



# CONSUMER'S RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES



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## 1. Introduction

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The distribution companies (Discoms) are governed by specific rules and regulations in the supply of electricity to consumers which aim to provide quality services and also to protect consumers from unfair practices. As per the Consumer Protection Act, consumers have the right to information, right to choose, right to safety, right to seek redressal and right to be heard. Similarly, there is also an onus of consumers to be aware, involved, responsible and environment friendly. This document lists down information on rights accorded to electricity consumers in Rajasthan and their responsibilities.

## 2. Right to Information and to be Notified

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Consumers have the right to get information and updates about the following items:

- a) RERC approved Tariff schedules, categories, surcharges, subsidies, rebates, penalties, etc.
- b) Process of getting a new connection, revision in load/name/address, disconnection and reconnection, transfer of connection, relevant formats, etc. and information on charges as applicable of service for various categories
- c) Standards of performance for Distribution Companies and terms & conditions of electricity (supply code) as determined by the regulatory commission
- d) Details of tools for redressal of grievances and complaint handling mechanism by distribution company such as toll-free number, web platforms, mobile applications, and consumer service centres
- e) Metering Regulations & Distribution Code, Safety Standards, Calibration, and accurate report of energy meter
- f) Annual report & statistics of the Discom including abridged annual account
- g) Any information from public Discoms, such as records, documents, memos, emails, opinions, advice, press releases, circulars, images or any computer-generated matter, orders, logbooks, contracts, reports, papers, samples models, or electronic data can also be asked under Section 6(1) of the Right to Information Act, 2005. (Sample RTI Format attached as Annexure 1)
- h) Electricity consumers have all the rights to receive a formal notice of 15 days before the disconnection of supply or any other action due to the non-payment of electricity bill. Also, the process of reconnection shall be made available for consumers. This right is not available only for the cases of unauthorised use of electricity or the prejudicial use of electricity
- i) Any changes in the details of the consumer in Discom's records also need to be notified to the consumer

### 3. Standards of Performance

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Consumers have the right to receive services as per guaranteed Standards of performance by RERC and they'll be compensated if the Discom fails to achieve those standards. For instance, restoration of supply due to minor faults has to be rectified as per the following timelines. Detailed guaranteed standards of supply are provided in Annexure 2.

Activity	Stipulated Time for Completion
The licensee shall restore the supply in case of supply-related problem/fault like blowing of HT/LT fuse/MCB.	4 hrs. in Class 1 Cities
	6 hrs. in Urban Areas
	24 hrs. in Rural Areas

### 4. Complaint Handling and Grievance Redressal

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Discoms are required to establish consumer service centres for consumers to get information and lodging complaints. Consumer service centres can also provide additional services including bill payments. As per the provisions of Electricity Act 2003, Section 42 (5), (6), and (7), consumers have the right to redressal of their grievances. Following is a brief of rights available to consumers:

- a) To get a copy of rules and procedures for redressal of grievances from offices of electricity distribution companies and cash collection centres
- b) To know the contact details of Internal Grievance Redressal (IGR) and Electricity Ombudsman
- c) To know the modes of filing a grievance, procedures, and circulars issued in the subject. If the conflict cannot be resolved by the IGR cell, the consumer can raise complaints to Electricity Ombudsman
- d) IGR, Forum, and Ombudsman are required to give their decision within 2 months
- e) Other than, Cell, Forum, and Ombudsman, the consumer can also lodge their complaints in the 'Consumer Forum' under the Consumer Protection Act

### 5. Others

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#### Copies of Documents

Consumers have the right to buy the below-listed documents at a nominal cost from consumer service centres, division office, circle office, section office, or ward office. These documents should also be available on the website of Discom.

- Consumer Charter
- Terms and Conditions of Supply

- Standards of performance for Discoms
- Schedule of charges for services of Discoms
- Latest Tariff Schedules
- Guidelines for the release of connections.
- Any booklet, folder, pamphlets, public notices, etc. issued in the public interest by the Discom

### **Billing**

- A period of 15 days is given to all consumers for payment of their bills
- Recovery of an outstanding amount cannot be made after two years without mentioning it in the previously issued bills
- An average bill can be issued to a consumer at most 3 times consequently
- A consumer does not need to pay the due amount of incorrect bill, he/she can pay the average amount of the previous six months and record their protest

### **Metre-related**

- Consumers have the right to get the metre/metering equipment tested for accuracy upon making a written request to the Discom and upon payment of the prescribed testing fee.
- Consumers also have the right to get meter tested at such laboratories as approved by the R.E.R.C. Consumers have the right to receive a copy of the meter test report.
- It is the responsibility of Discom to record the meter reading at least once in three months for agricultural consumers and once in two months for domestic consumers.
- In case the metre cannot record the reading for any reason or is stolen, the electricity consumed during this period shall be calculated as per the supply code.
- If the premise is locked at the time of meter reading or inaccessible for two billing cycles, the licensee cannot discontinue the supply of electricity without issuing a formal notice.

### **New Connection**

- Application forms required by consumers should be available free of cost at Discom offices. These forms can also be downloaded from Discom's website.
- In the case where there is no need of extending distribution lines (i.e. within 50 metres of existing lines for LT consumers) or commissioning of sub-stations, licensee is obligated to release connection within one month of receipt of the completed application.
- Consumers have the right to receive the acknowledgment of the successful submission and status of the application

- In case the extension of distribution lines is required for releasing the connection, the licensee shall complete the extension work within one month after depositing the additional sum worked out or intimated in the supply code
- If the supply is not affected by the Discom within the prescribed time to a person who has applied for a new connection/increased load and has completed the formalities and paid the charges for such a new connection/increase in load, he may complain to the Grievance Cell
- Licensee shall release a priority list for releasing the connections and also adhere to it
- The licensee is liable to pay interest on the security deposit to the consumer
- Consumers can ask Discom employees for identification cards and purpose of visit before admitting them to the premises

### **Unauthorised Power Usage/Theft**

- Consumers should be given a fair chance to present their case by addressing officers before imposing any penalty
- The consumers can pay a compromise amount and own up their offence
- The authorised officer should provide a copy of the inspection memo to the consumer in case of any unauthorised power usage found
- The authorised officer can break into the premises in case of having sufficient reasons to believe that unauthorised consumption of power is being practiced
- A consumer found guilty or in suspicion of electricity theft can make an application to the Empowered officer for compounding after initiation of legal proceedings by accepting to pay a compounded sum of money. The acceptance of paying a sum of money for compounding will make sure that no proceedings will be instituted or continued against the consumer

### **Responsibilities of Consumers**

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- a) Paying the bill timely and completely is the responsibility of the consumer
- b) Consumers should get wiring of their premises done by a licensed electrical contractor and should be inspected every five years to prevent fire and safety hazards
- c) Consumers should install an energy metre at an accessible place for taking the reading
- d) If a consumer is travelling out of station and metre is locked inside the premises, then he should inform the Discom in advance to avoid disconnection due to inability to read metre
- e) Consumers should take due care of the meter and install it at a secure location



- f) Any kind of tampering and manipulation in the metre is illegal
- g) Consumers should ensure proper earthing of energy meter and internal wiring
- h) The connected load should not be more than the sanctioned load, although this is not considered as power theft sanctioned load should be increased whenever required
- i) Electricity connection should not serve the purpose for which it was allotted. For example, the use of domestic supply for commercial purposes is considered as unauthorised consumption
- j) Electricity lines should not be illegally extended by a consumer to sell electricity to other subordinates
- k) Consumers should report the events of power theft or unmetered energy consumption
- l) Consumers should be aware of all the energy-saving measures and use it responsibly
- m) Consumers should not damage the property of Discoms and should report such incidents if witnessed
- n) Consumers should follow the proper channel and basic code of conduct for protesting and should not misbehave with Discom officials in any case
- o) Consumers should identify and contribute to consumer service organisations functional in their area
- a) Consumers should participate in regulatory affairs, RERC public hearings, etc. to express their opinions

## Annexure 1: Sample RTI Format

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To  
The Public Information Officer  
(Full address of Distribution Company)

Date:.....

Sub: Request to furnish information under section 6(1) of the Right to Information Act, 2005 on the following questions/points.

Sir, You are requested to furnish the following information/documents.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

If the information is not available in your office, kindly forward it to the concerned public authority as per section 6(3) of the RTI Act,2005.

I am a citizen of India and the address is given below. Requisite RTI application fee for Rs.10/- is being remitted vide Indian Postal Order/ eIPO/ Bank Draft/ Cheque No..... dated..... is enclosed).

Yours sincerely,  
(Name & Signature)

(IPO is to be addressed to "Account Officer" of concerned Public Authority)



## Annexure 2: Guaranteed Standards of Performance

Activity	Stipulated Time for Completion
The licensee shall restore the supply in case of supply-related problem/fault like blowing of HT/LT fuse/MCB.	4 hrs. in Class 1 Cities
	6 hrs. in Urban Areas
	24 hrs. in Rural Areas
The licensee shall restore the supply in case of its overhead line/cable breakdowns within.	6 hrs. in Class 1 Cities
	12 hrs. in Urban Areas
	24 hrs. in Rural Areas
The licensee shall restore the supply in case of failure of its transformer within.	<b>Distribution Transformers</b>
	16 hrs. in Class 1 Cities
	36 hrs. in Urban Areas
	72 hrs. in Rural Areas
	from the time of reporting of fault by the consumer
	<b>Power Transformers</b>
	3 working days from the occurrence of a fault.
Voltage Variations: in case of variation, the problem shall be resolved within the time frame.	2 working days in general
	1 month in case of transformer repair/ replacement
	4 months in case of substation augmentation
	6 months in case of a new substation
	from the time of reporting by the consumer.
Testing of Meter and Replacement of stopped/damaged / burnt Meter	Verify the correctness of the metre at the site and if required replace the meter within 2 months of the date of notice by the consumer.
	The stopped/damaged/burnt meter shall be replaced by the licensee, within 2 months of such detection.
Demand note	The licensee shall inspect and inform the estimated cost to the consumer within 15 days of receipt of the application.

Shifting of Meter	On receipt of the amount of demand note and necessary clearances / no-objection, shall shift the meter within:
	7 working days in case of LT consumers
	15 working days in case of HT consumers
Shifting of Service line	On receipt of amount of demand note and necessary clearances / no-objection:
	15 working days in case of LT consumers
	1 month in case of HT consumers
Consumer bill complaint: <i>The consumer should first approach the concerned Sub-divisional officer or Billing officer who shall resolve the problem.</i>	In the case of an unsatisfactory response, the consumer may get his complaint lodged in the Call centre. The licensee shall resolve the billing problem within:
	3 working days, in case no information is required to be collected
	7 working days, in case some information is required to be collected by the billing authority.
Disconnection of supply within	3 working days (in Class 1 Cities)
	7 working days (in Urban Areas)
	10 working days (in Rural Areas)