

# Are electricity customers in hardship?



*Research was conducted into how electricity consumption, sentiment and behaviours might have changed due to the COVID-19 pandemic*

## Customer Hardship Survey

COVID-19 has impacted customers across multiple facets of their lives. In particular, the type of work they do, their working hours, and their financial situation.

This survey's intent was to provide insights on hardships that customers are facing and/or how their behaviours and attitudes have shifted in order to understand how we can help them navigate uncertain times.

The survey explored a series of questions which seek to understand how long the impact of COVID-19 will last, in order to uncover 'at risk' groups so that Jemena has the ability to provide help and understand operational implications.

To formulate a view point on what the future of electricity might hold, we surveyed respondents about new propositions and what the drivers behind their choices might be to uncover potential new solutions that could also be offered.



44% of respondents experienced a reduction in their household income



23% believe that COVID-19 will impact their household income for 10+ months



27% respondents are currently receiving Job Keeper or Job Seeker payments



45% of respondents receiving income supplements are concerned with their ability to pay their electricity bill once the Job Keeper and Job Seeker is cut off

## Main themes arising from the customer hardship survey

Decreasing incomes. Increasing unemployment

COVID-19 has led to many households being financially impacted. 44% of respondents reported a decrease in income. At the same time, 39% of respondents had their hours reduced or became unemployed. Given the forecasted rise in unemployment, the number of respondents experiencing income decreases and job losses is expected to increase.

Optimists vs. Pessimists

Most respondents fall into two buckets, those that believe COVID-19 will no longer impact them within the next 1-6 months (46%), and 23% that believe it'll affect them for 10+ months. This research was conducted prior to the second lockdown in Victoria.

Assistance will still be needed

Income supplements have cushioned some of the financial blow from COVID-19, with 27% of respondents receiving Job Keeper or Job Seeker payments. Nearly half of all respondents have however indicated that they are concerned with their ability to pay their bills once payments end.

New propositions

The most popular proposition was a 3 month reduction in electricity bills, and the driver of appeal behind this was respondents wanting immediate financial relief. Respondents felt that a trusted brand and consistent electricity payments were the most important factors for considering a new electricity proposition.

Conditions won't be favourable for a while

Hardship is anticipated to continue as economic conditions such as GDP and unemployment remain unfavourable. The recent second wave of COVID-19 will most likely have a sustained impact on respondent hardship.

## Our team



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