

# Financial Hardship Policy

## Purpose

We are here to help. We will work with you to help you respond to financial difficulty, whether temporary or long-term. We are committed to helping customers facing financial hardship maintain telecommunications access and working with you to find a sustainable solution. Any help we can give will depend on your individual circumstances, and we provide help on a case-by-case basis.

## What is financial hardship?

The Telecommunications Consumer Protection Code (C628:2015) provides a definition of financial hardship as a situation where : (a) a Customer is unable to meet the financial obligations owed by them due to illness, unemployment or other reasonable cause; and (b) the Customer believes that they are able meet their financial obligations if payment arrangements or other arrangements are changed.

## Assisting financial hardship

Our accounts team will endeavor to assess, assist and communicate with those suffering genuine hardship in a friendly and empathetic way. This includes both Customers and their nominated councilors or advisors. Individual circumstances will need to be balanced with our business requirements. In the first instance if you predict difficulties in paying your bill, you are required to contact us before the bill is due. If you do not contact us and your bill falls due, you may be charged late payment fees for some product types. You may contact us Monday to Friday during business hours (0900-1700) on (03) 9081-2888, or email our accounts team at [customercare@hyperwave.com.au](mailto:customercare@hyperwave.com.au) . Please remember to identify your account number and the service location when making contact with Hyperwave.

## Identifying financial hardship

At Hyperwave we believe financial hardship to be a situation where our Customer wants to pay their bills however a temporary issue prevents them from doing so. We're here to help.

There are many factors that can contribute to this situation including illness, loss of employment, family breakdown or other reasonable causes.

When making an assessment of your situation to determine eligibility for financial hardship assistance, we may require certain information from you, including documents.

These may include :

- Employment information.
- Income details (including Government sourced).
- Debt details.
- Financial position statement.
- An official written statement from a person supporting you and is familiar with your circumstances ; this may include a support group.
- Evidence that you have engaged a recognised financial counselor.

## Options

After assessing your circumstances, we may look at a number of options to keep you connected, including :

- Spend controls (limiting purchase of Data Packs, for example)
- Restriction of service (eg, call barring for telephony services)
- Low cost interim options (eg lowering your plan, or creating a custom plan)

Financial arrangements may include :

- Temporarily postponing or deferring payments
- Agreeing to an alternative arrangement, plan, or contract
- Waiving late payment fees
- Incentives for making payments, for example, payment matching

## Financial hardship policy

Hyperwave's Financial Hardship policy is accessible via our website at <http://www.hyperwave.com.au>.

If we assess you as meeting our financial hardship criteria, we will endeavour to offer you options to both decrease your current spend and manage your payments owing. This may involve limiting your available call types, or capping calls for VOIP services, or decreasing your data package for Internet services. We may also offer a 3 month suspension of your service.

We will endeavour to assess your application to us in a fair and timely manner. As a guide only we aim to respond to your request within 72 hours.

We aim to assist improving your financial situation while reducing your debt to us.

Normally a financial hardship agreement would not extend beyond 60 days from approval.

If we approve your case and develop an assistance plan for you, we will document this and provide to you via email or post for you to sign and return to us.

You must notify Hyperwave if your financial circumstances change, either for the better or worse.

Hyperwave may choose to amend a previously invoked agreement if your circumstances change.

It is your responsibility to make payments to us according to the agreed schedule.

If you do not honour your responsibilities to make payments on time, you as the Customer risk suspension or termination of your service, and the application of reconnection or early termination fees. In this case, these fees would be applied as per the terms of your original contract.

Refusing to pay for your service on such grounds as

- The amount sought being unexpected
- The customer generally objecting to the amount
- Failure to contact Hyperwave to discuss alternative payment options

does not qualify as financial hardship and would cause normal business credit management or debt collection processes to begin.

The provision of false, incomplete, inaccurate or fraudulent information at any time during this process may result in Hyperwave cancelling any previously agreed financial hardship arrangements.

## Privacy

Our accounts team will treat any information supplied to us with the utmost care and discretion.

All information will be kept confidential in accordance with the Privacy Act 1988.

## Contact information

- By Telephone, Monday to Friday 0900-1700 AEST ; (03) 9081-2888 option 3
- By email, 24 hours 7 days a week ; [customercare@hyperwave.com.au](mailto:customercare@hyperwave.com.au)
- By post, attention Hyperwave Accounts ; PO Box 354, Rosanna, Victoria, 3084

## Community financial counsellor

Free financial counselling is available from many community based services.

If identifying as experiencing financial hardship, we require that you supply the details of your counseling service when making initial contact with us.

One example of a community based financial counselling lookup tool is :

<http://www.financialcounselingaustralia.org.au/Corporate/Find-a-Counsellor>

They can also be reached Monday to Friday 0930-1630 by phone at freecall 1800-007-007.