



STATUTORY

Mount Isa City Council Customer Service Policy

RESOLUTION OM68/08/13 VERSION (1)

File 1208 Statutory Policies I/R 857793

Policy Statement

The purpose of this policy is to advise on the service that can be expected from Council, and the procedures that can be taken if someone is not satisfied with Council decisions or actions.

This policy clearly defines all parties' roles and responsibilities when dealing with customers, and customers complaints.

Each local government must establish a process for resolving complaints by affected persons about failures of its local government business entities to carry on activities in a way that complies with the competitive neutrality principles applying to the activities.

1. Mount Isa City Council Commits to provide you with:

- ✓ Prompt and efficient services.
- ✓ Easy access to our services.
- ✓ Friendly, professional service.
- ✓ Accurate and consistent information.

And that we will:

- ✓ Consult you when developing new products and services.
- ✓ Make fair decisions.
- ✓ Fix our mistakes willingly.

2. What Mount Isa City Council needs you to do to help us meet our commitments:

- ✓ Treat our staff in a polite manner.
- ✓ Be honest and accurate in your dealings with us.
- ✓ Work with us to solve problems.
- ✓ Give us feedback on the things we do.
- ✓ Respect community property.

Our commitment is to embrace this Policy. However, if we should fall short in any aspect, we encourage you to bring it to us directly, so that the matter can be resolved.

Contacting Mount Isa City Council:

Email: city@mountisa.qld.gov.au

Phone: 07 4747 3200

Fax: 07 4747 3209

3. Definitions of Council's Commitment

3.1 Prompt and efficient services

We respond quickly and effectively to your service requests by:

- ✓ Having defined service standards for most commonly occurring service situations.
- ✓ Making a commitment to "when" and "how" the service will happen.
- ✓ Providing clear outlines of obligations, where appropriate, for any commonly occurring services.

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ORIGINAL APPROVED: Council Meeting 28.08.2013 Resolution No: (OM68/08/13) Version No. 1
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- ✓ Notifying you if there is any delay in the service we promised.
- ✓ Referring you, where appropriate, to alternative places where the service might be available if Council is not able to provide the service you seek.
- ✓ Preventing unnecessary return visits or calls to Council.
- ✓ Advising you promptly of the outcome of your request, **Easy access to our services**

Whether you phone, drop in personally, write or email us, we make every effort to:

- ✓ Answer your phone calls within six rings.
- ✓ Acknowledge your letters within five working days.
- ✓ Acknowledge your emails within two working days.
- ✓ Welcome you at the service desk within three minutes.
- ✓ Stick to agreed appointment times.
- ✓ Inform you of the best ways to access services from you Council.
- ✓ Provide "After Hours" service for requests of an urgent nature.
- ✓ Provide access to council information through our internet site;

www.mountisa.qld.gov.au

3.2 Friendly, professional service

We provide all Council services in a friendly and professional manner by:

- ✓ Treating you politely and with respect.
- ✓ Identifying ourselves when we talk to you.
- ✓ Listening carefully to what you say.
- ✓ Treating your personal information with confidentiality.
- ✓ Being helpful and sensitive to your needs.
- ✓ Being competent in providing the information and services that Council has determined to provide to its community.
- ✓ Being friendly as well as professional.

3.4 Accurate and consistent information

We do our best to provide the information you need by:

- ✓ Clearly outlining our policies, systems and service standards where this information is needed by you.
- ✓ Giving you time to fully explain your situation and needs.
- ✓ Using plain, respectful language with a minimum of jargon, acronyms and abbreviations.
- ✓ Knowing about the services we provide or knowing where to access this information quickly.
- ✓ Not unnecessarily quoting rules and regulations or details you do not need.
- ✓ Considering the information you need, not just the question you ask.

3.5. Consult you when developing and improving products and services

We will seek your input in regard to the provision of services by Mount Isa City Council through:

- ✓ Asking for and considering your ideas into the development of products and services.
- ✓ Regularly seeking feedback on our service delivery.
- ✓ Honestly listening to and acting upon your feedback.

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3.6 Make fair decisions

We will make decisions fairly and transparently by:

- ✓ Complying with all relevant legislation.
- ✓ Evaluating economic, environmental, social and cultural impacts.
- ✓ Considering the fairness of the outcome.
- ✓ Making decisions quickly once we have all the information needed.
- ✓ Notifying you promptly of the outcomes of decisions and actions.
- ✓ Notifying you of the reasons for the decision.
- ✓ Outlining options for appealing our decisions and for providing Council with feedback where you are unhappy with the outcomes

3.7 Fix our mistakes willingly

We willingly and reliably respond to complaints and errors by:

- ✓ Listening carefully to your situation and clarifying your needs.
- ✓ Apologising where we have made a mistake or caused delays.
- ✓ Informing you of the options open to yourself and Council.
- ✓ Taking ownership of any Council errors.
- ✓ Acting to fix the problems and mistakes quickly where we are able.
- ✓ Following up to ensure you know what we did.

4. Customers who cannot be satisfied

- 4.1. Customers who cannot be satisfied include members of the public and groups who do not accept that Council is unable to assist them, provide any further assistance or level of service that has been provided already and/or disagree with the action Council has taken in relation to their complaint or concern.
- 4.2. If, in the opinion of the Chief Executive Officer, a customer cannot be satisfied and all appropriate avenues of internal review or appeal have been exhausted and the customer continues to write, telephone, email and/or visit Council the following action may be taken;
 - 4.2.1. Not accept any further phone calls from the customer;
 - 4.2.2. Not grant any further interviews;
 - 4.2.3. Continue to receive, read and file correspondence but only acknowledge or otherwise respond to it if;
 - 4.2.4. The customer provides significant new information relating to their complaint or concern; or
 - 4.2.5. The customer raised new issues which, in the Chief Executive Officer's opinion, warrant fresh action.
- 4.3. The customer will be given the opportunity to make representations about Council's proposed course of action and will be referred to Council's Code of Conduct for options available to them by way of formal complaint about particular staff or via submissions they might make to the Queensland Ombudsman.
- 4.4. The Chief Executive Officer will advise Councillors of any correspondence issued in accordance with Clause 9.2.

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- 4.5. The customer will be given an opportunity to make representations about Council's proposed course of action and customers may be provided with copies of relevant policies which may assist in determining future actions.
- 4.6. If the customer continues to contact Council after being advised of Council's proposed course of action, the Chief Executive officer may, after considering any representations from the customer, advise the customer that any or all of Clause 9.2 will now apply.

5. Customer who make Unreasonable Demands

- 5.1. Customers who make unreasonable demands include members of the public whose demands on Council start to significantly and unreasonably divert Council's resources away from other functions or create the inequitable allocation of resources to other customers. Such demands may result from the amount of information requested, the nature or scale of services sought or the number of approaches seeking information, assistance or service.
- 5.2. If, in the opinion of the Chief Executive Officer, a customer is making unreasonable demands on Council and the customer continues to write, telephone, email and or visit the Council the following actions may be taken;
- 5.2.1. The Chief Executive Officer may write to the customer advising them of the Council's concern and requesting that they limit and focus their requests and that if the customer continues to place unreasonable demands on the organisation Council may;
- 5.2.2. Not respond to any future correspondence and only take action where, in the opinion of the Chief Executive Officer, the correspondence raises specific, substantial and serious issues; or
- 5.2.3. Only respond to certain number of requests in a given period.
- 5.3 The customer will be given the opportunity to make representations about Council's proposed course of action and will be referred to Council's Code of Conduct for options available to them by way of formal complaint about particular staff or via submissions they might make to the Queensland Ombudsman.
- 5.4. If, in the opinion of the Chief Executive Officer, a customer is constantly raising the same issues with different staff the Chief Executive Officer may notify the customer that;
- 5.4.1. Only a nominate staff member will deal with them in the future;
- 5.4.2. They must make an appointment with that person if they wish to discuss their matter; or
- 5.4.3. All future contact with Council must be in writing.
- 5.5. The Chief Executive Officer will advise Councillors of any correspondence issued in accordance with the above clauses.

6. Customers who are rude, Abusive or Aggressive

- 6.1. Rude, abusive or aggressive behaviour may include rude or otherwise vulgar noises, expressions or gestures, verbal abuse of either a personal or general nature, sarcastic remarks directed personally to officers, threatening or offensive behaviour, physical violence against property or physical violence against a person.
- 6.2. If, in the opinion of any staff member rude, abusive or aggressive comments or statements are made in telephone conversations or interviews, the staff member may;

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- 6.2.1. Warn the caller that if the behaviour continues the conversation or interview will be terminated;
 - 6.2.2. Terminate the conversation or interview if the rude, abusive or aggressive behaviour continues after a warning has been given;
 - 6.2.3. Call upon a manager or Police, as appropriate, if there is perceived threat.
- 6.3. Where a conversation or interview is terminated in accordance with Clause 6.2 the staff member must notify the Chief Executive Officer as soon as possible.
- 6.4. If, in the opinion of the Chief Executive Officer, any correspondence to Council contains personal abuse, inflammatory statements or material clearly intended to intimidate, it will be returned to the sender and not otherwise acted upon.

7. Vexatious Complainants

- 7.1. If, in the opinion of the Chief Executive Officer, a person continues to make representation by way of correspondence, telephone, email or personal representation, that has no basis in fact and/or is considered to be undertaken with frivolous or mischievous motives then the Chief Executive Officer may declare such a person to be a vexatious complainant. The Chief Executive Officer may take the same action as outline in Clause 4.2.

8. General

- 8.1. In all of the situations referred to in this policy, adequate documentary records must be made and maintained on the appropriate Council file.
- 8.2. Where the Chief Executive Officer determines to limit a customer's access to Council in any of the ways specified in this policy, the Chief Executive Officer must advise the council as soon as possible of the relevant circumstances and the action taken.

Associated Documents

1. Code of Conduct

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