

CUSTOMER SERVICE

CORPORATE GUIDELINE:

Customer Service Charter and
Customer Complaint Handling Guidelines



Overview

The City of Bunbury Customer Service Charter and Customer Complaint Handling Guidelines establishes the City's customer service standards, identifies a whole of organisation commitment to customer service and defines a common set of expected principles and behaviour relating to the delivery of service to our customers. The guidelines also define what our customers can do if the City has not delivered a level of customer service that meets these guidelines.

Who is our customer – a customer is any person or organisation we have dealings with.

Strategic Relevance:

Strategic Community Plan, Key Themes, Goals and Objectives the City's commitment to:

Theme 4 Our City

Goal Civic leadership, partnerships and sound governance in delivering with and for the community.

Objective 4 A skilled organisation, which exercises responsible asset ownership, sound financial management, and exemplary customer service.

Customer Service Charter:

The City is committed to being a leading customer-focused organisation.

As such, the City shall strive to provide excellent customer service that is sensitive to the needs of our customers, is of real value and is of the highest possible standard. This will be achieved through dedication and innovation to conscientiously and consistently improve our customer service.

The City will consult and engage with our community and actively seek feedback from our customers.

Our Commitment to Our Customers

When customers contact the City, they can expect to be treated with honesty, integrity, fairness and sensitivity and transparency.

At all times the City and its staff will aim to:

- Deliver a standard of service that meets and exceeds our customers' expectations.
- Engage with our customers to build an ongoing, positive relationship and keep our customers informed.
- Communicate in a way that is open, honest and respectful as per the City's values.
- Provide prompt, reliable and accurate information in a timely manner.
- Seek customer feedback to improve our services.



Guidelines

1. Contacting the City by telephone

- The City's core business hours are 8am to 5pm (Depot contactable from 7.30am to 4pm) Monday to Friday (Public holidays excluded).
- All calls will be answered by staff courteously, professionally and in a timely manner.
- City officers who are not directly involved in the administration of a department shall use voice mail when their individual phone number is unattended.
- The officer shall keep their voice mail up to date reflecting the officer's out of office circumstances.
- For administration purposes, where applicable, each department will have a multiple phone number hunt group that will transfer/divert back to the City's Service Centre.
- With calls to the City's Service Centre (9792 7000) Customer Service will attempt to resolve each enquiry immediately. If this is not possible calls will be redirected to the appropriate City officer or department.
- In the event that the City officer is not available the caller will have the option of leaving a voice mail or have the call transferred back to Customer Service who will forward the details to the appropriate City officer.
- All enquiries will be acknowledged within a business day of receipt.
- For emergency or afterhours issues, a 24-hour emergency customer service call-centre will be available.
- The City will maintain a TTY phone service

2. Contact the City of Bunbury by email

- Customers are advised to email all enquiries to records@bunbury.wa.gov.au
- Receipt of emails to the abovementioned email address will be acknowledged immediately by an automatic response system.
- Emails to the above email address are documented in the City's record management system and electronically distributed to the appropriate officer within one working day.
- Emails directly sent to individual email addresses will be responded to within two working day of receipt.
- Officers shall keep their individual email out of office responses up-to-date reflecting the Officer's circumstances with appropriate email redirects if required.
- Enquiries will be actioned within 10 working days where possible. If enquiries require in-depth research or follow up that takes longer than 10 working days, customers will be advised informing them which department is managing the enquiry, the status of the enquiry and when it is expected to be resolved.
- The City's correspondence will be courteous and written in easy to understand language.
- An officer will be allocated to each enquiry and will be responsible for following it through to a satisfactory conclusion.
- All associated e-mail correspondence will be logged into the City's record management system.

3. Visiting in person the City's administration centre

- The normal business hours for the City's Administration Centre are 8.30am to 5pm, Monday to Friday (public holidays excluded) and are staffed by the Customer Service team.
- All customers will be met with openness, respect, courtesy and understanding.
- Customers will be attended to within two minutes of arriving in person the City's administration centre.
- All customers will be treated equally.
- If an enquiry from a customer is of a technical or specialised nature, an appropriate City officer will be called to assist or alternatively a meeting will be arranged.
- City officers will dress and behave professionally at all times and will introduce themselves so that customers can identify clearly who they have been speaking with.
- All enquiries will be dealt with to the best of the City officer's knowledge and experience at the time.
- If the required City officer is unavailable a message will be taken by Customer Service for the City officer to contact the customer by the next business day of receipt.

4. Visiting in person the City's other business locations

- The normal business hours for each of the City's business locations varies.
- All customers will be met with openness, respect, courtesy and understanding.
- All customers will be treated equally.
- City officers will dress and behave professionally at all times and will introduce themselves so that customers can identify clearly who they have been speaking with.
- All enquiries will be dealt with to the best of the City officer's knowledge and experience at the time.

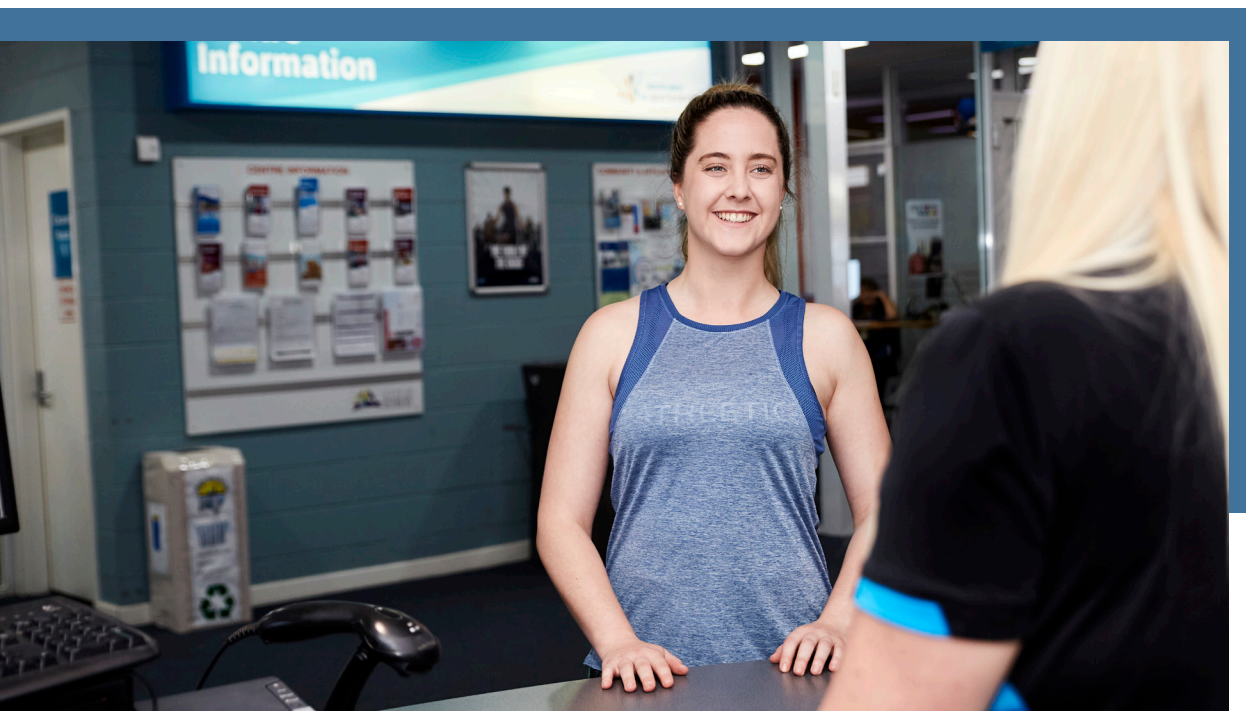
5. Contacting the City by hard mail

- All mail is documented and scanned into the City's record management system and electronically distributed to the appropriate officer or department within one working day.
- All correspondence will be acknowledged at least within two working days of receipt.
- An officer will be allocated to each enquiry and will be responsible for following the enquiry through to a satisfactory conclusion.
- Enquiries will be actioned within 10 working days. If the enquiry requires in-depth research or follow-up that may take longer than 10 working days, advice will be provided to the customer personally and/or in writing to inform them which officer/department is managing the enquiry, the status of the enquiry and when it is expected to be resolved.
- Correspondence from the City will be courteous and written in an easy to understand language.
- All mail associated with the correspondence will be logged into the City's record management system.

6. Contact the City of Bunbury via web or app-based technologies

- The web or app-based technologies will send all enquiries to records@bunbury.wa.gov.au. The resultant e-mail will then follow the same procedure and standards to that of any e-mail correspondence.





7. Expectations of the customer

To help us to meet our customer service commitments, we ask our customers to:

- Treat City officers with respect and courtesy.
- Not answer or conduct conversations on mobile phones while dealing with City officers.
- Respect the privacy, safety, needs and rights of other customers.
- Respect the community in which we live.
- Be honest, courteous and interact in a respectful manner.
- Provide accurate and complete information so responses are appropriate to the enquiry.
- Make an appointment for a complex enquiry or if there is a need to see a specific City officer.
- Contact the City officer as nominated in any correspondence sent to the customer and if required quote the reference details as noted on the correspondence.
- Provide your current contact details and advise us if they change.
- Cooperatively work with City officers to solve problems.
- Provide the City with feedback so we know how we are performing and where necessary, can continue to improve our service.

8. Customer relations

It is expected that customers will engage with City officers in a courteous and polite manner. Likewise, the City is committed to responding and engaging with customers in a courteous, polite and professional manner. However, if customers are personally abusive, use bad language or are threatening in any way, City staff may decide to cease engaging with the customer.

Unsuitable behaviour is displayed when a customer shouts, displays bullying behaviour, uses abusive or obscene language, makes threats, is intimidating or acts in a threatening manner towards City officers. Staff are not expected to tolerate this type of behaviour.

The communication interaction may be terminated, after checking with their supervisor.

The CEO or his delegate may decide to limit or cease responses to any person who is abusive and/or derogative in their communication with the City or who fails to accept that the City has done all that it can to assist. A decision of this nature will be communicated in writing to the person.

If a City officer considers that their personal safety is at risks or feels threatened by the behaviour of a customer, the police may be notified.



Internal Customer Service

Regardless of where a staff member works within the City, everyone has a customer and everyone is a customer. Whether the service is provided internally to a direct team member, another directorate, department, department member, to Councillors or externally to the community, all City staff will at some stage provide service to a customer.

As such we recognise and value the importance of all our customers and will endeavour to deliver excellent service to all of our customers. We acknowledge that the same principles of quality customer service for our external customers apply equally to every member of the City's staff as internal customers and we will train, mentor and monitor staff customer service delivery that is provided to each other.

All employees will work in partnership with each other to fulfil customer service obligations with the same service standards, regardless of whether the customer is a colleague or external customer. Each of the City's staff has a responsibility to ensure that a positive and effective internal customer service culture exists.

Quality internal customer service shall be managed using the following core values.

We are community - we are one team, we keep each other safe, we display empathy and respect, we have fun and celebrate our successes, we work together to achieve great outcomes

We are open - we are open to opportunities, we actively listen and think things through, we are inclusive and treat everyone equally, we are honest and open in our communications, we are open to feedback to improve our performance

We are brave - we lead the change, we own it, we trust and empower each other, we have the difficult conversations early, we hold ourselves to the highest standard, we have the courage to improve and simplify



Customer Complaint Process

The City will make every effort to be inclusive and accountable for our organisation's decisions and how they are made. It is recognised that there may be instances when our customers may disagree or be unhappy with a decision that is made by the City, and our customers may ask the City to review its decision or the way the City has provided a service by making a complaint.

1. What is the definition of a complaint?

The Australian Standard on complaints handling (ISO 10002:2006) defines the term “complaint” as –

Expression of dissatisfaction made to an organisation, related to its products, services or the complaint handling process itself, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected.

NOTE: A “complaint” should not be confused with a general “request” whereby a person has requested the provision of a product or a service i.e. rubbish to be collected, tree to be pruned, dog barking complaint to be investigated.

2. How can a customer register a complaint?

In person:

Monday to Friday 8.30am to 5pm
(public holidays excluded)
City of Bunbury Administration Building,
4 Stephen Street, Bunbury, 6230

Telephone: 9792 7000

TTY: 13 36 77

Interpreter: 13 14 50

In writing:

City of Bunbury
PO Box 21, Bunbury, 6231
Email: records@bunbury.wa.gov.au
FAX: 9792 7184

3. Employee responsibilities

- Listen to a customer's complaint.
- Ensure and advise the customer that all complaints are treated as confidential.
- Be positive and focus on solving the problem, finding a solution and not find fault or lay blame on other staff, departments or organisations.
- Be fair, empathetic, assist and make it easy for the customer to make the complaint.
- Treat customers with courtesy, respect and don't be judgemental.
- Take complaints seriously and if possible deal with them at the very first point of contact or forward them promptly.
- Inform the customer what is being done, expected timeframes and ensure that the customer is kept informed, especially if there will be delays.
- Give the customer your name and the name of the person and department that will be handling the complaint.
- Follow up with the customer when resolution is complete.
- Act on anonymous complaints if considered in the best interest of the customer and/or the community.

4. Recording Complaints

- All complaints received will be recorded in the City's Customer Request Management system (CRM) unless otherwise directed.
- Complaints will be directed to a responsible officer.
- A description of the complaint and a date for the complaint to be finalised to be entered in the CRM.
- Acknowledgement will be provided by the relevant department to the customer within one working day of receipt of the complaint by whatever means (face to face, phone call e-mail, hard mail) is appropriate
- All details for the complaint shall be completed in a CRM and the CRM number provided to the complainant.
- All details relating to contact with the customer i.e. discussions, phone calls or documentation shall be entered into the CRM/Records Management System.
- When a complaint is completed, the customer shall be advised of the outcome by whatever means (face to face, phone call e-mail, hard mail) is appropriate.
- Ensure customer is satisfied with the outcome before closing any complaint.
- Update and close the CRM when the complaint has been completed.

5. Complaints received that involve more than one department

Some complaints may relate to more than one department, remember this is of no concern to the customer, who simply wants their complaint resolved. If the incident involves more than one department, the Responsible Officer will co-ordinate the response to the customer, ensuring that response times are fulfilled.

6. Complaint resolution time frames

- Customers will be advised as to the outcome of a complaint within 10 working days upon receipt of a complaint.
- If a complaint is unable to be resolved within 10 working days, the customer will be kept updated as to what steps have been taken and what further information the relevant department is waiting on to finalise the complaint.
- Complaints that are not completed within 28 days shall be reviewed by the Chief Executive Officer.

7. Complaints about contactors or work undertaken by contractors

Services delivered for the City by a contractor will be considered by the customer to have been delivered by the City. Therefore, there should be no difference in the customer complaint handling process above.

8. Complaints officer

The City's Chief Executive Officer is responsible for ensuring the receipt and processing of all customer service complaints.

9. Complaints about City staff members

Any complaints relating to City staff or City employed contractors, are to be addressed/directed to the Chief Executive Officer.

10. Escalation

The City is confident it can resolve a majority of all customer complaints received, however it is appreciated that the City may not be able to satisfy every customer on every occasion. If the complaint remains unresolved or a customer is dissatisfied with the process, then the customer may refer this to the Ombudsman Western Australia.

Ombudsman Western Australia

PO Box Z5386

St Georges Terrace

PERTH WA 6831

Ph: 08 9220 7555/ 1800 117 000

Email: mail@ombudsman.wa.gov.au

[www: ombudsman.wa.gov.au](http://www.ombudsman.wa.gov.au)



Evaluating and Improving Performance

1. Service Standard Performance Management and Reporting

The City is committed to managing its business in a transparent manner. The City will develop realistic customer service performance measurements and report progress to the community. The City encourages our internal and external customers to provide feedback to ensure that the City continuously monitors its customer service and makes improvements where necessary.

The City has a Customer Support team specifically employed to deliver a range of customer service functions. In addition, and as a minimum there is an expectation that all staff across the organisation will demonstrate the common set of service standards outlined in this document when dealing with our customers.

2. Methods of Measurement

It is important that our customer service delivery and initiatives are regularly and appropriately monitored and assessed. This allows the City to know at any given time, where the City is performing well, what needs attention and any patterns or trends which may need to be addressed.

Customer satisfaction will be the most appropriate measure of compliance with our service standards. The following methods will be used from time to time to gauge the level of customer satisfaction.

- Call backs - random customers may be telephoned and asked a series of questions relative to recent contact with the City;
- Customer satisfaction surveys – surveys conducted by the City, by a department or by a service area to gauge a customer's overall satisfaction;
- Focus groups - where the City needs information concerning a particular service;
- Customer service feedback – can be provided via the City's Facebook page, available from the City's website or in hardcopy from the City's Customer Service Centre;
- Mystery shopping - whereby our service is assessed for efficiency and quality.

Legislation and other references:

- *Local Government Act 1995*
- *City of Bunbury Code of Conduct*
- *Public Interest Disclosure Act 2003*
- *Freedom of Information Act 1992*
- *Freedom of Information Statement*
- *City of Bunbury Corporate Guideline – Public Interest Disclosure*
- *City of Bunbury Policy – Public Interest Disclosure*
- *State Records Act 2000*

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