



CUSTOMER SERVICE POLICY

Summary:

The purpose of this policy is to provide clear direction on the delivery of customer services to residents, visitors and stakeholders in Tenterfield Shire.

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Department	Office of Chief Corporate Officer
Policy Custodian	Manager Customer Service, Records & Governance
Superseded Documents	Citizen and Customer Service Policy Version 4.0
Related Legislation	<i>NSW Local Government Act 1993</i> Customer Service Charter 2022 Complaints and Unreasonable Conduct Policy Exclusion Policy for Disruptive or Abusive Citizens and Customers
Delegations of Authority	Manager Customer Service, Records & Governance

1. Policy Principles

The Customer Service Policy applies to all permanent, temporary and casual employees, volunteers and nominated contractors of Tenterfield Shire Council.

2. Policy Statement

Tenterfield Shire Council will provide the highest possible level of service to its customers. Our service to our customers will reflect our Vision and Corporate Values. All activities undertaken at Tenterfield Shire Council are focussed on the delivery of service to our customers. Therefore, our service goes beyond the personal contact staff have with the public and encompasses internal procedures and practises that result in efficient service.

Council's staff will be professional at all times and provide:

- Courtesy in all circumstances
- Accuracy in what they do
- Accountability for the quality of service they deliver
- Integrity in all their dealings
- Consideration for the needs of the customer, and
- Keeping people informed of progress.

3. Scope

Council's primary purpose is the provision of service to both residents and non-residents of the Tenterfield Shire local government area.

1.1 External Customers

All those seeking assistance from the Council will be accorded a high level of service regardless of the manner in which that assistance is sought.

1.2 Internal Customers

Staff will give each other the same level of service as that provided to our external customers, as it is important that internal service standards support the external service delivery.

1.3 Courtesy

Courtesy will be shown in all circumstances, even in difficult situations where the customer does not show similar courtesy in return. Staff will be courteous in their spoken words, body language and demeanour.

1.4 Accuracy

Where there is any doubt about the accuracy of any information, the details will be checked and validated prior to release.

1.5 Accountability

Staff will look for ways to enhance the quality of service they deliver. Concerns about the quality of service will be referred to the next level of management.

1.6 Integrity

Staff will act with integrity in all their dealings and comply with all provisions of Councils Code of Conduct.

1.7 Confidentiality

Staff will ensure personal information is kept confidential.

1.8 Consideration

Consideration will be given to the needs of the customer. Staff will be empathetic and respond to the needs of the customer within the constraints of Local Government Regulations and Council's role and responsibilities.

1.9 Promptness

Staff will deal with matters promptly.

1.10 Continuous Improvement

Impediments to good customer service, when identified, will be addressed. Examples might include reviewing systems, procedures, documentation, improving online service provision via Council's websites and the internet and wherever possible to enable customers to complete business over the phone. Council recognises that our customers may wish to contact Council in a variety of ways and we are committed to providing choice about how customers can access Council Services.

1.11 Performance Measurement and Customer Feedback

Staff will be assessed on the quality of their delivery of customer service through Council's Annual Performance and Assessment Process.

Council's Customer Service Charter provides a commitment from Council and staff to deliver high quality services to the Community. The charter specifies the quality of service delivery that the Council aims to deliver.

1.12 Training

Training and coaching will be provided on customer service and general communication skills on a needs basis. In order to meet our commitment to Customer Services, Council will ensure that all staff has access to a range of training and materials to support service delivery.

1.13 Customer Responsibilities

To help Council to meet our commitments, we ask our customers to:

- Be courteous, polite and respectful to our employees;
- Use council's official channels for customer requests, complaints and compliments;
- Respect the privacy, safety and needs of other customers;
- Be open and honest with us and provide accurate and complete details when contacting us;
- Let us know when your situation changes, for example, when your address or personal details change or your pet registration details change;
- Telephone to make an appointment for a complex enquiry or if there is a need to see a specific officer;

- Telephone the officer nominated in any correspondence sent to you and quote the reference details noted on the letter;
- Work with us to solve problems;
- Provide us with feedback so we know how we are performing and where necessary, can continue to improve our service;
- Help us recognise our employees by telling us when you have received excellent customer service.

4. Accountability, Roles & Responsibility

General Manager, Executive and Management Teams Managers and Supervisors are responsible for:

- Monitoring the level of service provided by their staff and nominated contractors and for modelling and coaching good customer service, and
- Assessing staff against any established customer service criteria.

Managers are accountable for ensuring consistently high levels of customer service in their departments, and are responsible for acting upon any identified impediments to the delivery of good customer service.

The **Manager Human Resources, Workforce Development and Risk Management** and the **Manager Customer Service, Governance and Records** are responsible for arranging any training and/or coaching on customer service and communication skills.

Individual Staff

Each member of staff and/or nominated contractor is:

- Accountable for the quality of the service they deliver, and
- Responsible for identifying and reporting any impediments to delivery of good customer service.

5. Definitions

- Customers include all customers, whether internal or external.
- Nominated contractors are those whose contracts necessitate their working at Council worksites, using Council's facilities and operating in a similar manner to staff.

6. Related Documents, Standards & Guidelines

The Policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Customer Service Charter 2022
- Complaints and Unreasonable Conduct Policy
- Exclusion Policy for Disruptive or Abusive Citizens and Customers
- Tenterfield Shire Code of Conduct for Councillors & Staff 2020

7. Version Control & Change History

Version	Date	Modified by	Details
V1.0	26/09/12	Council	Adoption of Original Policy (Res No. 385/12)
V2.0	24/06/15	Council	Review/Amended (Res No. 191/15)
V3.0	23/08/17	Council	Review/Amended (Res No. 168/17)
V4.0	24/02/21	Council	Review/Amended (Res No. 29/21)
V5.0	26/10/22	Council	Review/Amended (Res No. 222/22)