

SMALL BUSINESS GUIDE TO

APPLYING TO BECOME AN APPROVED SOLAR RETAILER

More than 70 per cent of all Approved Solar Retailers are small businesses. If you are applying to become an Approved Solar Retailer, it is best to put in the work now before you apply. Most of the time when companies are rejected it is because they haven't read the Code.

Don't try to sign up to a Code that you haven't read. Do your homework, print out a copy, get out a highlighter and read the fine print before applying.

If you are unsure if you meet the minimum 12-month criteria, please contact retailers@cleanenergycouncil.org.au

HELPFUL LINKS

For more information: www.cleanenergycouncil.org.au/industry/retailers

Application requirements: www.cleanenergycouncil.org.au/industry/retailers/apply

Application form: www.cleanenergycouncil.org.au/industry/retailers/apply

Have you read the Solar Retailer Code of Conduct?

When a company becomes an Approved Solar Retailer, it becomes a signatory to the Solar Retailer Code of Conduct. It's important that you understand the Code to ensure compliance and so that you know exactly what your company is signing up to.

You can download a PDF copy of the Solar Retailer Code of Conduct here cleanenergycouncil.org.au/approved-solar-retailer-code-of-conduct.pdf

The Code of Conduct aims to protect consumers and promote best practice for retail businesses selling solar and storage systems. Much of what the Code covers is what many small businesses are doing already.

Complying with the Code means having honest dealings with customers and providing all the information needed to make an informed purchase decision. It also means protecting the rights of the customer and the business and looking after customers when something goes wrong.

ARE YOU READY TO APPLY?

Consider the following questions before submitting your application.

- **Does your solar quotation include all the information a customer needs to make an informed purchase decision?** For most customers, this will be the first time they are buying solar and it is a complicated purchase. The quote needs to be clear, informative and include the full specifications of the system, including the manufacturers and model numbers. See page 10 of the Code for more information.
- **Do you provide a full system design to the customer?** It is not necessary to use expensive design programs, but a full system design must:
 - be site-specific
 - include a roof plan
 - outline the orientation, tilt and efficiency losses due to shading

- include the system's site-specific estimated energy yield (i.e. the average daily performance estimate in kilowatt hours for each month of solar generation)

See page 10 of the Code for more information.

- **Do you tell the customer about any additional costs that may arise at or after installation?** For example, fees for meter exchange. See page 11 of the Code for more information.
- **Do you tell the customer that their electricity contract/tariff rates may change?** Remember that the customer is receiving a lot of new information when they are talking to you about solar. Include information about possible changes in the terms and conditions. See page 12 of the Code for more information
- **Do you explain to customers how STCs work?** STCs are financial incentives (not rebates). Be upfront with the customer about how STCs work and if they are guaranteed or not. See page 12 of the Code for more information.
- **Does your refund policy comply with the minimum requirements of the Code?** You must provide a full refund in all circumstances outlined by the Code. See pages 15-16 of the Code for more information.
- **Do you offer a minimum whole-of-system warranty period of five years?** Do you cover operation, performance, workmanship and all products? Have you checked that all warranty information including exclusions are compliant and consistent with the Code? See page 17 of the Code for more information.
- **Do you advise the consumer how to measure the performance of their system and appropriately maintain it?** See page 16 of the Code for more information.
- **Do you refer customers to alternative finance?** If so, you must check if that company holds an Australian credit license. If they do not, you may need to provide the customer with further information. Check page 13 of the Code for more information.
- **Are all the terms and conditions fair, transparent and easily understood by a residential customer?** Are they written in plain English?
- **Have you checked everything on your website and social media?** Are the photos compliant with CEC installation guidelines? Is the information accurate and truthful? See page 8 of the Code.
- **Are you using all CEC logos correctly?** Remember that a company cannot be "accredited". If using the accredited installer logo, ensure that the full name of the accredited installer is displayed directly below the logo. Refer to the CEC's logo guidelines for more information.
- **Do you have a formal set of terms and conditions?** We understand that doing business on a handshake may have worked well in the past, but it offers no protection for your business if something goes wrong. The CEC has a quotation and terms and conditions template available for purchase to help you get the best outcome for you and your customers.

For more information please visit www.cleanenergycouncil.org.au/industry/retailers or email retailers@cleanenergycouncil.org.au

Please note: This list is not exhaustive and does not constitute legal advice. Compliance with this guide alone does not guarantee approval of an application.