelink and apply the discount to your bill.

Eligible Concession Cards:

- Pensioner Concession Card
- Centrelink Health Care Card
- Veterans' Affairs Pensioner Concession Card
- Department of Veterans' Affairs Gold Card

Ineligible Concession Cards:

- Holders of a Health Care Card for Child Disability and Foster Care issued in the name of the child
- Holders of a Seniors Card.

A concession can only be claimed if:

- Energy account is in the name of the concession cardholder
- Supply address post code should match with primary residence of the cardholder
- Electricity account is billed on a domestic tariff.
- Power supply accounts only

Excess Electricity Concession

Concession households with annual electricity bills of more than \$2,882 for the current annual concession period will need to apply for the Excess Electricity Concession to continue to receive the 17.5 per cent concession on electricity consumed above this amount.

Recipients of the Life Support Concession and/or the Medical Cooling Concession are exempt from the need to apply for the Excess Electricity Concession and are not required to lodge an application form in order to receive the concession.

How to apply

Electricity retailer will identify if concession card holder need to apply for the Excess Electricity Concession and provide you with an application form. To apply, affected eligible concession cardholder will need to submit a completed application to the Department of Health & Human Services.

The department will check your eligibility and advise retailer who will calculate the Excess Electricity Concession and apply the discount to energy bill.

Eligible Concession Cards:

- Pensioner Concession Card
- Centrelink Health Care Card
- Veterans' Affairs Pensioner Concession Card
- Department of Veterans' Affairs Gold Card

Ineligible Concession Cards:

- Holders of a Health Care Card for Child Disability and Foster Care issued in the name of the child
- Holders of a Seniors Card.

A concession can only be claimed if:

- Energy account is in the name of the concession cardholder
- Supply address post code should match with primary residence of the cardholder
- Electricity account is billed on a domestic tariff.

Controlled Load Electricity Concession (formally known as Off-Peak Electricity Concession)

The Controlled Load Electricity Concession provides a 13 per cent discount on controlled load usage charges.

Controlled load charges apply to separately metered electric hot water or slab heating which is measured via a dual element electricity meter or dual element smart meter. These tariffs are usually shown as 'controlled load' or 'dedicated circuit' tariffs. The concession only applies to the controlled load component of

the bill. The concession is applied on bills issued throughout the year.

The Off-Peak Electricity Concession does not apply to general electricity consumption during off-peak periods enabled by the introduction of flexible or time of use tariffs.

How to apply

Concession holder has to phone electricity retailer and give concession card details over the phone. Electricity retailer will check concession card details with Centrelink and apply the discount to your bill.

Eligible Concession Cards:

- Pensioner Concession Card
- Centrelink Health Care Card
- Veterans' Affairs Pensioner Concession Card
- Department of Veterans' Affairs Gold Card

Ineligible Concession Cards:

- Holders of a Health Care Card for Child Disability and Foster Care issued in the name of the child
- Holders of a Seniors Card.

A concession can only be claimed if:

- Energy account is in the name of the concession cardholder
- Supply address post code should match with primary residence of the cardholder
- Electricity account is billed on a domestic tariff.
- Power supply accounts only

Service to Property Charge Concession

The Service to Property Charge Concession provides a discount on the electricity service charge where a household has very low electricity usage. The usage charge must be less than the service charge. The discount reduces the service charge to the cost of the total electricity usage for the billing period. This concession is available all year round. The electricity retailer will automatically apply the concession on bills where the customer is eligible.

How to apply

Concession holder has to phone electricity retailer and give concession card details over the phone. Electricity retailer will check concession card details with Centrelink and apply the discount to your bill.

Eligible Concession Cards:

- Pensioner Concession Card
- Centrelink Health Care Card
- Veterans' Affairs Pensioner Concession Card
- Department of Veterans' Affairs Gold Card

Ineligible Concession Cards:

- Holders of a Health Care Card for Child Disability and Foster Care issued in the name of the child
- Holders of a Seniors Card.

A concession can only be claimed if:

- Energy account is in the name of the concession cardholder
- Supply address post code should match with primary residence of the cardholder
- Electricity account is billed on a domestic tariff.
- Power supply accounts only

Transfer Fee Waiver

The Electricity Transfer Fee Waiver waives the fee that is normally payable to electricity retailers when cardholders move house. It provides a 100 per cent waiver of the fee payable by the customer when they transfer their electricity account to their new residential address. The Transfer Fee Waiver is not applicable on new property connections.

How to apply

Concession holder has to phone electricity retailer and give concession card details over the phone. Electricity retailer will check concession card details with Centrelink and apply the discount to your bill.

Eligible Concession Cards:

- Pensioner Concession Card
- Centrelink Health Care Card
- Veterans' Affairs Pensioner Concession Card
- Department of Veterans' Affairs Gold Card

Ineligible Concession Cards:

- Holders of a Health Care Card for Child Disability and Foster Care issued in the name of the child
- Holders of a Seniors Card.

A concession can only be claimed if:

- Energy account is in the name of the concession cardholder
- Supply address post code should match with primary residence of the cardholder
- Electricity account is billed on a domestic tariff.
- Power supply accounts only

Medical Cooling Concession

The Medical Cooling Concession provides a 17.5 per cent discount on summer electricity costs for cardholders where a member of the family has a medical condition that affects the body's ability to regulate temperature. This concession is available from 1 November to 30 April each year. The concession is given in addition to the Annual Electricity Concession.

Qualifying conditions include:

- Multiple sclerosis
- Lymphedema
- Parkinson's disease
- Fibromyalgia
- Post-polio syndrome/poliomyelitis
- Motor neuron disease

Applications for other conditions must be approved by the Department of Health & Human Services

To be eligible for the concession all of the following criteria must be met:

- The account holder must be the primary cardholder of an eligible concession card.
- The account holder or a permanent member of the household must have a qualifying medical condition as determined by the department.

- All eligible concession cardholders must complete the Medical Cooling Concession Application form that is issued by the Department of Human Services.
- The patient's general medical practitioner must sign the form as confirmation that the account holder or a permanent member of their household has the stated medical condition.
- The application is then assessed and processed by Online Power and Gas in accordance with the Department of Human Services' eligibility criteria for the Medical Cooling Concession.

How to apply

Phone electricity retailer for an application form or contact the Concessions Information Line on 1800 658 521 (toll free).

The application form needs to be completed and signed by doctor confirming your medical condition. If condition is one of the pre-approved conditions, forward the form to your electricity retailer. For any other condition, forward form to the Department of Health & Human Services for assessment. Electricity retailer will check your concession card details with Centrelink and apply the discount to your bill.

Please send completed form to:

Online Power and Gas Pty Ltd
PO Box 13293 Law Courts VIC 8010

Application forms for any medical condition other than those listed above should be forwarded to the Department of Human Services' Concessions Unit for assessment:

Department of Human Services

Concessions Unit
GPO Box 4057 Melbourne VIC 3001

Eligible Concession Cards:

- Pensioner Concession Card
- Centrelink Health Care Card
- Veterans' Affairs Pensioner Concession Card
- Department of Veterans' Affairs Gold Card

Ineligible Concession Cards:

- Holders of a Health Care Card for Child Disability and Foster Care issued in the name of the child
- Holders of a Seniors Card.

Life Support Concession

The Life Support Concession provides discount on electricity bills where a household member uses an eligible life support machine. This concession is available to both renters and homeowners all year round.

For electricity bills, the discount is equal to the cost of 1,880 kilowatt hours of electricity used each year, calculated using the general domestic tariff of your retailer. Qualifying machines are those that use at least 1,880 kilowatt hours per annum.

Machines already approved are:

- Oxygen concentrators
- Hemodialysis machines
- Intermittent peritoneal dialysis machines

Other machines has to be approved by the supervising officer at the Department of Human Services

The electricity account holder must hold a concession card to be eligible for the concession. The Life Support Concession is not available to account holders who have an eligible machine but do not hold an eligible concession card. The electricity account holder or a permanent member of the account holder's household must be the user of the eligible life support machine. The following are some types of machines commonly used which are not eligible for the Life Support Concession as they consume low levels of electricity:

- Continuous Positive Airways Pressure machines (CPAP machines)
- Bi-Pap machines
- Ventilators
- Ventolin nebulizers
- Humidifiers

All eligible concession cardholders must complete the Life Support Concession Application form that is issued by the Department of Human Services. The form must be signed by either a medical staff member at the hospital that issued the life support machine, the patient's general medical practitioner or a medical specialist, as verification that a life support machine is being used at the stated address.

How to apply

For an application form contact electricity retailer or hospital supplying the life support machine or the Concessions Information Line on 1800 658 521 (toll free).

Application forms need to be completed and signed by your doctor, nurse or hospital social worker confirming your use of a life support machine. Once completed, forward the form to your electricity retailer and/or water corporation. Electricity retailer will check your concession card details with Centrelink and apply the discount to your bill.

Please send your completed form to:

Online Power & Gas
PO Box 13293 Law Courts VIC 8010

For other machines, please contact the Concessions Information Line on 1800 658 521 (toll free) to discuss the application.

Eligible Concession Cards:

- Pensioner Concession Card
- Centrelink Health Care Card
- Veterans' Affairs Pensioner Concession Card
- Department of Veterans' Affairs Gold Card

Ineligible Concession Cards:

- Holders of a Health Care Card for Child Disability and Foster Care issued in the name of the child
- Holders of a Seniors Card.