



Veolia Water Retail (UK) Limited Vulnerability Strategy

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This strategy outlines Veolia Water Retail UK Limited's commitment to supporting vulnerable non-household customers, in accordance with Ofwat requirements and our corporate values.

2.0 DEFINITION AND SCOPE

We adopt Ofwat's definition of a Vulnerable Non-Household Customer:

"A Non-Household Customer who, due to the personal circumstances of a key individual associated with the customer, or the business circumstances of the customer, may require additional provisions beyond those typically provided to an NHH customer in order to access an inclusive service."

3.0 UNDERSTANDING VULNERABILITY

Ofwat has highlighted that individuals associated with businesses can face vulnerable circumstances, with approximately 25% of small business owners having a disability or health condition that may require additional support to engage and participate in the water market. This significant proportion underscores the importance of our approach to vulnerability support.

We recognise that vulnerability is not confined to a specific timeframe, nor is it always apparent. Vulnerability can arise from various circumstances, including:

- Age-related factors
- Physical or mental health conditions
- Literacy limitations
- Language barriers
- Digital exclusion
- Sudden life changes (such as bereavement or divorce)
- Business circumstances

We demonstrate our commitment to supporting vulnerable customers through several key partnerships and accreditations:

- Members of the Business Disability Forum (BDF), accessing best practice resources for increasing accessibility
- A Retail team member is a registered BDF user with access to vulnerable customer resources and will cascade information and resources appropriately
- 'Disability Confident' accredited organisation
- Gold members of the Armed Forces Covenant

These partnerships and accreditations enhance our ability to understand and support vulnerable customers while demonstrating our ongoing commitment to providing inclusive services.



We acknowledge that vulnerability can be:

- Temporary or permanent
- Situational or circumstantial
- Varying in severity
- Not always immediately apparent

This understanding shapes our approach to identifying and supporting vulnerable customers through flexible and responsive support measures.

4.0 IDENTIFICATION AND AWARENESS

4.1 Customer Communication Channels

We ensure clear communication about vulnerability support through our website, welcome letters and invoice backing sheets. All these materials provide clear information about how customers can contact us if they require additional support.

4.2 Initial Response Process

In the event a customer indicates they may require additional support, we will offer an immediate telephone consultation. This allows us to understand their specific needs and ensure we deliver an inclusive service tailored to their circumstances.

4.3 Ongoing Identification Methods

We maintain vigilance in identifying vulnerable customers through:

- Staff awareness during interactions
- Partner organisation referrals
- Customer self-identification

4.4 Awareness Raising

We actively promote awareness of our vulnerability support through:

- Regular customer communications
- Business community engagement
- Staff training and awareness
- Partnership networks

5.0 INCLUSIVE SERVICES AND SUPPORT MEASURES

5.1 Communication Support

We provide comprehensive and adaptable communications to meet individual needs:

- Multiple communication channels (email, telephone, post)



- Translated documents and telephone translation services
- Accessible format communications (large text, font adjustments)
- Priority contact arrangements
- Extended response times where needed
- Telephone support for those who prefer verbal communication

5.2 Financial Support

Our dedicated credit control team provides flexible support including:

- Adaptable payment arrangements
- Clear debt management processes
- Signposting to financial support services on every invoice
- Reasonable repayment plans aligned with Customer Protection Code of Practice
- Financial advice referrals
- Where requested, regular account reviews

5.3 Operational Support

We ensure practical assistance through:

- Accessible meter locations arranged with wholesalers (this may incur a wholesale cost)
- Appropriate escalated wholesale engagement during emergencies (i.e loss of water)
- Dedicated support team assistance
- Regular service reviews, if requested

All customer vulnerability records are maintained appropriately and securely in line with data protection regulations.

This comprehensive approach ensures we provide inclusive services that meet the diverse needs of our vulnerable customers while maintaining appropriate confidentiality and service standards.

6.0 TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

6.1 Core Values and Culture

We place strong emphasis on Veolia's core values:

- Customer focus
- Respect
- Responsibility
- Community spirit

6.2 Training Requirements

Our training approach includes:

- Maintaining at least one qualified mental health first aider
- Regular awareness sessions delivered internally



- Access to Business Disability Forum resources
- Partner organisation training opportunities

6.3 Ongoing Development

Team members are supported through:

- Regular refresher training
- Best practice updates
- Access to specialist resources
- Partnership learning opportunities

7.0 TARGETS AND COMMITMENTS

7.1 Short-term

- Complete staff training programme
- Include vulnerability strategy references in:
 - Website content
 - Welcome letters
 - Invoice backing sheets

7.2 Medium-term

- Enhance service delivery and partnerships
- Review and optimise processes

7.3 Long-term

- Ensure ongoing colleague and system compliance
- Continue service innovation
- Regular strategy review and updates

8.0 MONITORING AND REVIEW

We maintain robust monitoring through annual assessments, incorporating both customer and staff feedback. Board-level oversight ensures proper governance and compliance.

9.0 CONTACT INFORMATION

If you are a Non-Household Customer and would like to discuss our Vulnerability Strategy and where we can provide you with additional support, please contact us on;

Telephone: 0203 567 8174

Email: businesswater@veolia.co.uk

Post: Water Retail, 1 Masterton Park, South Castle Drive, Dunfermline, KY11 8NX