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TRIPURA ELECTRICITY REGULATORY COMMISSION



The Tripura Electricity Regulatory Commission (Consumer Prepaid Metering) Regulations, 2021.

Bhoturia, Banamalipur, Agartala, Tripura (W), Pin-799001

Ph: (0381)232-6373/0381-230-0137(O)

Website: www.terc.tripura.gov.in E-mail: secretarytercagt@gmail.com

PREPAID METERING REGULATIONS' 2021

Chapter –I

General

1. Short title, commencement and interpretation:-

- 1.1. These Regulations may be called “The Tripura Electricity Regulatory Commission (Consumer Prepaid Metering) Regulations, 2021.”
- 1.2. These Regulations shall come into force from the date of their notification in the Tripura Government Gazette.
- 1.3. These Regulations shall extend to the State of Tripura.

2. Scope and extent of application–These Regulations shall be applicable to:-

- i. Distribution and Retail Supply licensees including deemed licensees and franchisees in their respective area of supply and the electricity consumers in the State of Tripura who are covered under the scope of these Regulations

Chapter –II

3. Definitions. –In these regulations, unless the context otherwise requires:-

- (1)“**Act**” means the Electricity Act, 2003 and subsequent amendments thereof.
- (2)“**Advance Consumption Deposit (ACD)**” means deposit prescribed to cover the estimated power consumption charges for minimum one billing cycles.

- (3) **“Agreement”** means an agreement entered into by the licensee and consumer for the services including supply of electricity by the licensee to such consumer.
- (4) **“Area of supply”** means the area within which a licensee is authorized to supply electricity and shall include such areas where a franchisee(s) may be deployed.
- (5) **“Billing Cycle or Billing period”** means the period for which regular electricity bills, as specified by the Commission, are prepared for different categories of consumers by the licensee.
- (6) **“Commission”** means the Tripura Electricity Regulatory Commission.
- (7) **“Connected load”** expressed in kW, means aggregate of the manufacturer’s rated capacities or in its absence assessed capacities of all energy consuming devices or apparatus connected with the Distribution licensee’s service line on the consumer’s premises which can be simultaneously used and shall be determined as per the procedure laid down in the Regulations.
- (8) **“Consumption Charges”** means the consumption of electrical energy in KWh or KVAh/ multiplied by applicable energy charges including demand charges/fixed charges, fuel surcharge adjustment (FSA), peak load exemption charges, whichever applicable. These exclude all types of duties and taxes, service charges and rentals. Consumption charges may also be called the Sale of Power (SOP) charges.
- (9) **“Contract Demand”** means the maximum demand in kW or kVA (within a consumer’s sanctioned load) agreed to be supplied by the licensee and indicated in the agreement executed between the licensee and the consumer.
- (10) **“Disconnection”** means the physical separation of consumer installation from the licensee’s system.

- (11) **“Licensee” Or “Distribution Licensee”** means a licensee authorized to operate and maintain a distribution system for supplying electricity to the consumers in his area of supply and includes his authorized representative.
- (12) **“Low Voltage (LV)”** means a voltage not exceeding 250 volts.
- (13) **“Maximum demand”** means the highest load measured in average kVA or kW at the point of supply of a consumer during any continuous period of thirty minutes during the billing period.
- (14) **“Meter”** means an device installed for measuring, indicating and recording consumption of electricity or any other quantity related with electrical system and shall include, where ever applicable, other equipment such as Current Transformer (CT), Voltage Transformer (VT) or Capacitor Voltage Transformer (CVT), necessary for such purpose.
- (15) **“Prepaid Meter”** means a meter defined in the CEA Regulations for regulating the installation and operation of meters which facilitate use of electricity only after advance payment. The meters shall also include associated in-home display / keypad unit.
- (16) **“Minimum Charge”** means the minimum monthly charges as approved by the Commission in the prevailing tariff order for the licensee.
- (17) **“Sanctioned Load”** means the approved connected load in kW.
- (18) **“Security Deposit”** means deposit made by a consumer to cover the payment due to the licensee for electric meter and metering equipment that is to be provided by the licensee for supplying electricity to a premises and includes the advance consumption deposit.
- (19) **“Tariff”** means a schedule of prices or charges including fixed charges and monthly minimum charges for supply of electrical energy and services as approved by the Commission, which are applicable to all such services provided to the consumers by the licensee.
4. The other words and expressions used herein but not specifically defined in this Regulation but defined in the Act or under any law passed by the

Parliament applicable to the electricity industry in the State shall have the meaning assigned to them in the Act or such law.

These Regulations shall be in addition to and not in derogation of the Tripura (Electricity Supply Code) Regulations, 2011 and other relevant Regulations notified by the Commission.

Chapter III

5. Applicability

- 5.1** The Prepaid Metering Regulations shall cover new single phase and three phase LT Industrial, NDS, mobile towers and Temporary connections up to a connected load of 50 KW as specified by the distribution licensee.
- 5.2** The distribution licensee, on an application made by a consumer covered under 5.1 above shall provide electricity supply through prepaid meter subject to feasibility as per the relevant provisions of the Tripura Electricity Supply Code and the other Regulations in force.
- 5.3** The existing LT Industries, NDS, temporary consumers and domestic consumers whether existing or new, may also opt for Prepaid Metering supply arrangement. The licensee shall convert the supply of such consumers to the Prepaid Metering on receiving such request as per the provisions under these Regulations, provided the requisite facilities for recharge exist in that area.
- 5.4** In case the existing consumer opts for Prepaid Metering and the meter under postpaid arrangement was owned by the consumer the licensee shall return the meter to the consumer after change-over of the connection to prepaid meter.

Provided further if the meter belongs to licensee the same shall be retained by the licensee and the security deposit, if any, shall be returned to the consumer such working meters taken out from consumers premises shall be used by the licensee for replacement or providing new connections.

- 5.5** The licensee may also introduce prepaid metering scheme to such other category of consumers and in such areas of supply, where its felt necessary to implement prepaid metering scheme under intimation to the Commission.
- 5.6** It is clarified that provisions of Section 56 of the Act which apply to supply of electricity through post-payment mechanism shall not be applicable to supply through prepaid meters.
- 5.7** The prepaid consumer shall not be required to be billed. However, the licensee shall carry out the periodical inspection / checking of meters not more than once in six months unless, there is specific complaint and shall download the requisite data for energy accounting purposes.

6. Security/ACD

In case of new connection with prepaid meter the distribution licensee shall not require security, in pursuance of clause (a) of sub section (1) and sub section(5) of Section 47 of the Electricity Act,2003.The consumer shall not be required to deposit any advance consumption deposit (ACD)as part of security.

Provided further that for existing consumer shifting to Prepaid Metering arrangement, the ACD deposited with the licensee shall be adjusted against the last bill including arrears if any and the balance if any payable to the consumer shall be adjusted in next recharge.

7. Metering:

- 7.1** The licensee shall approve vendor for prepaid meters (meters shall be certified as per the relevant IS standard 15884) and shall make arrangement for recharge of the credit in the meter by the consumer online and offline within area of his supply.
- 7.2** The licensee shall install prepaid meters, including the display unit, conforming to the technical requirement as prescribed in the CEA (Installation and Operation of Meters) Regulations, 2006 and its subsequent amendments. The prepaid meter including the display unit shall be provided by licensee at the cost of the consumer or on monthly rental basis (meter rent charged to the consumer on monthly basis).

Provided further that the consumer may also purchase his own meter of approved make and specifications from the vendor(s) approved by the licensee. The consumer shall get such meter tested at the licensee's meter testing lab after payment of the requisite fee. The licensee shall install the meter outside the consumer premises.

- 7.3** The display unit shall indicate the electricity consumed (kWh, kVAh), the running load / demand in KW/KVA and the number of units and the credit balance available out of the prepaid amount.
- 7.4** The prepaid meter shall be simple keypad based meter with ease of operation capable of recharging through coupon and/or online recharge and also capable of alarm, indication in case of low credit and disconnection on over load or no balance. Provided further that these meters of various manufactures and the vending infrastructure shall have the inter-operability for ease of operation.
- 7.5** The meter shall be communicable and compatible for AMR or AMI applications. Provided further that the meter shall have adequate number of registers and the facility for TOD and kVAh based tariff application.
- 7.6** The meter shall set off alarm when the balance amount in the meter account as reached the amount defined by consumer. It shall raise alarms on regular intervals till it is acknowledged.
- 7.7** The electricity supply shall be automatically disconnected once the credit gets exhausted in the meter. The supply shall be restored automatically on recharging and no reconnection charges will be recovered.
- 7.8** In case the consumer fails to recharge his prepaid meter account and his balance runs out, the meter shall not disconnect the supply of the consumer for 48hours or till the emergency credit limit, if any, defined by the licensee for that consumer gets exhausted.
- 7.9** The prepaid meter and the recharge coupon shall have inbuilt security mechanism to guard against any attempt of theft of the codes. In case the recharge coupon is lost by a consumer, it should not be usable in any other prepaid meter.

7.10 The meter shall have the provision for ensuring recovery of monthly minimum charges, fixed charges and the consumption charges as per the applicable tariff.

Provided further that the meter shall be capable of deductions of the consumption charges according to the slab system in the tariff from the consumer.

7.11 The tariff revision in case of prepaid meter consumer shall be done through a recharge coupon code for offline prepaid meters and through data command for the online prepaid meters.

7.12 In case of off line recharge for prepaid meter, the coupon shall have validity of 3(three months) after which the same shall be required to be revalidated.

7.13 In case the consumer, at any time, uses/put on load exceeding 110% of his sanctioned load, the meter shall give an audible warning for one minute and then the supply shall be disconnected by the meter automatically.

Provided the supply shall be restored when the load falls below the sanctioned load.

7.14 The licensee shall provide adequate number of vending machines for facilitating recharge of coupons in addition to the facility of online recharge.

8. Rebate for prepaid meter

A rebate shall be allowed on the applicable tariff for the consumers availing supply through prepaid meters as per the provision of current Tariff Order.

9. Procurement

9.1 The licensee shall prepare a draft contract, for prepaid meter procurement / installation and submit the same for approval of the Commission.

9.2 The licensee shall finalize the terms and conditions with various manufacturers/suppliers to have a common platform (or sharing of code) for developing the vending software to create recharge for multiple meter makes.

9.3 Provision of spare meters for replacement. The utility shall keep adequate stock of spare prepaid meters duly tested for replacement of defective

prepaid meters immediately without any waiting to avoid inconvenience to the consumer and to meet the requirement of new incumbents to the scheme.

10. Vending inter operability

Licensee shall ensure vending system inter operability so that consumer shall not have any problem in getting recharge coupon from anywhere through any mode as per the availability of the service. The licensee shall ensure that system level interoperability is achieved using web services, while ensuring the tariff compliance and relevant BIS for the meter. It shall be possible to recharge coupon for different make of meters from any vending station.

Provided further that the prepaid metering system shall have the capability to be integrated with the main system of the licensee to have one system with all consumers' data for ease of operation.

11. Training

The meter vendor shall provide training to the staff of utility to facilitate smooth/proper implementation of prepaid metering scheme.

Provided further that the server for the proposed metering system, software and the vending infrastructure shall be maintained and operated by the licensee to eliminate any problem at later stage.

12. The regulation in respect of billing as provided under TERC (Electricity Supply Code) Regulations, 2011 and the other relevant Regulation shall not be applicable to the consumer under prepaid meter scheme.

Chapter –IV

Miscellaneous

13. **Interpretation.** -If any question arises relating to the interpretation of any provision of these regulations, the decision of the Commission shall be final.

14. Power to amend. -The Commission, for reasons to be recorded in writing, may at any time vary, alter or modify any of the provision of these Regulations by specific order.

15. Power to remove difficulties. -If any difficulty arises in giving effect to any of the provisions of these Regulations, the Commission may, by a general or special order, not being inconsistent with the provisions of these Regulations or the Act, do or undertake to do things or direct to do or undertake such things which appear to be necessary or expedient for the purpose of removing the difficulties.

16. Power of relaxation. -The Commission may in public interest and for reasons to be recorded in writing, relax any of the provisions of these regulations.

**By order of the Commission.
Secretary,
Tripura Electricity Regulatory Commission**