



NORTHERN MIDLANDS COUNCIL

POLICY MANUAL

CUSTOMER SERVICE CHARTER

- Originated Date:** Adopted 5 May 2003 – Min. No. 156/03 (as Policy 46)
- Amended Date/s:** Revised 19 December 2005 – Min. No. 427/05
Revised 21 September 2009 – Min. No. 255/09
Revised 28 May 2012 – Min. No. 119/12
Revised 26 May 2014 – Min. No. 118/14
Revised 27 June 2016 – Min. No. 160/16
Endorsed 20 July 2018 – Min. No. 217/18
Revised 16 August 2021 – Min. No. 319/21
Revised 16 October 2023 – Min. No. 23/0375
- Applicable Legislation:** Section 339F of the *Local Government Act 1993*.
Regulation 31 of the *Local Government (General) Regulations 2015*
- Objective** To provide responsive and consistent services to all members of the Northern Midlands community.
This Customer Services Charter defines our commitment to how we serve our community and our expectations of how our community interact with us.
- Administration:** Corporate Services
- Review Cycle/Date:** Within 12 months after a Council election. Next review due before October 2027.

OUR COMMITMENT TO YOU

Council aims to provide innovative, efficient, equitable and quality service for **all** the community.

We will deal with our customers in an open, honest and courteous manner and respect their privacy at all times.

Our decision-making processes will be fair and accountable, considering the economic, environmental and social sustainability of any proposed action.

HOW WE CAN WORK TOGETHER

To ensure fast, efficient, quality service we request that our customers:

- promptly report any concerns they have to Council
- provide us with accurate information
- respond to our requests for further information as soon as possible
- treat Council Officers with respect
- make appointments to see Council officers
- respect the privacy, safety and needs of other members of the community.

COUNCIL SERVICES

To support a safe and healthy community Council offers the following services:

- Infrastructure construction and management (roads, footpaths, bridges, parks, reserves, recreation grounds, pools and halls).
- Planning and development assistance and supervision (planning, building and plumbing)
- Environmental health and public safety monitoring (food premises registration, immunisations, fire hazard abatements, animal control, emergency management)
- Promotion and support for economic development, community development and tourism.



NORTHERN MIDLANDS COUNCIL

POLICY MANUAL

IMPROVING OUR SERVICE

Council aims to continually improve its customer service by:

- undertaking regular customer satisfaction surveys
- listening to customer suggestions on how we can improve our services
- providing employee training
- adopting appropriate new technology.

MAKING A COMPLAINT (INCLUDING FEEDBACK)

If you are dissatisfied with a decision of Council, level or quality of service, or behaviour of an employee or agent, you are entitled to make a complaint to the Council.

Complaints should be made directly to the Manager of the Department relevant to the matter. Please ensure your complaint identifies as simply as possible your issue, providing enough information for Council to investigate the matter.

IN WRITING:

Via post: PO Box 156, Longford, Tasmania 7301
Via email: council@nmc.tas.gov.au

IN PERSON:

Municipal Office: 13 Smith Street, Longford
(open from 8.45 am to 4.30pm)
(if you wish to speak to a specific Council officer an appointment is required)

PHONE

Council Office -telephone number: 6397 7303

RESPONDING TO A COMPLAINT (INCLUDING FEEDBACK)

The relevant Department Manager will provide a response to your complaint:

- i) in writing, if you have lodged a written complaint; or
- ii) verbally, if your complaint was given in person or over the telephone.

Council will endeavour to respond to your complaint within twenty (20) working days. If a Councillor has submitted a complaint on your behalf we will also endeavour to respond to the Councillor within twenty (20) working days.

Sometimes it is not possible to meet this deadline, e.g. where a complaint is complex and Councillors are to be briefed on the outcome of the investigations. In these cases we will endeavour to keep the customer informed of progress.

REVIEW OF THE OUTCOME OF YOUR COMPLAINT

Experience has shown that the majority of complaints will be satisfactorily resolved by the relevant Manager. However, if you are not satisfied with the outcome of your complaint you may request a review of the complaint by Council's General Manager.

A request for a review of the complaint to the General Manager is to be in writing.

The General Manager will inform the customer of the findings on completion of an investigation.

If appropriate the relevant Manager or the General Manager may request to meet with you with a view to resolving the complaint.

- The Ombudsman located at NAB House, Level 6, 86 Collins Street, Hobart 7000.



NORTHERN MIDLANDS COUNCIL

POLICY MANUAL

- Phone: Free call from landlines in nationally 1800 001 170
- Email: ombudsman@ombudsman.tas.gov.au; or
- Write to: Ombudsman Tasmania, GPO Box 960, Hobart TAS 7001
- Local Government Division, located at Executive Building, Level 5, 15 Murray Street, Hobart
 - Phone: (03) 6232 7022
 - Email: lgd@dpac.tas.gov.au
 - Write to: Local Government Division, GPO Box 123, Hobart, 7001

While you are entitled to refer a complaint directly to these bodies at any time, we encourage you to allow the Council to investigate the complaint first.

PERSONAL INFORMATION PROTECTION

Council has a commitment to protection of Personal Information provided by a customer to Council in accordance with the requirements of the *Personal Information Protection Act 2004* and the *Right to Information Act 2009*.

REPORTING

The General Manager is to provide Council with a report at least once a year of the number and nature of complaints received in accordance with section 339F(5) of the *Local Government Act 1993*.

AVAILABILITY

This *Customer Service Charter* is available:

- For public inspection at the Council Office during normal office hours.
- On the Council's website free of charge.
- For purchase from the Council Office.

REVIEW

This *Customer Service Charter* is to be reviewed within 12 months after a Council election in accordance with section 339F(4) of the *Local Government Act 1993*.



NORTHERN MIDLANDS COUNCIL

POLICY MANUAL

Service	Standard	Service	Standard	Service	Standard
Customer Service		Drainage / Stormwater		Planning / Subdivision	
Answer your telephone call	Within 10 rings	Respond to drainage emergencies	24 hours / 7 days	Permitted application	28 days
Return your call	5 business days	Respond to seepage/drainage problems	20 business days	Discretionary application	42 days
Reply to your correspondence	10 business days	Environmental Health		Plumbing	
Acknowledge your correspondence if a detailed reply is required that may take additional time to research	10 business days	Respond to food complaints	2 business days	Process Certificate of Likely Compliance application	21 days
Respond to messages and comments on social media (if required)	5 business days	Respond to urgent environment nuisances	24 hours / 7 days	Undertake Plumbing Inspections	Within 1 business day
Respond to complaints (dissatisfaction of service) <i>*acknowledgement generated on receipt of complaint</i>	20 business days	Inspect registered food premises	as per statutory requirements	Grant (or refuse) Certificate of Completion	Within 5 days of receipt of application
Notify you if there is likely to be a delay in our service commitment		School immunisation clinics	as per recommended schedule	Building	
Leave a 'visit card' with contact details if we call to your residence and you are not home		Finance		Process a Building Permit	7 business days
Endeavour to refer you to an appropriate service provider if council cannot provide the service you require		Payment of accounts	by due date	Process a Building Certificate	as per statutory requirements
Provide an after hours service for emergencies		Respond to written rates enquiries	10 business days	Issue Building Completion Certificates	5 business days
<i>**An emergency is regarded as an incident that threatens life or property or one that may cause environmental harm</i>		Governance		Roads	
Waste#		Conduct Annual General Meeting and publish Annual Report	each November / December	Inspect, assess and respond to requests about potholes, edge breaks and cracks	20 business days
#Depending on the area in which you live, some services may not be available		Publication of news in Country Courier	fortnightly / monthly	Grade unsealed roads	1 to 2 times per year if required
Garbage Collection	fortnightly	Ordinary council meeting agenda made available	4 days prior to meeting	Pick up identified large quantities of roadside litter on Council owned roads where a nuisance exists	10 business days
Recyclable Collection	fortnightly	Special council meeting agenda made available	2 days prior to meeting	Attend to identified damage road furniture	20 business days
FOGO Collection	fortnightly	Human Resources		Road Sweeping of Council owned roads with kerb and gutter	quarterly
Fire Hazards		Respond to outcomes of applications on conclusion of appointment process	5 business days	Privacy information protection	
Respond to fire hazard notifications	10 business days	Dogs		Personal information provided by a customer to council is protected in accordance with the Personal Information Protection Act 2004, the Right to Information Act 2009 and Council's Privacy policy.	
		Respond to urgent incidents	24 hours / 7 days		
		Respond to routine incidents	5 business days		