



## Treating Vulnerable Customers Fairly Policy

We understand that some of our customers are vulnerable, whether on a temporary or permanent basis. That means they might not be able to represent their own interests and could suffer harm as a result. Our aim is to ensure that vulnerable customers receive the same outcomes as customers who are not vulnerable.

### What may make a customer vulnerable?

Factors may include (the list is not exhaustive):

1. Exceptional financial hardship;
2. Serious illness/injury or bereavement;
3. Age (but you're not necessarily vulnerable just because of your age);
4. Physical and mental health issues such as deafness, blindness or depression;
5. Not speaking English as a first language.

### How will you know if I'm vulnerable?

You or a colleague, relative or friend may tell us or it may become clear to us from our communications with you.

### How will we treat you if you are vulnerable?

We may help in one or more of the following ways:

1. By directing you to the information on our website on the financial support available to you if you're affected by the coronavirus pandemic;
2. By speaking more slowly/more clearly/or louder as necessary;
3. By sending you information to read in your own time;
4. By repeating important information;
5. By offering to deal with a third party on your behalf;
6. By suggesting you speak to a healthcare professional;
7. By directing you to free debt services such as StepChange or Business Debtline

### What products and services can we offer to vulnerable customers?

1. An approved Next Generation Text Relay Service;
2. Access to emergency SMS (mobile only);
3. Free directory enquiries;
4. Support with fault repair;
5. Third party bill management;
6. Our bereavement process;
7. Electronic invoices;
8. Financial hardship support including payment plans;
9. The cancellation of services (this will be determined on a case by case basis);
10. An alert on your account to flag you as vulnerable.

### What extra steps will we take during the coronavirus pandemic?

We will waive charges for setting up call divert for vulnerable customers who report a fault with their line.

If you fall into one of the categories defined by the government as 'COVID AT RISK' and you experience a fault with your telephone service please let us know when you contact us and we will work with Openreach to prioritise your fault and secure a restoration of service as a priority.

The categories defined by the government as 'COVID AT RISK' are:

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- Pregnant
- Over 70
- Under 70 with an underlying medical condition. Underlying medical conditions are:
  - people with respiratory illnesses,
  - people that have undergone transplants,
  - people undergoing cancer treatments,
  - people undergoing immunosuppression therapies.

If you are experiencing payment difficulties our collections team will, if required, discuss payment options with you.