



Validation Guidelines

Prolonged Power Outage Payment Program

Purpose of this document

The Prolonged Power Outage Payment (PPOP) validation guidelines outline the validation requirements for assessing a residential and business customers eligibility for the PPOP as per the Program Guidelines. The guidelines were published online Friday 5 November 2021 [TBC] on the following Vic Gov web pages:

<https://www.vic.gov.au/prolonged-power-outage-payment>

<https://www.energy.vic.gov.au/safety-and-emergencies/power-outages>

Program Summary

The PPOP assists residential and business customers affected by the prolonged power outages following the storm event that occurred on Thursday 28th and Friday 29th October 2021. The Victorian and Australian Governments have made funding available from the Disaster Recovery Fund, with payments to eligible residential and business customers.

AusNet Services and United Energy electricity account holders that remained without power at 12.01am on 5th November 2021, as a result of the storm event on Thursday 28th and Friday 29th October 2021, are eligible for the payment. AusNet Services and United Energy will administer the payment for the Victorian Government with oversight from the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP).

Standard Eligibility Criteria for Residential Customers

To be eligible for a Prolonged Power Outage Payment, residential customers must:

- Have a residential electricity account with AusNet Services or United Energy
- Be an electricity account holder at a property that was without power as at 12.01am Friday 5 November 2021, due to the October severe weather event in Victoria
- Not received a Prolonged Power Outage Payment for the same electricity account (NMI)

Demonstration of eligibility

To be eligible for a payment, applicants must provide the following information:

- Electricity account holder name
- National Meter Identifier (NMI)

Validating eligibility

AusNet Services and United Energy are responsible for validating that the applicant meets the standard eligibility criteria. Applicants who are successfully validated will receive their PPOP in the next payment run.

An applicant will receive a formal response that they are not eligible for payment when according to AusNet Services or United Energy data, the applicant had power restored to their property before 12.01am on Friday 5 November 2021 following the storm event that occurred on Thursday 28th and Friday 29th October, or if there are other validation errors returned.

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All notifications to ineligible customers/applicants should include an avenue for dispute and/or additional investigation by Ausnet Services or United Energy.

To validate that the applicant is the electricity account holder, the details submitted in the application must match the information of the electricity account holder as they are held with the retailer. These validations are:

- The electricity account holder name must be the name of the residential customer applying for the payment
- The NMI must be associated with the electricity account
- The contact information and bank details provided must match with the electricity account holder details
- Phone and contact information must be associated with the electricity account holder (This is the most common validation error e.g. phone number is an old number or partner's phone number)

If AusNet Services or United Energy identify a data mismatch for the above validations the applicant will receive a follow up call with instructions to provide additional information to confirm their eligibility.

Standard Eligibility Criteria for Business Customers

To be eligible for a Prolonged Power Outage Payment, a business must:

- Be operating from a location that remained without power as at 12.01am on Friday 5 November 2021 due to the October severe weather event in Victoria
- Have an annual Victorian payroll of \$10 million or less in 2019-20 on an ungrouped basis¹
- Hold an Australian Business Number (ABN) and have held that ABN at 12.01am on Friday 5 November 2021
- Be registered with the responsible Federal or State regulator
- Not received a Prolonged Power Outage Payment for the same electricity account (NMI)

Other eligibility conditions

Both employing and non-employing businesses are eligible for the payment, including if they work from residential premises.

Demonstration of eligibility

To be eligible for a payment, applicants must provide the following information:

- Business' legal name
- Business' trading name
- ABN
- WorkCover Employer Number (for employing businesses only)
- Electricity Account Holder Name
- National Meter Identifier (NMI)

Validating eligibility

AusNet Services and United Energy are responsible for validating that the applicant meets the standard eligibility criteria.

Identical to applications for residential customers, an applicant will receive an automated response that they are not eligible for payment when according to AusNet Services or United Energy data, the applicant had power restored to

¹ Where a business is in a payroll group, the payroll eligibility criteria applies to each business in the payroll group. That is, any member of a group with an annual Victorian taxable payroll of up to \$10 million in 2019-20 can apply.



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their property before 12.01am on Friday 5 November 2021 following the storm event that occurred on Thursday 28th and Friday 29th October, or if there are other validation errors returned.

All notifications to ineligible customers/applicants should include an avenue for dispute and/or additional investigation by Ausnet Services or United Energy.

To validate that the applicant is the electricity account holder, the details submitted in the webform must match the information of the Electricity Account Holder with the retailer. These validations are:

- The electricity account holder must be in the business' legal name or trading name
- The NMI must be associated with the electricity account
- The contact information and bank details provided must match with the electricity account holder details
- Phone and contact information must be associated with the Electricity Account Holder (This is the most common validation error e.g. phone number is an old number or partner's phone number)

If AusNet Services or United Energy identify a data mismatch for the above validations the applicant will receive a follow up call with instructions to provide additional information to confirm their eligibility.

Additional Validations

Once AusNet Services or United Energy has confirmed that the business has met the above validations, each day by 4pm they will share via email with DELWP an Excel file with the details of each business customer. This file includes the following information:

- Business' legal name
- Business' trading name
- ABN
- WorkCover Employer Number (for employing businesses only)
- National Meter Identifier (NMI)

By 5pm that same day, DELWP will share the Excel file with the State Revenue Office's (SRO). SRO will then validate using the SRO database and/or ABR database if the SRO database is unable to validate:

- The business has an active ABN and it was held at 12.01am on Friday 5 November 2021
- ABN matches either the Legal Name or Trading Name of the business
- Payroll associated with the ABN is under \$10million for the financial year 2019/20

If the business passes the above validations, SRO will input 'Y' against that businesses record. If the business fails the above validation, SRO will put 'N' against the businesses record.

A blank return will be inputted by the SRO if the business has a payroll of less than \$650K for financial year 2019/20 and is therefore not required to register with the SRO.

SRO will return the file to DELWP via Kiteworks with the above validations by 11am the next day.

DELWP is responsible for reviewing the validations for each business customer to determine their eligibility for the PPOP. Once reviewed, DELWP will return the original excel file via email with a new column 'DELWP Payment Approval' and either a 'Y' or 'N' input. If 'N' input, an additional comments column will advise why the business failed the validation and next steps for that business customer to action i.e. requesting further information from the business or communicating to the business customer that they are ineligible for the payment.

AusNet Services and United Energy will receive the file and ensure eligible businesses are paid the PPOP in the next payment run.



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Data Contacts

- DELWP – Matthew Jones matthew.i.jones@delwp.vic.gov.au

Exceptional circumstances and edge cases

[Refer to Escalation Guideline document]

Closing date

The Prolonged Power Outage Payment for residential and business customers will be open for online applications until 11:59pm Friday, 3 December 2021. A process to support late applications beyond this date will be determined ahead of that date, and based on the volume of eligible customers yet to submit an application.

Payments

Payments will be administered by AusNet Services/United Energy and made by EFT or Cheque.