

Customer Service Policy

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1. Scope

This Policy applies to all Council staff, elected Councillors, our community and service partners. It deals with our expected standards of service when interacting with customers across all channels including telephone, email, webchat, social media, written correspondence and in person engagements.

2. Purpose

This Policy supports Council's commitment to excellence in customer service. It provides clear guidance to staff on expected standards and supports consistency of service delivery aligned with Council's values and strategic vision.

The Policy promotes the delivery of positive customer experiences and a continued focus on meeting the expectations of our customers and the community.

3. Policy

3.1 City of Parramatta 2050 alignment

The Customer Service Policy supports the realisation of the City of Parramatta's 2050 Vision:

Our 2050 community vision 'AT PARRAMATTA – Local Heart, Global Outlook' captures what we have always celebrated about Parramatta: it stands as the cultural and geographic heart of our local region, a role it will proudly uphold for generations to come. By 2050, Parramatta will have firmly established itself as a pioneering local leader, and a global city full of world class experiences and opportunities to gather, create and accelerate.

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3.2 Council's Customer Service Charter

Council's Customer Service Charter outlines our service commitments, including our overarching promise to our customers to:

- **Be respectful:** Treat every customer with respect, empathy and kindness
- **Be easy to deal with:** Make it easy to access services, information and assistance
- **Value your time:** Respond promptly and update you on the progress of your requests
- **Be helpful:** Be flexible and work with you to provide solutions that support your needs
- **Take ownership:** Be solutions focused, seeking to resolve issues on the first contact
- **Be transparent:** Communicate clearly, so you know what will happen and when
- **Listen to you:** Actively listen and confirm we have understood correctly
- **Understand your needs:** Seek and act on feedback to better understand and meet the needs of our customers and community.

3.3 Council's standards of service

Council sets clear expectations for service delivery and consistently presents a professional and positive image through:

- creating an inclusive environment where everyone feels welcome and supported, making reasonable adjustments to accommodate individual needs related to disability, culture, language, age, and accessibility.
- identifying customer needs and expectations at the beginning of an interaction;
- responding to customer enquiries promptly and within allocated timeframes;
- providing clear, concise and easy to understand advice and information;
- making decisions using processes that are customer-centric, consultative, impartial and ethical;
- acting in accordance with the law and Council's policies and procedures;
- managing complaints in alignment with Council's Feedback and Complaints Management Policy.

3.4 Council's service provision

Council receives a wide range of requests for assistance and types of service. Processes are developed to support the efficient and effective resolution of regular requests and the delivery of services to our customers.

These processes include:

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- logging all customer interactions in our secure corporate system to track progress and ensure accountability;
- providing regular updates to customers on the status of their enquiry; particularly if there are any delays or changes to the expected timeframe;
- ensuring that staff are trained in customer service excellence and are knowledgeable about the services offered by Council;
- conducting regular reviews of our service processes to identify areas for improvement and implement best practice.

By adhering to these procedures, we aim to deliver a consistent and high-quality service to all our customers.

3.5 Accessibility and assistance

Council is committed to providing choice to our customers and supports accessible ways to interact with us and access our services.

This may include the following:

- provision of 24/7 access to a wide range of Council services via our website, which meets accessibility standards (Web Content Accessibility Guidelines);
- where a customer prefers or requires another person, agent or organisation to assist or represent them when making a request or enquiry, Council will communicate with the customer through their nominated representative if consent is provided;
- where a customer requires the assistance of a translator, they may contact the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) on 131 450 and request the interpreter contact City of Parramatta's Customer Service Centre on 1300 617 058;
- where a customer has communication support needs, they may visit www.accesshub.gov.au to connect with the National Relay Service. After expressing their preferred method of support, the customer may then request the National Relay service contact the City of Parramatta's Customer Service Centre on 1300 617 058;
- provision of an 'after-hours' telephone service, available outside of business hours, for urgent customer requests;
- any reasonable request to provide support and assistance in facilitating the making of a request or enquiry in adherence with relevant legislation;
- facilitating access for all with sensitivity and understanding, supporting them in ways that meet their individual requirements and is appropriate to their age, abilities, culture and linguistic background.

3.6 Unreasonable conduct by a customer

Unreasonable conduct is defined as any behaviour by a person which, because of its nature or frequency, raises substantial health, safety, resource or equity issues for the

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people involved.

Council will utilise NSW Ombudsman's [Managing Unreasonable Conduct by a Complainant Guidelines](#) to assist in the identification of unreasonable conduct by customers and to identify strategies to address that conduct.

Additional information is provided in Council's Feedback and Complaints Management Policy. Council has a zero-tolerance approach towards any harm, abuse or threats directed towards Council staff and Council officials.

3.7 Customer feedback, compliments and complaints

Council encourages and welcomes customer feedback, positive or negative. All feedback received will be reviewed with care and used to support continuous improvement of the services Council delivers.

Feedback, compliments and complaints may be provided via the following channels:

- Website: Online feedback, compliment or complaint form
- Post: City of Parramatta, PO Box 32, Parramatta NSW 2124
- Email: council@cityofparramatta.nsw.gov.au
- Phone: 1300 617 058
- In person: PHIVE, 5 Parramatta Square, Parramatta

More information about how Council manages feedback and complaints is available in Council's Feedback and Complaints Management Policy.

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4. Definitions

Customer	<p>Council's customers include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • residents, property owners and members of the business community, sporting and community groups; • visitors to the City of Parramatta; • Councillors, as elected representatives of the community; • government departments and non-government organisations; • future residents and generations impacted by current decisions.
Customer Request	A request for service, action and/or information received by Council. Customer requests can also be generated via Council resolutions.
Feedback	Opinions, compliments, comments and expressions of interest or concern made directly or indirectly, explicitly or implicitly, to or about Council, where a response is not implicitly or explicitly expected or legally required.
Service procedures	Procedures outlining the standard approach to managing customer interactions and service requests.
Service request	<p>The definition of a service request includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • requests for the provision of works or services; • routine inquiries about the organisation's business; • requests for the provision of services and assistance; • reports of failure to comply with laws regulated by the organisation; and • requests for information or explanation of policies, procedures and decisions.
Council official	<p>Any person who performs official functions for or on behalf of Council. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillors; • the Chief Executive Officer (CEO); • Council staff and administrators; • delegates of Council, including members of Council committees; • any person to whom Council's Code of Conduct applies.

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5. Supporting information

<p>City of Parramatta policies and documents</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer Service Charter • Code of Conduct incorporating the Procedures for the Administration of the Code of Conduct for Local Councils in NSW • Feedback and Complaints Management Policy • Privacy Management Policy • Work Health and Safety Policy • Internal Ombudsman Shared Service Governance Charter • Disability Inclusion Action Plan • Councillor and Staff Interaction Policy
<p>Relevant external governing laws and guidelines</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NSW Government, State of the Customer, Customer Commitments • Effective Complaints Management Guidelines (2024), NSW Ombudsman • Managing unreasonable conduct by a complainant (2021), NSW Ombudsman • Disability Inclusion Act (2014) NSW • Anti-Discrimination Act (1977) NSW • Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) • Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 (NSW) • Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 • State Records Act 1998 (NSW)

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