

## **Supporting Our Disabled and Vulnerable Customers**

### **1. Our Vulnerability Definition**

- 1.1 Some of our customers may struggle with certain things when it comes to using communications products. Customers may be considered vulnerable when they're:
- (a) Significantly less able to protect or represent their interests in the communications market; and/or
  - (b) Significantly more likely to be at a disadvantage, or that disadvantage is likely to be more substantial.
- 1.2 Examples of personal circumstances that make some people more vulnerable are events such as bereavement, separating from a partner, pregnancy, serious illness, being a victim of fraud, domestic violence, loss of employment or financial difficulties. Some characteristics of vulnerability are age, physical or learning disability, low literacy, mental health issues and communications difficulties. These are not exhaustive lists however, as different life events and characteristics affect people in different ways. We are also committed to ensuring there is transparency in our own business and in our approach to tackling modern slavery throughout our supply chains, consistent with our disclosure obligations under the Modern Slavery Act 2015. We expect the same high standards from all of our contractors, suppliers and other business partners, and as part of our contracting processes, we include specific prohibitions against the use of forced, compulsory or trafficked labour, or anyone held in slavery or servitude, whether adults or children, and we expect that our suppliers will hold their own suppliers to the same high standards.

### **2. Our Vulnerability Policy Statement**

- 2.1 We're committed to treating all our customers fairly and with respect, including those who are in vulnerable situations.
- 2.2 We know that there's lots of different factors and life events which may cause vulnerability, whether it be long-term or on a temporary basis. For example, it could be because of age, a physical or learning disability or difficulty in communicating. We also understand that challenging circumstances and events like bereavement or separating from a partner can mean that you need some extra support to help keep you connected while you get back on your feet.
- 2.3 We'll do our best to offer you the right level of help and the most appropriate products and services to suit your needs. Our customer support team will always try to identify specific needs to provide specialised assistance where it's needed. Sometimes it isn't always easy for them to

identify if you are experiencing difficulties, so please let the team know if you think they could help.

- 2.4 If you're in a vulnerable situation and need extra help, next time you call us, let our advisor know and they'll register it on your account so we can consider your extra needs when you contact us next time. It will help us to help you better in the future. Alternatively, you can use one of the other contact methods shown on our contact us page. You can also, if you choose, give your permission for someone else to contact us on your behalf. You can be reassured that any information you provide to us will be treated in confidence and in accordance with data protection law with the policy

### **3. Regulations**

- 3.1 Customers who are vulnerable due to circumstances such as age, physical or learning disability, physical or mental illness, low literacy, communications difficulties or changes in circumstances such as bereavement must receive fair and appropriate treatment
- (a) People using assistance dogs must be allowed to enter your premises
  - (b) For Customers who have hearing difficulties, induction loops or important information in leaflet form should be available
  - (c) Access to emergency SMS (mobile only) for people who cannot make a voice call and who need to contact the emergency services
  - (d) For Customers with sight problems written information in an alternative format should be available
  - (e) Aisles or walkways should be kept free from obstacles and ensure that fixtures don't restrict access for people with mobility impairments or sight problems
  - (f) Access to an approved text relay service for people who are hearing-or speech-impaired should be available
  - (g) Provide free directory enquiries for consumers who are unable to use a printed directory because of a disability, with through-connection of calls (text relay / video relay)
  - (h) Bills and contracts must be available in formats such as large print and Braille upon request
  - (i) Third party bill management must be available, thus enabling a nominated friend or relative to act on behalf of someone who needs help to manage their affairs.