



## GLEN INNES SEVERN COUNCIL

### Customer Service Standards

<b>RESOLUTION NUMBER:</b>	<b>13.05/19</b>	<b>MEETING:</b>	<b>23 May 2019</b>
	5.12/15		17 December 2015
	8.12/12		20 December 2012
	11.08/09		27 August 2009

Customer service is everyone's responsibility, not just those who staff the front information desk(s).

Each time we interact with an individual, answer the telephone, send an email, write a letter, or attend a meeting, we are making an impression on our customers – whether they are ratepayers, residents, visitors, people working in the Glen Innes Severn area, people working with our staff on a project, or other Council employees.

These customer service standards were created for employees to follow to ensure that the quality of service to all of our customers meets or exceeds their expectations. The requirement for high standards of customer service extends equally to both external and internal customers, including all other Council employees, elected members, volunteers and contractors.

All new employees will be introduced to these standards as part of their induction program, and Council will continue to provide customer service training opportunities for employees so that all staff understand the value of customer service as well as the importance of following Council's approved standards.

### Standards Covering all Customer Interactions

*Customers have a right to expect:*

- Courtesy, respect, honesty and professionalism.
- That the Council staff member will listen to their request or question, ask for clarification if necessary, and provide complete, knowledgeable, accurate and precise information regarding their enquiry, within the staff member's capacity to do so.

*Staff members of Council have a right to expect:*

- That customers will extend mutual courtesy and respect in their dealings with Council employees.

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The staff member will make a reasonable effort to provide information about the Council and, as appropriate, other outside agencies related to his / her department or section's functions.

### Telephone / Voicemail / Email

*Customers have a right to expect that:*

- Telephones will be answered promptly – where practicable within four (4) rings (each department is responsible for making arrangements to ensure the telephone is answered during business hours).
- A person, not voicemail, will answer the main number at each worksite during business hours.
- All incoming telephone calls from external sources will be answered with the consistent greeting “Glen Innes Severn Council, (section / function name), this is (first name), how may I assist you?” For example, Glen Innes Severn Council, Children’s Services, this is John, how may I assist you?”
- Staff will:
  - answer calls courteously;
  - listen to and understand the nature of requests before transferring a call;
  - inform callers of the name of the person they are being transferred to and that person’s position title or work section.
- Calls will be answered and returned in the order received or by priority / urgency.
- If a call is unable to be attended to immediately, the caller will be given the option to be put on hold or have their call returned at a later time.
- If a caller is on hold for an extended period of time, periodic updates will be provided.
- If a call comes during interdepartmental telephone coverage, staff will explain that they are covering for a different department and offer to take a message or transfer the call to voicemail.
- Staff will, when transferring a call, provide the call recipient with details of the caller’s name, organisation, and other relevant details.
- If a transferred call is unanswered, the staff member transferring the call will provide the caller with the option to leave a message, go to the call recipient’s voicemail, or contact a mobile number / email address.
- Callers will receive acknowledgements of their voicemail messages within 24 hours on regular working days.
- Outgoing voicemail messages will be kept current and voicemail messages at answering stations will be changed on days that the Council is closed.

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- Staff will give their full name; position title; organisation, department or section name; telephone number; and other relevant details when creating a voicemail message.
- Where practicable, voicemail messages left on fixed line telephones and mobile phones will be consistent for both types of device.
- Where practicable, voicemail messages will give at least one optional telephone number to call.
- If a staff member is on leave for more than one (1) day, their calls / enquiries will be redirected to an alternative contact. This may be done by out of office email message, transfer / redirection of calls / emails, voicemail message or other appropriate means.
- If a staff member is on unplanned sick leave of more than two (2) days, his or her supervisor will organise appropriate changes to out of office email messages and voicemail messages.
- Out of office email messages and voicemail messages left while a staff member is on leave will include an intended date of return.

## Meetings

*Customers have a right to expect that:*

- Where practicable, they will be given a minimum of two (2) days advance notice of meetings.
- Meeting notifications contain accurate information (date, time, place, point of contact, telephone number and directions).
- They will be informed of scheduled changes or cancellations prior to the meeting.
- Agendas will be available and distributed in advance of meetings.
- Meetings will start on time and end on time.
- Meetings will be organised, run efficiently (proper equipment and handouts), and conducted in a professional manner.
- Security will be provided at meetings involving sensitive issues as determined by the department head and / or facilitator.
- Meeting notices will be removed after a meeting has been completed and the venue returned to a clean and neat state.

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## Public Amenities

*Customers have a right to expect:*

- Properly maintained facilities, which are sanitary, completely operational, fully stocked and supplied, accessible, adequate to needs, and inclusive to people who have a disability.\*
- Appropriate and timely responses to identified problems at a facility.
- Hours of regular operation will be posted and observed.

\* *Note: Disability accessible public amenities are available within the Local Government Area; however, not all amenities are presently deemed “accessible”.*

## Money / Currency Transactions

*Customers have a right to expect:*

- User-friendly accounts / statements.
- That the Council is prepared to accept daily monetary transactions.
- Financial transactions are recorded accurately.
- That accounts may be paid by cash, cheque, credit card, BPay, Postbillpay or direct deposit.
- A receipt or verification of transaction will be provided.

## Written Correspondence

(Including letters, memoranda, emails and faxes)

***Refer also to the Glen Innes Severn Council Correspondence Guidelines***

*Customers have a right to expect:*

- Written correspondence formatted to Council's standards.
- That information regarding their enquiries is complete, accurate and precise.
- A timely response to their request or an interim communication explaining the delay. A timely response for internal email is within 2 (two) business days and for letters and external business email, within five (5) business days.
- All emails will contain a signature block including: the staff member's name, title, department, Glen Innes Severn Council, address, telephone number, fax number and email address.
- Emails sent to a large group of external recipients will be blind carbon copied to maintain confidentiality.

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- Fax cover sheets that are legible and include name, telephone number and department of the sender and the name and fax number of the receiver.

## In Person

*Customers have a right to expect:*

- A timely and courteous acknowledgement, such as eye contact (where culturally appropriate) or a positive indication that the staff member is aware of their presence, especially if the staff member is on the telephone or with another customer.
- That if there is a person at a counter and the phone rings, the staff member will excuse him / herself, answer the telephone, ask the caller if they prefer to be put on hold or have their call returned, and then continue to assist the initial customer.
- That each main information counter will be staffed during business hours or, if staff members are unavailable, there will be signage referring them to the appropriate department.

## In Person Contacts with Field Personnel

*Customers have a right to expect:*

- That when a resident approaches a Council employee who is doing work in the field, whenever possible, the staff member will attempt to answer the question if it pertains to the employee's duties, and is not of a private or confidential nature. If the employee cannot answer the question and it is related to their duties, the staff member will offer the option to the resident of contacting the supervisor.
- If a question pertains to an area outside of the employee's scope of duties or department, the employee will explain it is outside of the scope of their duties, and will provide the resident with a "helpful numbers to call card". This will provide the resident with the correct information they need to contact the department that can answer their question.

## Implementation and Communication

These Standards will be communicated to all new staff as part of their induction. Revised versions of the Standards that contain significant changes will be communicated to all relevant staff by the Administration and Human Resources Section. New versions that contain only minor or inconsequential changes will be distributed to managers for highlighting at team meetings.

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**Variation and Review**

These Standards will be reviewed every three (3) years or earlier if required. Council reserves the right to vary or revoke these Standards at its discretion.



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General Manager

31-5-19

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Date

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