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STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

2020 No. 78.

ELECTRICITY (CODE OF QUALITY OF SERVICE)
REGULATIONS, 2020

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STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

2020 No. 78.

The Electricity (Code of Quality of Service) Regulations, 2020 *(Under section 119 of the Electricity Act, 1999, Cap. 145)*

IN EXERCISE of the powers conferred upon the Electricity Regulatory Authority by section 119 of the Electricity Act, 1999, these Regulations are made this 19th day of May, 2020.

PART I—PRELIMINARY

1. Title

These Regulations may be cited as the Electricity (Code of Quality of Service) Regulations, 2020.

2. Application

These Regulations apply to a holder of a distribution licence under the Act and a consumer.

3. Interpretation

In these Regulations, unless the context otherwise requires—

“Act” means the Electricity Act, 1999, Cap.145;

“authority” means the Electricity Regulatory Authority established under section 4 of the Act;

“agreement” means an agreement entered into by a holder of a distribution licence and its consumers including any commercial arrangement for supply of electrical energy or open access;

“billing cycle” means the period for which a regular bill is ordinarily raised by the holder of a distribution licence;

“consumer” means any person supplied or entitled to be supplied with electrical energy for personal, industrial and commercial use but does not include a person supplied with electrical energy for delivery to another person;

“currency point” has the value assigned to it in Schedule 1 of these Regulations;

“distribution system” means the system of wires and associated facilities used for distribution or supply of electrical energy between the delivery points on the transmission lines or the generating station connection and the point of connection at the installation of the consumers;

“holder of distribution licence” means a company granted a distribution licence under the Act;

“health facility” means a place that provides health care including a hospital, clinic, outpatient care centre and specialised care centres such as birthing centre or psychiatric care centre;

“Installations Permits Committee” means the Committee established under regulation 3 of the Electricity (Installation Permits) Regulations, 2003;

“interruption” means a loss of electrical energy supply for more than one minute that is due to a cause beyond the control of the consumer concerned;

“licence” means a licence granted under the Act;

“low voltage” means the rated voltage of 240 volts between phase and neutral or 415 volts between any two phases;

“maximum demand” means the highest load measured in kVA or kW at the point of supply of a consumer for a continuous period of 45 minutes or as specified by the authority, during the billing cycle;

“meter” means a device used to measure the amount of electrical energy consumed by a consumer;

“non-technical complaints” includes complaints relating to billing and general inquiries;

“network” means —

- (a) transmission works; or
- (b) distribution works used to convey electrical energy under a distribution licence, transmission licence or integrated regional licence, but does not include a line, pole, switch, transformer or apparatus that is—
 - (i) on or a part of premises to which a transmitter or distributor supply electricity; and
 - (ii) situated beyond the point at which electricity is supplied;

“scheduled interruption” means a foreseen interruption of electrical energy supply service and includes all repairs with enough lead time to allow them to be completed on a non-emergency basis and all capital and renovation projects which require outages during construction;

“smart meter” means an electronic device that records consumption of electrical energy and communicates the information to the electricity supplier for monitoring and billing;

“premises” means land or building or part of land or building in respect of which a separate meter or metering arrangements have been made by the holder of a distribution licence for supply of electricity;

“prudent utility practice” means the generally accepted design, practices, methods and operation of a power system, to

achieve safety, dependability, efficiency and economy, and to meet utility and industry codes, standards and regulations;

“quarter” means the period in any given calendar year from—

- (a) 1st January to 31st March;
- (b) 1st April to 30th June;
- (c) 1st July to 30th September; and
- (d) 1st October to 31st December;

“technical complaints” includes complaints relating to broken conductors, faulty or broken transformers, fallen poles, blackouts and power fluctuations;

“tribunal” means the Electricity Disputes Tribunal established under Part XIII of the Act; and

“unscheduled interruption” means an interruption of electrical energy supply service which is not a planned interruption.

PART II—QUALITY OF SERVICE

4. Guaranteed service standards for new service connections

(1) A holder of a distribution licence shall connect a consumer for new service—

- (a) within ten working days, where the connection requires a single-phase or no pole service;
- (b) within fifteen working days, where the connection requires one or more pole service; and
- (c) within fifteen working days, where the connection requires a three-phase service.

(2) Subject to the guaranteed service standards prescribed in subregulation (1), the holder of a distribution licence shall adopt service rules.

(3) The rules adopted by the holder of a distribution licence under subregulation (2) shall be approved by the authority.

5. Application for new service connection

(1) A person wishing to connect electricity supply to his or her premises shall—

- (a) make an application to the holder of a distribution licence;
- (b) retain a qualified electrician certified by the Installations Permits Committee to undertake the electrical installation at his or her premises;
- (c) obtain from the electrician a signed and dated installation completion certificate verified by the holder of a distribution licence;
- (d) pay the requisite fees for the new connection; and
- (e) provide to the holder of a distribution licence, at no cost, a suitable right of way and a site for the installation of a pole and meter.

(2) The application referred to in subregulation (1) (a) shall include—

- (a) outstanding debt from a previous electricity bill at a different supply address, if any;
- (b) the estimated load and expected energy consumption;
- (c) an undertaking to pay the requisite connection fee;
- (d) an undertaking to grant permission for access at reasonable times and adequate protection of the holder of a distribution licensee's agent during meter reading, fault rectification, disconnection or reconnection exercise and other lawful activities related to the electricity supply at the applicant's premises;
- (e) a contact address for the delivery of the electricity bills;

- (f) an undertaking not to connect electricity supply which is not metered;
- (g) an undertaking not to tamper with the meter or any ancillary equipment associated with the electricity supply; and
- (h) an undertaking not to permit a connection from the applicant's premises to other premises, electricity supplied to the applicant's premise, without the prior consent of the holder of a distribution licence.

(3) The application for new service connection shall be accompanied by the certificate referred to in subregulation 1(c).

(4) On receipt of the application and inspection fees, the holder of a distribution licence shall carry out a survey of the premises and issue the applicant with an invoice for a new connection within—

- (a) five working days, where the connection requires one pole or no pole service and is to be made from an existing supply line;
- (b) ten working days, where the connection requires more than one pole and is to be made from an existing supply line; or
- (c) ten working days, where the connection requires a line extension.

(5) Where the applicant pays the required fees, the holder of a distribution licence shall connect the applicant to electricity supply within the time prescribed in regulation 4(1) from the date of payment.

(6) A holder of a distribution licence who fails to comply with subregulations (4) and (5) commits an offence and is liable, on conviction, to a fine not exceeding two hundred currency points or imprisonment not exceeding two years or both and in the case of a continuing offence, an additional fine not exceeding five currency points in respect of each day on which the offence continues.

6. Renovation and reconstruction of existing property

In case of complete demolition, reconstruction or substantial renovation of premises by an existing consumer, the consumer shall apply for a new connection in accordance with regulation 5.

PART III—RELIABILITY OF SUPPLY

7. Interruptions for scheduled maintenance

(1) A holder of a distribution licence may disconnect or interrupt electricity supply to a locality or a consumer for the purpose of carrying out scheduled maintenance, including repair and installation of new equipment.

(2) Except in the case of an emergency referred to in regulation 8(2), the holder of a distribution licence shall not disconnect or interrupt electricity supply under subregulation (1) unless the holder of a distribution licence informs the consumer of the intended disconnection or interruption, specifying the duration of the disconnection or interruption through—

- (a) a public notice of not less than fifteen days before the interruption of the electricity supply; or
- (b) direct contact by telephone, electronic mail, or any other information technology system.

(3) Where the electricity supply is interrupted under subregulation (1), the holder of the distribution licence shall restore the electricity supply within nine hours from the time of interruption.

(4) The holder of a distribution licence shall restore electricity supply under subregulation (3) before 4:00 pm on any given day.

8. Unplanned interruptions

(1) A holder of a distribution licence shall take reasonable steps to prevent interruption of supply of electricity.

(2) A holder of a distribution licence may, in an emergency situation disconnect or interrupt the supply to a consumer without notice to the consumer but shall notify the consumer within two hours and take the appropriate measures to restore service.

(3) Where interruption of electricity supply occurs, a holder of a distribution licence shall restore the service within the shortest time possible consistent with prudent utility practices.

(4) A holder of a distribution licence shall take reasonable steps to address emergencies resulting from a failure of service and shall prescribe procedures to be followed by its employees in the case of an emergency in order to prevent or mitigate the interruptions or impairment of service.

(5) For the purposes of this regulation, “emergency situation” means a situation where any part of an apparatus, installation or equipment connected with electricity supply becomes defective or unsafe.

9. Reliability index

(1) The authority shall prescribe reliability of supply targets for a holder of distribution licence by notice in the Gazette every year.

(2) The authority may cause a copy of the notice referred to in subregulation (1) to be served on the holder of a distribution licence.

PART IV— CONSUMER RELATIONS

10. Agreements

(1) A holder of a distribution licence shall enter into agreements—

- (a) regulating the terms and conditions for the connection between its installations and installations of another holder of a distribution licence;
- (b) regulating business relations with another holder of a distribution licence; and
- (c) defining its relationship with consumers.

(2) The agreements made under subregulation (1) shall be submitted to the authority for review and approval prior to signing by the parties.

11. Information to consumers

A holder of a distribution licence shall—

- (a) maintain a current set of maps showing the physical locations of its service centres;
- (b) assist the consumer or applicant in selecting the most economical rate schedule;
- (c) notify consumers affected by a change in rates or schedule classification;
- (d) post a notice in a conspicuous place in its business offices where applications for service are received, informing the public that copies of the rate schedules and rules relating to the service of the holder of a distribution licence as filed with the authority are available for inspection;
- (e) inform its consumers as to the method of reading meters;
- (f) provide consumers with an information booklet containing the following—
 - (i) the consumer's right to information concerning rates and services;
 - (ii) the consumer's right to have his or her meter checked;
 - (iii) the time allowed to pay outstanding electricity bills;
 - (iv) the grounds for termination of service;
 - (v) the time the holder of a distribution licence shall take before terminating service;
 - (vi) the procedure for resolving billing disputes between the consumer and the holder of a distribution licence;

- (vii) the procedures for service reconnection after involuntary termination;
- (viii) the appropriate officer to receive complaints and the contact address;
- (ix) the hours, addresses and telephone numbers of officers where electricity bills may be paid and where information may be obtained; and
- (x) the consumer's right to be instructed by the holder of a distribution licence on how to read his or her meter.

12. Provision of telephone hotlines

(1) A holder of a distribution licence shall provide a telephone service that operates twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, to receive notice of, and give information concerning service interruptions, complaints and queries.

(2) A holder of a distribution licence shall undertake—

- (a) to answer all telephone calls within forty-five seconds; and
- (b) to attend to emergencies within thirty minutes.

(3) For the purposes of subregulation (2) (b) “emergencies” means safety situations that require immediate response to isolate a network or equipment, including live broken conductors and fires.

13. Confidentiality

A holder of a distribution licence to whom confidential information is provided shall in accordance with the Access to Information Act, 2005 and the Data Protection and Privacy Act, 2019—

- (a) not divulge or give access of the confidential information to any person except as permitted under these Regulations or any other relevant law; and

- (b) only use or reproduce the confidential information for the purposes for which it was provided under these Regulations or any other relevant law, or for a purpose consented to by the parties.

14. Consumer complaints and dispute resolution

(1) Where a consumer has a complaint regarding the holder of a distribution licensee's obligations under the Act, these Regulations or any other relevant law, code, standard or licence, the consumer may lodge a verbal or written complaint with the holder of a distribution licence.

(2) Where a consumer lodges a verbal complaint under subregulation (1), the holder of a distribution licence shall reduce it in writing.

(3) Upon receipt of the complaint, the holder of a distribution licence, shall within forty-eight hours from receipt of the complaint, investigate the matter and advise the complainant in writing of the results of its investigation.

(4) For the purposes of subregulation (3), the holder of a distribution licence shall resolve—

- (a) technical complaints within seven working days; and
- (b) non-technical complaints within thirty working days.

(5) The holder of a distribution licence shall keep a record of all complaints indicating the name and address of the complainant, the date and nature of the complaint and resolutions of the complaint.

(6) Where the consumer is not satisfied with the holder of a distribution licensee's resolution or response to the complaint, the consumer may refer the complaint to the authority for resolution.

(7) The authority shall resolve the dispute referred to it under subregulation (6) expeditiously and may delegate its powers relating to dispute resolution to a committee established under sections 13 and 15 of the Act.

(8) A person aggrieved by the decision of the authority made under subregulation (7) may appeal in writing to the tribunal.

PART V— REFUSAL AND DISCONTINUATION OF SERVICE

15. Grounds for discontinuation of service

(1) Subject to subregulation (2), a holder of a distribution licence may disconnect a consumer from electricity service where—

- (a) the consumer fails to pay the bills for the electrical energy consumed for more than thirty days from the date of demand for payment;
- (b) the consumer defaults on a payment arrangement agreed upon under these Regulations;
- (c) the consumer tampers or interferes with a meter or a holder of a distribution licensee's equipment or permits any person to damage any of the holder of a distribution licensee's installation or equipment;
- (d) the consumer illegally connects the service or allows the service to be used in such a manner as to interfere with the supply to other consumers;
- (e) any part of the apparatus, installation or equipment connected with the supply of electricity to the premises of the consumer becomes defective or unsafe; or
- (f) the consumer requests for disconnection of service.

(2) A holder of a distribution licence shall not disconnect electricity service to a consumer where—

- (a) the consumer has lodged a complaint with the holder of a distribution licence in respect of a disputed electricity bill and has paid the undisputed amount or continues to pay for the actual cost of units of electrical energy consumed;
- (b) a complaint in respect of a disputed electricity bill, metering defect or a disputed meter reading is under investigation by the authority and the consumer has paid or continues to pay for the actual cost of units of electrical energy consumed; or
- (c) a complaint in respect of a disputed electricity bill, metering defect or a disputed meter reading is pending determination by the tribunal and the consumer has paid for the actual cost of units of electrical energy consumed.

16. Notice to disconnect service

(1) Except in the case of an emergency referred to in regulation 8 (2), a holder of a distribution licence shall not disconnect electricity service to a consumer without written notice to the consumer of at least fourteen days before the date of disconnection of electricity service.

(2) A holder of a distribution licence may disconnect electricity service without the notice referred to in subregulation (1), where, upon inspection by the holder of the distribution licence—

- (a) it is proved that the service is obtained by the consumer illegally or through tampered apparatus, installation or equipment;
- (b) that the consumer knew or should have known that he or she was not being fully billed for the electricity service; or
- (c) where any part of the apparatus, installation or equipment connected with the supply of electricity to the premises of the consumer becomes defective or unsafe.

(3) For the purposes of this regulation, a notice to disconnect electricity service printed on the electricity bill of the consumer is sufficient notice.

17. Disconnection of service to health facilities

(1) Where a health facility fails to pay for the electricity service for more than sixty days from the date of demand of payment, the holder of a distribution licence shall contact the health facility and endeavour to agree on a payment arrangement.

(2) Where the payment arrangement referred to in subregulation (1) cannot be made or where the payment arrangement agreed upon is dishonoured by the health facility, the holder of a distribution licence shall give the health facility a notice of intention to disconnect and shall continue to provide the electricity service for thirty days from the date of the notice before disconnecting service.

18. Reconnection of service

(1) Where a holder of a distribution licence disconnects the service to a consumer for non-payment, the holder of a distribution licence shall reconnect the service of the consumer within twenty-four hours—

- (a) after payment of the full amount owed or execution of a payment agreement;
- (b) after payment of reconnection charges; and
- (c) after payment of other lawful charges related to the service.

(2) Subject to subregulation (1), service disconnected by a holder of a distribution licence shall be restored as follows—

- (a) where the service was disconnected due to violation of any regulation by the consumer, the consumer shall be reconnected within twenty-four hours from the time the holder of a distribution licence receives evidence that the violation has been corrected; or
- (b) where the service is disconnected under regulation 15(1) (e), the holder of a distribution licence shall reconnect the service within twenty-four hours of rectifying the defect or conducting the necessary maintenance or repairs.

(3) The authority may order reconnection of electricity service to a consumer where the service was disconnected in error or where a complaint has been filed and the undisputed amount of an electricity bill has been paid.

19. Time when service may be disconnected for non-payment

(1) Subject to these Regulations, a holder of a distribution licence may disconnect the service to a consumer only between the hours of 8.00 am to 5.00 pm from Monday to Friday.

(2) For the avoidance of doubt, no disconnection of service shall be effected on a day, or on a day immediately preceding a day when personnel of the holder of a distribution licence are not available to the consumer to receive payment and reconnect service.

PART VI— CONSUMER SECURITY DEPOSITS

20. Consumer security deposit

(1) A holder of a distribution licence may require an applicant for electrical energy service connection to make a consumer security deposit which shall not exceed three times the applicant's estimated monthly electricity bill.

(2) A holder of a distribution licence may accept a bank guarantee from a consumer as an alternative to the consumer security deposit referred to in subregulation (1).

(3) The holder of a distribution licence shall keep the consumer security deposit funds and the accrued interest, on an account separate from that on which any other money belonging to the holder of a distribution licence is kept.

(4) A holder of a distribution licence shall develop an investment policy to govern consumer security deposits.

(5) The authority shall approve the investment policy developed under subregulation (4).

21. Refund of consumer security deposit

(1) Where service is not connected, or after disconnection of service, the holder of a distribution licence shall, within fifteen days of non-connection or disconnection of service, refund the consumer's security deposit and the accrued interest, which is in excess of the unpaid electricity bills for the service.

(2) A holder of a distribution licence may use a consumer's security deposit and accrued interest to offset any amount owed by a consumer to the holder of a distribution licence—

- (a) where the consumer refuses to take up supply after completion of installation works at the supply address;
- (b) where the consumer fails to pay the electricity bill which results in disconnection of the electricity from the supply address; or
- (c) where the consumer defaults on the payment arrangement.

22. Transfer of service

(1) A consumer may transfer electricity service from one supply address to another within the service area of the holder of a distribution licence.

(2) A transfer of electricity service in subregulation (1) shall not be deemed to be a disconnection and the consumer shall not pay an additional security deposit.

23. Prepaid security deposits

(1) Where a consumer deposits a consumer security deposit and subsequently opts to receive supply of electrical energy through a prepaid metering system, the amount of the consumer security deposit shall, after deduction of all monies owing from the consumer, be treated as a part of the value of the prepaid credit to the account of the consumer.

(2) The consumer shall not pay a consumer security deposit in case of a new connection with a prepaid meter.

24. Issue and delivery of electricity bills

(1) A holder of a distribution licence shall issue an electricity bill every month to a consumer except a consumer on the prepaid metering system, indicating the electrical energy used in the month and other charges.

(2) The electricity bill shall be prepared by the holder of a distribution licence as promptly as possible following—

- (a) the reading of a consumer's meter; or
- (b) an estimated electricity bill, based on energy consumption of the previous month.

(3) A holder of a distribution licence shall deliver the electricity bill by hand at the address of the consumer or send the electricity bill by electronic means.

(4) Where the holder of a distribution licence fails to deliver an electricity bill to the consumer for a period of three consecutive months, the holder of the distribution licence and a consumer shall enter into a payment arrangement on how to settle the accumulated electricity bill, where the consumer is unable to pay the accumulated electricity bill in one lump sum.

(5) Where the holder of a distribution licence and the consumer are unable to agree on a payment arrangement, the matter shall be referred to the authority for resolution.

(6) Where a holder of a distribution licence reads a consumer's meter outside the billing cycle and as a result, the consumer's electricity bill covers two varying tariff rates, the holder of the distribution licence shall adjust the electricity bill according to the applicable tariff rate.

25. Contents of an electricity bill

A consumer's electricity bill shall contain the following—

- (a) the name, address, telephone contact, location and account number of the consumer;
- (b) the meter number;
- (c) the dates of previous and current meter recordings or estimates;
- (d) the date of issue;
- (e) the total number of units of electrical energy consumed;
- (f) the approved tariff and the amount due;
- (g) the tax obligations of the consumer;
- (h) any service charge;
- (i) the date by which the consumer must pay the electricity bill;
- (j) the total amount due before and after any discount for prompt payment within a specified period;
- (k) a distinct mark identifying an estimated electricity bill; and
- (l) the amount of arrears or any other charge with the details of the service provided, credit, refundable advance and the balance brought forward.

26. Estimated electricity bill

(1) A holder of a distribution licence may estimate electricity consumption and issue an electricity bill to a consumer for a period up to six months, where—

- (a) the meter is not functioning;
- (b) the meter is faulty and is registering incorrect electricity consumption;
- (c) the holder of a distribution licence has no meter in stock;

- (d) an existing meter has been tampered with; or
- (e) access to the premises is denied for any reason including safety, bad weather, industrial action or locked premises.

(2) Where a holder of distribution licence estimates electricity consumption under subregulation (1) the holder of a distribution licence shall indicate the estimated electrical energy consumption on the electricity bill.

(3) Where the circumstance referred to in subregulation (1) is remedied and the holder of a distribution licence is able to read the meter, the holder of a distribution licence shall within fourteen days reconcile the actual meter reading with the estimated electricity consumption and notify the consumer.

(4) Where the estimated electricity bill of a consumer exceeds the consumer's actual electricity consumption by more than fifty percent, the holder of a distribution licence shall correct the electricity bill and credit the account of the consumer with the full amount overcharged.

(5) A holder of a distribution licence shall calculate an estimated electricity bill as follows—

- (a) where service has been provided for twelve months or more, the amount shall be based on the average units consumed by the consumer over the previous twelve months;
- (b) where service has been provided for less than twelve months, the amount shall be based on the average units consumed by the consumer for the period the service was provided; or
- (c) where the service is new, the amount shall be based on the estimated load and expected energy consumption provided by the consumer to the holder of a distribution licence on the application form.

27. Payment procedure

(1) A holder of a distribution licence shall establish a consumer service centre throughout its area of operation for—

- (a) payment of electricity bills; and
- (b) enquiries, complaints and other services.

(2) A consumer shall pay the electricity bill by the due date to avoid disconnection of electricity supply.

(3) A holder of a distribution licence shall develop methods of payment to facilitate collection of its revenue from the sale of electricity by cash or electronic payment.

28. Dishonoured payment

Where a consumer pays an electricity bill by cheque or by direct debit from an account with a bank and the cheque is dishonoured by the bank, resulting in the holder of a distribution licence incurring a bank charge, the holder of a distribution licence shall recover the bank charge from the consumer.

29. Disputed electricity bills

(1) Where there is a dispute between the consumer and the holder of a distribution licence regarding the electricity bill, the holder of a distribution licence shall investigate and notify the consumer of the findings.

(2) The consumer shall pay any undisputed portion of the electricity bill.

(3) Where the entire electricity bill is in dispute, the consumer shall pay an amount agreed between the consumer and the holder of a distribution licence in respect of the electricity bill until the holder of a distribution licence reconciles the electricity bill.

(4) Where the consumer and the holder of a distribution licence fail to reach an agreement in subregulation (3), the matter shall be referred to the authority for resolution.

(5) Where it is established after a review that the electricity bill is accurate, the consumer shall—

- (a) pay the amount accrued by the due date; or
- (b) request for a payment arrangement.

30. Payment arrangements

(1) Subject to subregulation (3), a holder of a distribution licence shall permit a consumer to pay his or her electricity bill or arrears by instalments.

(2) The instalments may be paid concurrently with the current monthly electricity bill.

(3) In making a payment arrangement with a consumer, the holder of a distribution licence shall—

- (a) take into consideration electrical energy consumption of the consumer and ability to pay when calculating the number of instalments and the duration of payment;
- (b) put in place measures to monitor the electrical energy consumption of the consumer while on the payment arrangement;
- (c) make provision to provide fair and reasonable procedures to address any possible payment difficulties; and
- (d) explain to the consumer how the amount and duration of payment are computed.

PART VIII—METERS

31. New meter requirements

(1) A holder of a distribution licence shall provide, install and maintain a meter to measure and record the amount of electrical energy supplied to the consumer within the accuracy limits of the meter prescribed in the Weights and Measures (Electricity Meters) Rules, 2015.

(2) A holder of a distribution licence shall ensure that all meters installed at consumer premises are tested and sealed in accordance with the Uganda National Bureau of Standards Act and the Weights and Measures (Electricity Meters) Rules, 2015.

(3) A holder of a distribution licence shall install a reliable meter that is of a standard and type approved by the authority and certified by the Uganda National Bureau of Standards.

(4) The holder of a distribution licence shall ensure that all meters are installed with anti-tamper devices.

32. Separate meter

(1) A holder of a distribution licence shall install a separate meter at the consumer's premises where—

- (a) the consumer requesting the separate meter is a distinct household and shares a meter with another household;
- (b) the consumer requesting a separate meter is willing to make the necessary modifications to the wiring system, to accommodate the separate meter; and
- (c) the installation of the separate meter will not require installation of a new connection line except for a line to connect the meter where the distance between the meter connection points and the service fuse of the holder of a distribution licence does not exceed one meter.

(2) On receipt of the consumer's request, the holder of distribution licence shall visit the premises, make an assessment and provide the estimates for installing the meter within five working days.

(3) Where the consumer pays the required charge for a separate meter, the holder of a distribution licence shall provide and connect the separate meter to the electricity distribution system within five working days from the date of payment.

33. Record of meters

(1) Each holder of a distribution licence shall keep a record of all its meters, showing the address and location of the consumer and date of the last test of the meter.

(2) The record of each test made shall show—

- (a) the identifying number and contents of the meter;
- (b) the meter and other measuring devices used;
- (c) the date and type of test made;
- (d) the person that carried out the test;
- (e) the error or percentage of accuracy at each load tested; and
- (f) sufficient data to permit verification of all calculations.

34. Testing of installed electricity meters

(1) A holder of a distribution licence shall conduct a periodic inspection and testing of electricity meters in accordance with the Weights and Measures (Electricity Meters) Rules, 2015 and Schedule 2 of these Regulations.

(2) A consumer may request the holder of a distribution licence to test an electricity meter installed on his or her supply address where the consumer doubts the accuracy of the electricity meter.

(3) The holder of a distribution licence shall test the accuracy of the electricity meter within thirteen days of receipt of the application referred to in subregulation (2).

(4) Where the electricity meter is found to be accurate, the electricity meter shall be reinstalled at the premises of the consumer within three working days.

(5) Where the electricity meter is found faulty, the electricity meter shall be replaced with a new electricity meter within five working days.

(6) A holder of a distribution licence shall inform the consumer of the time and place of the test and permit the consumer or authorised representative to witness the electricity meter testing.

(7) The consumer shall be notified of the results of the test referred to in subregulation (6) within forty eight hours.

(8) Where the electricity meter is found to be more than nominally defective, in the case for a request for testing under subregulation (2), the holder of a distribution licence shall refund the fee charged for testing the electricity meter.

(9) For the purposes of this regulation, “more than nominally defective” means a deviation of more than two percent from accurate test result.

35. Defective electricity meters

Where an electricity meter is found defective either on consumer's complaint or upon the inspection by the holder of a distribution licence, the holder of a distribution licence shall —

- (a) take necessary preventive action at the supply address to avoid future damage;
- (b) take all necessary steps to restore supply; or
- (c) install a new meter within five working days.

36. Electricity bill adjustments

(1) Where an electricity meter test establishes that a meter is nominally defective, the holder of a distribution licence shall reconcile and adjust the billing based on the previous readings.

(2) Where the meter is found not to register energy consumption for any period, the holder of a distribution licence may estimate the electrical energy consumption and charge for unmetered units based on the consumer's historical consumption.

PART IX—PREPAID METERING

37. Prepaid metering

(1) A holder of a distribution licence shall ensure that all prepaid meters are installed with the ability to upgrade to smart metering function.

(2) A holder of a distribution licence shall provide prepaid meters with a communication module hot plug and play functionality.

(3) All prepaid meters installed by a holder of a distribution licence shall comply with the provisions of regulation 31(1).

38. Consumption information

(1) Upon the request of a consumer, a holder of a distribution licence shall provide within five working days, by electronic media at no charge, information relating to at least five years of the consumer's prepaid metering installation.

(2) The information in subregulation (1) shall include—

- (a) the total energy consumption;
- (b) the average daily consumption; and
- (c) the average daily cost of consumption.

39. Limitation on recovery of sums owed for electricity

A holder of a distribution licence may—

- (a) use a prepaid meter to recover a sum that is owed by a consumer in respect of the supply of electricity; or
- (b) under the prepaid meter agreement and with the consent of the consumer, recover repayment of a debt by charging not more than thirty percent of the amount paid by the consumer at any recharge.

40. Recharging facilities for prepaid metering

A holder of a distribution licence shall establish facilities for the prepaid energy purchases within a ten kilometre distance of the supply address where the prepaid meter is installed and shall keep the facilities open and operational for a minimum of eight working hours of a day.

PART X—NEW CONSTRUCTION

41. Standards of construction

A holder of a distribution licence shall construct, install, operate and maintain its plant, structure, equipment and lines in accordance with construction standards approved by the authority.

42. Network extension plans

(1) A holder of a distribution licence shall, by the 30th day of August every year, prepare and submit to the authority a network extension plan for approval.

(2) The plan referred to under subregulation (1) shall not be discriminatory.

43. Construction activities and transfer

A holder of a distribution licence shall submit to the authority a notice—

- (a) for planned construction works, sixty days prior to commencement; or
- (b) for transfer of licensed installations or activities, subject to licensing under the Act.

PART XI—DISCONTINUATION OR ABANDONMENT OF SERVICE

44. Discontinuation of service

(1) A holder of a distribution licence shall not discontinue service to a consumer due to reasons other than the violation of the terms and conditions for the supply of electricity without the prior written approval of the authority.

(2) Except in emergency situations, an application to discontinue or abandon service shall be submitted to the authority at least sixty days prior to the proposed date of abandonment or discontinuance of service.

(3) The application under subregulation (2) shall contain—

- (a) the number of directly affected consumers in each consumer category;
- (b) the names and addresses of all directly affected consumers;
- (c) the specific reasons for the proposed discontinuation or abandonment; and
- (d) the alternative energy sources available to the affected consumers.

(4) The holder of a distribution licence shall send a copy of the application in subregulation (2) to all directly affected consumers.

(5) The directly affected consumers shall, within thirty days from the date of receipt of a copy of the application in subregulation (4), submit their objections or representation to the authority.

45. General penalty

A person who contravenes a provision of these Regulation commits an offence and is liable, on conviction, to a fine not exceeding two hundred currency points or imprisonment not exceeding two years or both and in the case of a continuing offence, an additional fine not exceeding five currency points in respect of each day on which the offence continues.

47. Revocation of S.I. No. 21 of 2003

The Electricity (Quality of Service Code) Regulations, 2003, S.I. No.21 of 2003 are revoked.

SCHEDULE 1

Regulation 3

CURRENCY POINT

A currency point is equivalent to twenty thousand shillings.

INSPECTION AND TESTING OF METERS

	Type of meter	Period for testing
1.	Single phase meter	At least once every five years
2.	Low voltage three-phase meter for a consumer with a load between 20-100 kVA (current transformer operated)	At least once in a year
3.	High voltage meter	At least once in a year
4.	Other low voltage metering systems	At least once in two years after installation

Cross References.

Access to Information Act, 2005, Act No.6 of 2005

Data Protection and Privacy Act, 2019, Act No.9 of 2019

Electricity (Installation Permit) Regulations, 2003, S.I No.19 of 2003

Uganda National Bureau of Standards Act, Cap.327

Weights and Measures (Electricity Meters) Rules, 2015

RICHARD SANTO APIRE,
Chairperson, Electricity Regulatory Authority