



**Bayside Council**

Serving Our Community

# *draft* **Customer Experience Policy**

**November 2023**



## Document Control

### Review

This policy is reviewed at least every four years and when relevant legislation changes. The General Manager may approve non-significant and/or minor editorial amendments that do not change the policy substance.

### Version history

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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Background

This policy underpins Bayside Council's commitment to quality customer service and Bayside Council's Customer Experience Strategy. The Policy defines how staff respond to customers in line with Council's core organisational value of providing exceptional customer service.

## 1.2 Our Customers

Bayside Council's customers include any person or organisation who uses its services or with whom the Council's works with to serve and support the community.

Council has many customers with a diverse range of needs and expectations. Key customer groups include:

- Citizens including residents, ratepayers, and visitors.
- Future residents who will be affected by current decisions.
- Industry and Small Business
- Business Partners
- Other Government Departments and Agencies
- Councillors, as elected representatives of the community
- Community Groups
- Council Staff

## 1.3 Definitions

### **Council**

Refers to Bayside Council (NSW).

### **Complaint**

A complaint means an expression of dissatisfaction with Council's policies, procedures, staff, or the quality of service. Complaints are dealt with in Council's Complaint Management Policy and Guidelines.

### **Service Request**

A Service Request is a term used to identify customer requests that are logged in Council's Customer Request Management (CRM) System.

## 1.4 Policy statement

Bayside Council is committed to providing quality customer service to customers every time they interact with Council.

## 1.5 Scope of policy

This policy applies to all interactions between staff and customers of Bayside Council across all channels. It includes both external and internal customer interactions.

## **2 Council's Service Commitment**

When a customer interacts with Council, they can expect:

- A helpful and professional response.
- To be provided with the correct information.
- For the next steps to be explained.
- Their matter to be addressed at first point of contact.
- If the matter cannot be addressed at first point of contact, then the customer is provided information about the process and expected timeframe for the matter to be resolved.
- To be kept informed on the progress of the matter.
- To be notified when the matter has been resolved.
- If a staff member can't help them, then the staff member will find someone who can.

To ensure Council achieves quality service standards our customers expect, Council will:

- Implement the Customer Experience Strategy (which includes the Customer Experience Cultural Change program) that guides customer service delivery priorities to meet community needs and expectations now and into the future.
- Adhere to the customer service principles, behaviours, and standards that our community expect as set out in our Customer Experience Charter.
- Develop and implement systems and processes to make it easy for our customers to access accurate information and to enable customers to interact with Council at any time.
- Work to continuously improve services, systems, and processes to ensure Council continues to meet customer expectations.
- Set Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for standards of service and report back to the community on Council's customer service performance.
- Seek feedback from the community on their satisfaction with Council's customer service performance and to identify where Council is performing well and areas to improve.
- Recruit talented, customer focussed and high performing staff. Regularly review their performance and continue to develop their knowledge and skills to achieve the customer service standards our community expect.

## **3 Customer Responsibilities**

To help Council to resolve the customer's enquiry, request or transaction to the expected standard, the customer is to:

- Contact Council using the published contact methods and communication channels.
- Provide Council with accurate and timely information that is necessary to action the matter.
- Provide Council with their contact details when applicable so Council can keep them informed.
- Work with Council to help resolve the matter.
- Treat Staff and other Customers with courtesy and respect
- Understand that staff may need to refer their enquiry to a specialist to assist with complex enquiries and requests.
- Provide honest and constructive feedback about Council's performance.

Council accepts and records anonymous requests for service. Council generally only acts on these requests where there is sufficient information to enable the matter to be investigated and actioned. Council will not accept anonymous requests for matters when the customer's details is required by legislation or relevant policies.

Council may cease to engage with or place administrative controls on a customer (and their associated parties) in accordance with Council's Complaint Management Policy and Guidelines, if the customer demonstrates unreasonable:

- Persistence
- Demands
- Lack of Cooperation
- Arguments
- Behaviours

Council will not tolerate any abusive behaviour and/or threats.

## **4 Policy implementation**

### **4.1 Policy responsibilities**

The General Manager has the overall responsibility for this policy.

The Manager Customer Experience is responsible for the administration of this policy.

### **4.2 Application of the Policy**

The following positions have obligations for implementing and supporting this policy:

**Staff and External Customers** - This policy applies to any team member in a customer facing role and any team member providing support to those in customer facing roles.

**Staff and Internal Customers** - Every staff member that works for Council has internal customers. This Policy applies to how team members interact and support their internal customers across Council.

**The Executive** - The Executive Team is responsible for applying the principles outlined in this policy to all customer engagement activities conducted by Bayside Council. It is also accountable for meeting the whole of Council standards within this Policy, ensuring adequate resourcing to implement this policy and monitoring trends.

**Directors, Managers and Coordinators** - are responsible for working in consultation with their teams to promote awareness of this policy, develop a customer-focused work ethic and implement customer-focused processes. They are also accountable for reporting known areas of non-compliance with this policy to their line manager.

### **4.3 Procedures**

Procedures that support and underpin this policy may be approved by the General Manager or their delegate.

The Manager Customer Experience may approve operational procedures that support the day-to-day implementation of this policy.

#### **4.4 Breaches**

Non-compliance with this policy by Council, Council staff and all persons dealing with customers on behalf of Bayside Council will be addressed in accordance with the Bayside Council Code of Conduct and relevant legislation.

### **5 Related documents**

This policy should be read in consideration in the following related documents.

- Bayside Council Customer Experience Strategy.
- Bayside Council Customer Experience Charter.
- Bayside Council Complaints Management Policy and Guidelines.
- Bayside Council Access to Information Policy and Procedures.
- Bayside Council Code of Conduct Policy.