

**GUJARAT ELECTRICITY REGULATORY COMMISSION (GERC)
GANDHINAGAR**

Draft Gujarat Electricity Regulatory Commission (Electricity Supply Code and Related Matters) (Third Amendment) Regulations, 2022

Notification No.-- of 2022

In exercise of powers conferred under Section 181 (2) (x) read with Section 50 of the Electricity Act, 2003 (Act 36 of 2003) and under Section 42 (1) (b) of the Gujarat Electricity Industry (Reorganisation and Regulation) Act, 2003 (Gujarat Act 24 of 2003), and all powers enabling it in that behalf, the Gujarat Electricity Regulatory Commission hereby amends the Gujarat Electricity Regulatory Commission (Electricity Supply Code and Related Matters) Regulations, 2015, “The Principal Code”.

1. Short Title, Scope Extent and Commencement

- 1 This Code shall be called ‘Gujarat Electricity Regulatory Commission (Electricity Supply Code and Related Matters) (Third Amendment) Regulations, 2022.
- 2 This Code shall come into force from the date of their publication in the Official Gazette.

1. Amendment in “SHORT TITLE, SCOPE EXTENT AND COMMENCEMENT of the Principal Code”

It is proposed to delete Para 3 title SHORT TITLE, SCOPE EXTENT AND COMMENCEMENT of the principle Regulation.

2. Amendment in Section 2 of the Principal Code

i. Clause 2.3 (3) of the principal Code shall be substituted as under:

‘**Applicant**’ refers to an owner or occupier of any land/premises who files an application form with a distribution licensee for supply of electricity, increase or reduction in sanctioned load/contract demand, change in title, mutation of name, change in consumer category, disconnection or restoration of supply, or termination of agreement, shifting of connection or other services as the case may be, in accordance with the provisions of the Act and the Supply Code, rules and regulations made thereunder or other services;

ii. Clause 2.3 (4) of the principal Code shall be substituted as under:

‘**Application**’ refers to an application form complete in all respects in the appropriate format, as specified by the Commission, along with documents showing payment of necessary charges and other compliances;

iii. Clause 2.3 (5) of the principal Code shall be substituted as under:

‘**Application Form**’ refers to an application form complete in all respects in the appropriate format, as specified by the Commission, before any payment of applicable charges;”

iv. Clause 2.3 (24) of the principal Code shall be substituted as under:

‘**Disconnection**’ refers to the physical separation or remote disconnection of User or Consumer from the system;

v. Clause 2.3 (46) of the principal Code shall be substituted as under:

‘**Maximum Demand**’ refers to the Maximum Demand in kW or kVA, as the case may be, shall mean an average kW/ kVA supplied during consecutive 30/15/3 minutes (depending upon the type of meter used) period of maximum use where such meter with the feature of reading the maximum demand in kW/ kVA directly, has been provided;

vi. Clause 2.3 (49) of the principal Code shall be substituted as under:

‘**Occupier**’ refers to the owner or tenant or person in occupation of the premises where energy is used or proposed to be used;

3. Amendment in Section 4 of the Principal Code

i. Clause 4.4 of the principal Code shall be substituted as under:

4.4 The licensee shall prominently display on its website and wherever feasible, conspicuously as far as possible at its offices, the updated status of applications for new connections in that area/circle, the detailed procedure for grant of new connection, temporary connection, shifting of meter or, service line, change of consumer category, enhancement of load, reduction of load or change in name, transfer of ownership and shifting of premises etc. and the complete list of documents required to be furnished along with such applications in Gujarati and English languages. Normally no document, which has not been so listed, will be required for processing application forms for new connection. Security

amount and cost of service line to be deposited by applicant in accordance with GERC (Licensee's Power to Recover Expenditure incurred in providing Supply and other Miscellaneous Charges) Regulations, 2005, as amended from time to time, and GERC (Security Deposit) Regulations, 2005, as amended from time to time, shall also be prominently displayed.

The application tracking mechanism based on the unique registration number shall be provided by the distribution licensee through web-based application or mobile app or through SMS or by any other electronic mode to monitor the status of processing of the application like receipt of application, site inspection, issuance of demand note, external connection, meter installation and electricity flow.

ii. Clause 4.10 of the principal Code shall be substituted as under:

- 4.10 Application forms shall be available at the local office of the licensee free of cost. The licensee shall also put up all application forms on its website for free download. Legible photocopies of a blank form may be made by the consumer which shall be accepted by the licensee. The licensee shall clearly display on its website the address and telephone numbers of offices where filled-up application form can be submitted. The licensee shall also display in each office the address and telephone numbers of offices in the respective area of supply where filled-up application form pertaining to that particular area can be submitted. The licensee shall prominently display the website address for online submission of application form on its website and notice board of all its offices. Any assistance or information required in filling up the form shall be provided to applicants at the local office of the licensee.

iii. Clause 4.11 of the principal Code shall be substituted as under:

4.11 The licensee shall also provide new avenues for applying for new connection or modification in existing connection through website, mobile application for submission of online application form. The applicant shall have an option to submit an application form in hard copy form or through an electronic means such as online through web portal or mobile app of distribution licensee. The licensee shall establish a centralized 24/7 toll free call center for this purpose, which minimize the applicant's interface with the utility during the process, within six months from the date of Notification of this Amendment.

Further, the licensees shall endeavour to provide all services through a common Customer Relation Manager (CRM) System to get a unified view of all the services requested, attended and pending, at the backend for better monitoring and analytics. The CRM shall have facilities for SMS, email alerts, notifications to consumers and officers for events like receipt of application, completion of service, change in status of application, etc.; online status tracking and auto escalation to higher level, if services are not provided within the specified time period.

The distribution licensee shall provide services such as application submission, etc., to senior citizens at their door-steps.

iv. Clause 4.12 of the principal Code shall be substituted as under:

4.12 Application forms for new connection must be accompanied with a photograph of the applicant, identity proof of the applicant, proof of applicant's ownership or legal occupancy over the premises for which new connection is being sought,

proof of applicant's current address, and in specific cases, certain other documents as detailed in Clauses 4.15 - 4.20 of this Code.

Provided that for new connections up to a load of 10 kW, the application form shall be accompanied with only two mandatory documents- (1) identity proof of the applicant as per Clause 4.15 below; and (2) proof of applicant's ownership or occupancy over the premises as per Clause 4.16 below, for which new connection is being sought or in the absence of any proof of ownership or occupancy, any other address proof not given as part of identity proof under Clause 4.15 below.

v. Clause 4.21 of the principal Code shall be substituted as under:

- 4.21 For all application forms received in hard copy pertaining to release of supply to new connections, the licensee shall verify the application form along with enclosed documents and if found deficient, shall issue a written note on the spot regarding shortcomings in the application form. If the application form is complete, the licensee shall receive the registration charges as per GERC (Licensees power to recover expenditure and other miscellaneous charges) Regulations, 2005 and amendments thereof and upload on the website. The licensee shall generate an acknowledgement with registration number for the same and intimate to the applicant immediately.

In case of online application form through web portal or mobile application of the licensee, the licensee shall verify the application form and the documents enclosed therewith and if found deficient, shall intimate to the applicant at e-mail id mentioned in the application form within 24 hours, specifying deficiencies in the application form. If the application form is complete or once

the deficiencies are removed by the applicant to the satisfaction of the licensee, the licensee shall acknowledge the receipt of the registration charges paid online by the applicant as per the GERC (Licensees power to recover expenditure and other miscellaneous charges) Regulations, 2005 and amendments thereof, and immediately upload the application on website and generate an acknowledgement with registration number for the same and intimate to the applicant immediately.

vi. Clause 4.22 of the principal Code shall be substituted as under:

4.22 The licensee shall maintain a permanent record of all application forms received in an Application Register/Database. Each application form shall be allotted a permanent registration number (for identification) serially in the order in which it was uploaded on website.

Separate registers/databases for different category of consumers may be maintained. The licensee shall keep the necessary registers/databases updated with stage-wise status of disposal of each application form.

vii. Clause 4.24 of the principal Code shall be substituted as under:

4.24 An application form shall be deemed to be received on the date of generation of acknowledgement with registration number.

viii. Clause 4.32 of the principal Code shall be substituted as under:

4.32 In case of application for HT/EHT supply the licensee shall forward the application to the Transmission Licensee within three days of its receipt for its further processing in terms of provisions in the Grid Code. The Transmission Licensee within 7 working days of receipt of the application from distribution

licensee, shall intimate the distribution licensee regarding feasibility or otherwise of the application. Comments of the Transmission Licensee shall be communicated to the applicant within three days thereafter.

In case the application is found feasible and subject to compliance as provided in Clause 4.29 above, the Distribution Licensee shall issue a demand note in writing, under acknowledgement, within the timeline specified in GERC (Standard of Performance of Distribution Licensee) Regulations, 2005 and amendments thereof.

Provided that the time taken by applicant in securing the compliance as provided in Clause 4.29 above shall not be included in the timeline specified in GERC (Standard of Performance of Distribution Licensee) Regulations, 2005 and amendments thereof.

ix. Clause 4.35 of the principal Code shall be substituted as under:

- 4.35 The excess amount, if any, shall be refunded to the Consumer by issuing account payee cheque or by electronic mode within 30 days of energisation of connection, failing which the Licensee shall be liable to pay interest at a rate equivalent to the Late Payment Surcharge as per the prevailing Tariff Order issued by the Commission. The Consumer shall be given the detailed bill showing the details of item-wise estimation and actual expenditure along with item-wise figures of variance to the extent possible. Further, if Applicant seeks further information, the Distribution Licensee shall furnish the same or state the reasons for not furnishing the same within 10 days of receipt of such request.

Any expenditure incurred in excess of the amount deposited by the Applicant

shall be paid by the Applicant within thirty days of demand, failing which such amount shall be debited to the next electricity bill of the consumer.

Provided that where the estimates are issued on the basis of per kW of demanded load, no adjustment shall be required.

x. Clause 4.39 of the principal Code shall be substituted as under:

- 4.39 In case the applicant had opted to get the extension work done himself and/or the applicants installation in the premise where the supply has been demanded is completed in all respect and tested by the supervisor, holding a certificate of competency issued or recognized by the Government, the applicant should sign and submit to the Distribution Licensee, work completion and test report of the installation along with necessary test report charges specified in GERC (Licensee's Power to recover Expenditure incurred in providing electricity and other Miscellaneous Charges) Regulations, 2005, as amended from time to time, the licensee shall on receipt of the test report stipulate a date for testing the consumer installation through mutual consultation, under written acknowledgment. The date of testing must be scheduled so as to provide connection within prescribed time limit as specified in the GERC (Standard of Performance of Distribution Licensee) Regulations, 2005 and amendments thereof.

Provided that if the electric installation exceeds 440 Volts, it will require to be inspected by the Electrical Inspector and written approval thereof be obtained before commencement of supply.

The test report form for this purpose shall be supplied by the Distribution

Licensee.

xi. Clause 4.61 of the principal Code shall be substituted as under:

4.61 Application forms shall be available at the local office of the licensee free of cost. The licensee shall also put up all application forms on its website for free download. Photocopies of a blank form may be made by the consumer and shall be accepted by the licensee. The licensee shall clearly display on its website the address and telephone numbers of offices where filled-up application form can be submitted. The licensee shall also display in each office the address and telephone numbers of offices in the respective area of supply where filled-up application form pertaining to that particular area can be submitted. The licensee shall prominently display on its website and on the notice board on all its offices the address of website for online submission of application form. Any assistance or information required in filling up the form shall be provided to applicants at the local office of the licensee.

xii. Clause 4.62 of the principal Code shall be substituted as under:

4.62 The licensee shall also provide new avenues for applying for new connection or modification in existing connection through website, 24/7 call center which minimize the applicant's interface with the utility during the process, with effect from expiry of six months of date of notification of this Amendment.

Further, the licensees shall endeavour to provide all services through a common Customer Relation Manager (CRM) System to get a unified view of all the services requested, attended and pending, at the backend for better monitoring and analytics. The CRM shall have facilities for SMS, email alerts, notifications to consumers and officers for events like receipt of application,

completion of service, change in status of application, etc; online status tracking and auto escalation to higher level, if services are not provided within the specified time period.

The distribution licensee shall provide services such as application submission, etc., to senior citizens at their door-steps.

xiii. Clause 4.64 of the principal Code shall be substituted as under:

- 4.64 For all application forms received in hard copy pertaining to release of supply to new connections, the licensee shall verify the application form along with enclosed documents and if found deficient, shall issue a written note on the spot regarding shortcomings in the application form. If the application form is complete, the licensee shall receive the registration charges as per GERC (Licensees power to recover expenditure and other miscellaneous charges) Regulations, 2005 and amendments thereof and upload on the website. The licensee shall generate an acknowledgement with registration number for the same and intimate to the applicant immediately.

In case of online application form through web portal or mobile application of the licensee, the licensee shall verify the application form and the documents enclosed therewith and if found deficient, shall intimate to the applicant at e-mail id mentioned in the application form within 24 hours, specifying deficiencies in the application form. If the application form is complete or once the deficiencies are removed by the applicant to the satisfaction of the licensee, the licensee shall acknowledge the receipt of the registration charges paid online by the applicant as per the GERC (Licensees power to recover expenditure and other miscellaneous charges) Regulations, 2005 and

amendments thereof, and immediately upload the application on the website and generate an acknowledgement with registration number for the same and intimate to the applicant immediately.

xiv. Clause 4.65 of the principal Code shall be substituted as under:

4.65 The licensee shall maintain a permanent record of all application forms received in an Application Register/Database. Each application form shall be allotted a permanent registration number (for identification) serially in the order in which it was uploaded on website. The licensee shall keep the registers/databases updated with stage-wise status of disposal of each application form. The licensee shall deal with application forms on the broad principle of “first come, first served” basis as per serial priority in the Application Register/Database.

xv. Clause 4.66 of the principal Code shall be substituted as under:

4.66 An application form shall be deemed to be received on the date of generation of acknowledgement with registration number.

xvi. Clause 4.81 of the principal Code shall be substituted as under:

4.81 If on inspection there are no defects found, or on re-inspection the defects noticed earlier are found to have been removed, the licensee shall sanction the additional load applied for, and issue a demand note in writing, under acknowledgment, within the time limit specified in Clause 4.31 and 4.32 for LT supply and HT/EHT supply respectively.

xvii. Clause 4.85 of the principal Code shall be substituted as under:

4.85 The overall timeline for releasing additional load, from the date of receipt of application, shall be as provided in the GERC (Standard of Performance of Distribution Licensee) Regulations, 2005 and amendments thereof.

xviii. Clause 4.110 of the principal Code shall be substituted as under:

4.110 All payments shall be made by way of Cash (up to Rs 20,000), Banker's Cheque or Demand Draft. Banker's Cheques and demand drafts shall be payable at any branch of a scheduled commercial bank. The licensee shall also create facility for e-payment of demand note.

4. Amendment in Section 6 of the Principal Code

i. Clause 6.1 of the principal Code shall be substituted as under:

6.1 "No installation shall be serviced without a meter. All new connections shall be serviced with the smart pre-payment meter or pre-payment meter. The Distribution Licensee may seek exception to the smart meter or pre-payment meter from the Commission along with proper justification. The Commission may allow the deviation from installation of the smart pre-payment meter or pre-payment meter after recording reasons thereto.

All meters shall conform to requirements as laid down in the Central Electricity Authority (Installation & Operation of Meters) Regulations, 2006 and amendments thereof, issued under Section 55 of the Act. The licensee shall also comply with the abovementioned Regulations for energizing a new connection or for replacement of meter or for other purposes such as energy

audit and interface meter.”

ii. Clause 6.3 of the principal Code shall be substituted as under:

6.3 At the time of seeking a new connection the consumer shall have the option to either:

- (1) Purchase the meter, MCB/CB and associated equipment himself from a vendor(s) provided the equipments are of a make and specification approved by the licensee from time-to-time; or
- (2) Require that the meter, MCB/CB and associated equipment be supplied by the licensee on payment of applicable charges.

The consumer shall indicate this option in the application form. The licensee shall make available on its website an updated list of makes and specifications of meters and other equipments, as approved by the licensee. The licensee shall also ensure that tested and sealed meters of approved meter manufacturers are available to consumers for purchase and information of the places from where the consumers can purchase them is available on its website.

Once the consumer has procured the meter, the licensee shall test, install and seal the meter.

iii. Clause 6.5(1) and 6.5(2) of the principal Code shall be substituted as under:

6.5 The meters for new connections shall be of following type(s) subject to exemption, if any, granted by the Commission in accordance with Clause 6.1 above:

(1) For LT consumers –

(a) For 1 Phase LT connections – Smart pre-payment meter or pre-payment meter. If exemption is granted, Electronic Meters.

(b) For 3 Phase LT connections – Smart pre-payment meter or pre-payment meter. If exemption is granted, Electronic Meters with Maximum Demand Indicator (MDI).

(2) For HT/EHT consumers – 3 Phase Tri-vector meters with MDI. The meters shall have a facility for “Time of the Day” metering and storage of at least 45 days. The consumer shall have the option to install meter having facility to record peak hours MDI in addition to above features. Such meter shall be Smart pre-payment meter or pre-payment meter. If exemption is granted, Electronic Meter with Automatic Meter Reading facility.

iv. Clause 6.11 of the principal Code shall be substituted as under:

6.11 Initial installation or replacement of the meter shall be done by the licensee’s authorized person/ representative in the presence of the consumer or his authorized representative. For initial installation of meter the licensee shall give advance notice keeping in mind the overall time frame for release of connection as specified in the GERC (Standard of Performance) Regulations, 2005 and Amendments thereof. For replacement of meter, such notice period shall be of 7 (Seven) days.

v. Clause 6.17 of the principal Code shall be substituted as under:

6.17 The meter shall normally be read on fixed date \pm 3 working days for monthly

billing cycle & ± 5 working days for bi-monthly billing cycle and the consumer shall extend all facilities to the licensee or his authorized representatives to read the meter.

In case of smart meters, the meters shall be read remotely at least once in every month and in case of other pre-payment meters, the meters shall be read at least once in every three months. The data regarding energy consumption shall be made available to the consumer, through website or mobile App or SMS, etc. Consumers having smart pre-payment meters may also be given the data access for checking their consumption on real time basis. If a consumer, having smart pre-payment meter, wishes to have a record of reading taken, he shall be allowed so by the Licensee.

vi. Clause 6.21 of the principal Code shall be substituted as under:

- 6.21 In case, for any reason, the meter is not read during a billing cycle the licensee shall prepare a provisional bill based on the average consumption of last three billing cycles when readings were taken. Such provisional billing shall not continue for more than two billing cycles at a stretch. In the case where meter is inaccessible the consumer shall have the option to send the picture of the meter indicating the meter reading and date of meter reading through registered mobile number or through registered e-mail ID by +/- 3 days for monthly billing cycle and +/- 5 days for bi-monthly billing cycle from the due date of current bill. In case where the meter is rendered inaccessible even after two billing cycle, except under extraordinary situation due to force majeure, the licensee shall issue bill for minimum charge and/or fixed charge applicable to that consumer.

vii. Clause 6.22 of the principal Code shall be substituted as under:

6.22 If the meter is rendered inaccessible on two consecutive meter reading dates and the consumer has not sent the picture of the meter indicating the meter reading and date of meter reading through registered mobile number or through registered e-mail ID as mentioned in Clause 6.21 above, a notice shall be issued to consumer to keep the meter accessible for reading on the date (at least 7 days after the date of notice) and time specified in the notice.

viii. Clause 6.25 of the principal Code shall be substituted as under:

6.25 When a domestic consumer gives prior information in writing about inaccessibility of the meter to the licensee due to continued absence from residence, the licensee shall not send any notice/provisional bill to the consumer provided that the consumer pays the fixed charges for such period in advance. Whenever the meter is made accessible by the consumer for taking the meter reading, the entire consumption shall be taken as if the consumption was for the period excluding the intimated period of inaccessibility. This facility shall be available to the consumer if he has paid up to date dues. Further, such consumers should make the meter available for reading once in six months after giving reasonably adequate prior intimation or shall send the picture of meter indicating the meter reading and date of meter reading through registered mobile number or through registered e-mail ID. In case of failure to do so the supply may be liable to be disconnected.

ix. Clause 6.30 of the principal Code shall be substituted as under:

6.30 The meter may be tested for accuracy at a third party facility approved by the Commission, if so desired by the consumer. The list of third party agencies approved by the Commission for testing of meters shall be available in their

various offices as well as on the website of the licensee:

Provided that in case of testing on the consumer's request, the consumer shall have to pay the requisite testing fee.

Provided further that if the meter is found to be defective / burnt due to technical reasons attributable to the licensee viz. voltage fluctuation, transients etc. or it is successfully established that the results of this test are contrary to the results of the test performed by the distribution licensee the licensee shall refund the test fee to the consumer by adjustment in the subsequent bill.

The meter test results of such Third Party Meter Testing Laboratory and the meter data shall be issued to the consumer after such test has been completed and the said results are final and binding on both the consumer and the distribution licensee.

x. Clause 6.34 of the principal Code shall be substituted as under:

6.34 If a consumer disputes the results of testing carried out at Licensee's Testing Facility, he may appeal to the Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum (CGRF) which shall adjudicate upon the matter.

xi. Clause 6.35 of the principal Code shall be substituted as under:

6.35 No testing fee shall be charged from the consumer at the time of reporting of defective/ burnt meter.

If, as a result of testing it is established that the meter became defective/burnt due to technical reasons viz. voltage fluctuation, transients etc. attributable to the licensee, the cost of the meter and testing fee shall be borne by the licensee.

xii. Clause 6.36 of the principal Code shall be substituted as under:

6.36 If, as a result of testing, it is established that the meter was rendered defective/burnt due to reasons attributable to the consumer such as defect in consumer installation, connection of unauthorized load by the consumer etc., the cost of the meter and/or testing fee shall be borne by the consumer as specified below:

- (1) If the meter was owned by the consumer, the licensee shall inform the consumer to replace the meter and associated equipment. The licensee shall however replace the meter immediately till the consumer arranges it's own meter and associated equipments. The Licensee shall recover the testing fee from the consumer through subsequent bills.
- (2) If the meter was owned by the licensee, the licensee shall install a new meter at its own cost initially and shall recover it from the consumer and shall also charge testing fee from the consumer through subsequent bills.

Provided further that if, as a result of testing, it is established that the meter was rendered defective/burnt due to tampering or any other deliberate act by the consumer to interfere with the meter, the consumer shall be assessed as per clauses 7.7-7.9 of this Code and action as permissible under law shall be taken against the consumer for pilferage and tampering.

xiii. Clause 6.37 of the principal Code shall be substituted as under:

6.37 If a consumer disputes the results of testing, the meter shall be tested at a third-party facility selected by the consumer from the list of third party testing

facility approved by the Commission as stipulated in Clause 6.30 above.

xiv. Clause 6.42 of the principal Code shall be substituted as under:

6.42 In case a meter is found burnt either on consumer's complaint or upon inspection by the licensee, the licensee shall restore the supply immediately by providing another meter in place of the burnt meter after ensuring that necessary preventive action at site is taken to avoid future damage.

Non-availability of meter with Licensee shall not be a reason for delay in restoration of supply.

xv. Clause 6.46 of the principal Code shall be substituted as under:

6.46 Supply in such cases shall be restored after installation of a new meter, payment of electricity charges for the period in which meter was not available and any other prescribed charges that may be approved by the Commission. Electricity charges for the period in which the meter was not available shall be assessed as per clause 6.60 of this Code.

Non-availability of meter with Licensee shall not be a reason for delay in restoration of supply.

xvi. Clause 6.48 of the principal Code shall be substituted as under:

6.48 Tariffs and charges for supply of electricity shall be as determined by GERC from time to time. Tariff for each category of consumers shall be displayed on distribution licensee's website and consumers shall be notified of change in tariff including Fuel and Power Purchase Price Adjustment (FPPPA) charges and other charges, a full billing cycle ahead of time, through distribution

licensee's website as well as through energy bills.

xvii. Clause 6.49 of the principal Code shall be substituted as under:

6.49 The distribution licensee shall prepare the bill for every billing cycle based on actual meter reading, except where pre-payment meters are installed. In case of pre-payment metering, the distribution licensee shall issue the bill, to the consumer, on his or her request. Such intimation shall consist of the details of bill amount and the due date for payment. The licensee shall intimate the consumer of bill dispatch through SMS and/or email immediately, if the consumer has furnished requisite details. The distribution licensee shall also upload the bill on its website on the day of bill generation. The billing details of last one year (including the latest bill) for all consumers shall also be made available on the licensee's website along with payment receipt details. The consumer who registers himself with licensee for this facility can access his details.

xviii. Clause 6.51 of the principal Code shall be substituted as under:

6.51 The licensee shall issue the first bill within two billing cycles of releasing a new connection where post payment meters are installed. In case the consumer does not receive the first bill within two billing cycles from the date of release of the connection, he may complain, in writing, to the licensee's office and the licensee shall issue the bill within the next 7 days.

xix. Clause 6.52 of the principal Code shall be substituted as under:

6.52 The bill will be delivered to the consumer immediately in case of spot billing. In all other cases, the licensee shall ensure that the bill is delivered to the consumer by hand/post/courier/any electronic mode at least 10 days prior to

the due date of payment.

xx. Clause 6.53 of the principal Code shall be substituted as under:

6.53 If a consumer does not receive the bill within 7 days of normal bill issue date, he may obtain a duplicate bill from the concerned billing office of the licensee. The licensee shall issue a duplicate bill immediately if the consumer contacts the licensee's office in person/ telephonically, or on the date of acknowledgement if received by post. Non-receipt of the bill shall not entitle the consumer to delay payment beyond the due date. If any bill is served with a delay of 60 days the consumers shall be given a rebate of two percent.

xxi. Clause 6.54 (9) of the principal Code shall be substituted as under:

6.54 The following information shall be included in the bill:

(1)...

(2)...

.....

(9) Status of meter (Visual inspection);

xxii. Clause 6.55(1) of the principal Code shall be substituted as under:

6.55 The following information shall be provided on the reverse of the bill or stamped on the bill or be sent in an annexure accompanying the bill at least twice a year:

(1) Address(es) of collection centre(s) and working hours for collection of bill payments, including the date and time of presence of the mobile van, if any, at different venues for collection of bill payments. Details regarding e-payment facility along with information related to rebate as

per Clause 6.74.

xxiii. Clause 6.57 of the principal Code shall be substituted as under:

6.57 If the licensee is not able to read the meter and the consumer has not sent the picture of the meter indicating the meter reading and date of meter reading through registered mobile number or through registered e-mail ID as mentioned in Clause 6.21 above, a provisional bill may be issued on the basis of the average consumption of the previous 3 billing cycles. However, the licensee shall ensure that such provisional billing does not extend to more than two billing cycles at a stretch, and more than two provisional bills shall not be generated during one financial year except under extraordinary situation due to force majeure. The provisional bills shall be adjusted on the basis of the subsequent actual meter reading.

xxiv. Clause 6.66 of the principal Code shall be substituted as under:

6.66 In case of post payment meters, when a domestic consumer gives prior information in writing about his continued absence from residence, the distribution licensee shall not send any notice or provisional bill to the consumer provided that the consumer pays the fixed charges for such period in advance and his supply line shall not be disconnected.

xxv. Clause 6.67 of the principal Code shall be substituted as under:

6.67 Such provisional payment shall be adjusted when subsequent bill is issued on the basis of actual meter reading.

xxvi. Clause 6.74 of the principal Code shall be substituted as under:

6.74 Consumer may pay the bill amount less than or equal to Rs. 1000 by Cash,

Cheque, Demand Draft or through e-payment mechanism. Cheques and demand drafts shall be payable at any branch of a scheduled commercial bank. The date of realization of the cheque shall be deemed to be the date on which the payment is received in the licensee's account.

The consumer shall mandatorily pay bill amount more than Rs. 1000 through e-payment mechanism. The Licensee shall give a rebate of 0.01% or Rs. 50, whichever is less, calculated on the annual energy bill amount, to such consumer who has paid all the bills of a financial year within due date of payment of such bills through e-payment mechanism. The Licensee may claim amount of such rebate given to the eligible consumer in their Annual Revenue Requirement.

xxvii. Modification in Clause 6.76 of the Principal Code

Following shall be inserted at the end of Clause 6.76 of the Principal Code:

“The distribution licensee shall also provide bill payment service to senior citizens at their door-steps.”

xxviii. Clause 6.80 of principal Code shall be substituted as under:

6.80 Receipt shall be issued to the consumer for payment of bills made. In all cases, payments shall be acknowledged in the next bill.

5. Modification in Section 8 of the Principal Code

i. Below Clause 8.3 (6) of the principal Code following shall be inserted:

(7) In case of pre-payment meter, supply shall be automatically cut-off when the amount credited is exhausted. This shall however not be treated as a

disconnection and the supply will be resumed whenever the meter is recharged.

ii. Clause 8.9 of the principal Code shall be substituted as under:

8.9 Thereafter, the disconnection shall be done immediately after payment of the final bill. The balance amount due to any consumption between the final reading and the permanent disconnection, if any, may be adjusted against the security amount with the distribution licensee. The remaining security deposit shall be refunded to the consumer within such period as specified by the Commission in the GERC (Security Deposit) Regulations, 2005, amended from time to time.

6. Modification in Section 9 of the Principal Code

i. Modification in Clause 9.1 of the Principal Code

Following shall be inserted below Clause 9.1 of the Principal Code

For creating proper awareness among consumers and licensee staff, the distribution licensee shall ensure to undertake the following steps, namely: -

- a) Manual of procedure for providing common services and handling customer grievances shall be made available for reference of consumers at every office of the distribution licensee and downloadable from its website.
- b) The distribution licensee shall publish the guaranteed standards of performance along with compensation structure, information on procedure for filing of complaints, in the bills for month of January and July. If it is

not possible to publish the same at the back of the bills, the distribution licensee shall publish it on a separate hand out and distribute it along with the bills.

- c) The distribution licensee shall arrange to give due publicity through media, TV, newspaper, website and by displaying in boards at consumer service-related offices to bring awareness of consumer rights, standards of performance, compensation provisions, grievance redressal, measures for energy efficiency and any other schemes of the distribution licensee.
- d) The distribution licensee shall arrange to display feeder wise outage data, efforts made for minimising outages, prevention of theft or unauthorised use of electricity or tampering, distress or damage to electrical plant, electric lines or meter and results obtained during the year, on its website.
- e) Whenever the existing meters are to be replaced by any new technology meters, the distribution licensee shall take adequate measures to create consumer awareness regarding the advantages of such replacement. Distribution licensee shall issue a public notice in at least four daily newspapers. Such information shall also be displayed in conspicuous manner on the distribution licensee's website and the distribution licensee shall indicate the area wise schedule of dates for replacement of such meter.

ii. Clause 9.2 of the principal Code shall be substituted as under:

- 9.2 The distribution licensee shall supply 24 x 7 power to all consumers. However, the Commission may specify, from time to time, lower hours of supply for some categories of consumers like agriculture.

However, except, subject to a contract to the contrary, the Distribution Licensee shall not be responsible for any loss to Consumer or damage to Consumer's plant and equipment due to interruptions / fluctuations in supply of power. Such interruption/fluctuations in supply may arise from the reasons including but not limited to war, mutiny, riot, earthquake, cyclone, tempest, strike, civil commotion, lock-out, lightning, fire, flood, accident or breakdown of plant and machinery, load shedding as suggested by SLDC or causes beyond control of the Distribution Licensee. The Distribution Licensee shall communicate through SMS or by other electronic mode along with estimated time for restoration. This information shall also be available in the call centre of the Licensee.

iii. Clause 9.4 of the principal Code shall be substituted as under:

9.4 The Distribution Licensee shall always be entitled for reasons of testing or outages or maintenance or any other cause for efficient working of the undertaking to temporarily discontinue the supply for such period as may be necessary. The Distribution Licensee shall inform the consumer through SMS or by other electronic mode along with estimated time for resumption of supply. This information shall also be available in the call centre of the Licensee.

Sd/-

(Roopwant Singh, IAS)

Secretary

Gujarat Electricity Regulatory Commission

Gandhinagar

Place: Gandhinagar

Date: 19/02/2022