

# Drafted Rules providing for Rights of Electricity Consumers for the First Time

By : Editor Published On : 16 Sep, 2020 01:50 PM IST



INVC NEWS

New Delhi,

The Union Power Ministry has drafted Rules providing for Rights of Electricity Consumers for the First Time. Electricity Consumers are the most important stakeholders in the power sector. The sector exists because of them. Having provided access to electricity to all citizens, it is now important to focus on consumer satisfaction. For this, it is imperative to identify the key services, prescribe minimum service levels and standards with respect to these services and recognize them as rights of consumers.

With this objective, a draft of Electricity (Rights of Consumers) Rules, 2020 have been prepared for the first time by the Government.

The main features are -

- Reliability of service: SERCs to fix average number and duration of outages per consumer per year for DISCOMs.
- Timely and simplified procedure for connection: Only two documents for connection up to load of 10 kw and no estimation of demand charges for loads up to 150 kw to expedite giving connection.
- Time period of not more than 7 days in metro cities, 15 days in other municipal areas and 30 days in rural areas, to provide new connection and modify existing connection.
- 2 to 5% rebate on serving bills with delay of sixty days or more.
- Option to pay bills in cash, cheque, debit cards, net banking etc but bills of Rs. 1000 or more to be paid online.
- Provisions related to disconnection, reconnection, meter replacement, billing, payment, etc.

•Recognition to the emerging category of consumers known as “Prosumers”. Persons who are consumers and have also set up a rooftop units or solarised their irrigation pumps. They will have right to produce electricity for self-use and inject excess in the grid using same point of connection up to limits prescribed by the SERC.

•Compensation / penalties for delay in service by DISCOMs; compensation to be automatic as far as possible, to be passed on in the bill.

•24x7 toll free call centre, web-based and mobile applications for common services like new connection, disconnection, reconnection, shifting of connection, change in name and particulars, load change, replacement of meter, no supply, etc with facilities for sms/email alerts, online status tracking and auto escalation.

•Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum with 2-3 representatives of consumers at various levels starting from Sub-division for ease of consumer grievance redressal.

Draft Rules have been circulated by Ministry of Power on 9th September 2020 for seeking comments/views/suggestions of Consumers up to 30th September 2020. They shall be finalized after taking into account all the suggestions received and issued.

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