

OVERBERG

DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY

CUSTOMER CARE POLICY

Reviewed: 30 March 2017



TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. BACKGROUND.....	3
2. PURPOSE OF THE POLICY	3
3. DEFINITIONS	5
4. LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT	5
5. SCOPE OF THE POLICY	5
6. BATHO PELE & THE CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MUNICIPAL STAFF MEMBERS	6
7. CUSTOMER CONTACT	6
8. THE IMPORTANCE OF CUSTOMER CARE.....	7
9. OUR COMMITMENT	8
10. CONTACTS	8
11. RELATED POLICIES.....	9
12. REVIEW	9
13. EFFECTIVE DATE.....	9

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Whenever customers have contact with Overberg District Municipality they will receive consistently excellent standards of customer service. It incorporates the Municipality's commitment to ensuring the human rights principles set out in the South African Constitution, the eight Batho Pele principles aimed at transforming public service, and "getting it right the first time". The municipality is committed to ensuring that customer service excellence is an integral part of the planning, resourcing and delivery of all municipal services.

2. PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

- 2.1 The municipality aims:

2.1.1. to move progressively towards the social and economic upliftment of the community in harmony with its natural environment;

2.1.2. to provide efficient, effective and transparent administration that conforms to constitutional principles;

2.1.3. to ensure that the municipality is financially and economically viable; and

2.1.4. to create a harmonious relationship between the municipality and the local municipalities through the acknowledgement of reciprocal rights and duties.

- 2.2. The municipality by these Policies, within the scope and spirit of the Constitution, the Local Government Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act 32 of 2000), gives effect to the principles underlying and expressed in these Acts, and therefore designs, regulates on and implements:

2.2.1. a customer care and management system which has as purpose:

2.2.1.1. to create a positive and reciprocal relationship between the municipality and an account holder;

- 2.2.1.2. to establish mechanisms for an account holder to give feedback to the municipality regarding the quality of the services and the performance of the municipality;
- 2.2.1.3. to ensure that reasonable steps are taken to inform an account holder of the costs involved in service provision, the reasons for payment of service fees, and the manner in which monies raised from the services provided, are utilised;
- 2.2.1.4. to ensure that an account holder receives regular and accurate accounts that indicate the basis for calculating the amounts due;
- 2.2.1.5. to provide accessible mechanisms for an account holder to query or verify a municipal account and appeal procedures which allow the account holder to receive prompt redress for inaccurate accounts;
- 2.2.1.6. to provide accessible mechanisms for dealing with complaints from an account holder, together with prompt replies and corrective action by the municipality, and to provide mechanisms to monitor the response time and efficiency of the municipal's actions;
- 2.2.1.7. to provide for accessible pay points and other mechanisms for settling an account; and
- 2.2.1.8. to provide credit control and debt collection mechanisms and procedures which aim to ensure, subject to the Act and other legislation, that all money that is due and payable, from whatever source or cause, to the municipality, is collected; and structures for tariffs.

2.3 As an organisation the municipality will:

2.3.1 Identify ourselves, be helpful and courteous;

2.3.2 Be professional and positive;

2.3.3 Be well informed, so that we are able to help our community;

2.3.4 Be effective in listening and responding the community;

2.3.5 Be fair and supportive; and

2.3.6 Handle all customers equal and fair.

3. DEFINITIONS

“Customers” mean:

- 1.1 All the people who interact with the municipality. This includes people who live in, work in or visit the area and people acting on behalf of people who live in the area; and
- 1.2 The customers of some services will be employees and other services will be all stakeholders. Although produced primarily with external customers in mind, these customer care standards will also apply to internal customers who are colleagues in the municipality.

“Municipality” means the Overberg District Municipality.

4. LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

The policy aims to give effect to the requirements and stipulations of –

- The Municipal Finance Management Act 56 of 2003 (MFMA);
- Treasury regulations issued in terms of the MFMA; and
- The Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000.

5. SCOPE OF THE POLICY

This policy applies to all customers involving the following persons or entities:

- 5.1 All members of the Council of the Municipality; and
- 5.2 All employees of the Municipality.

6. BATHO PELE & THE CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MUNICIPAL STAFF MEMBERS

6.1 Batho Pele means “People First” and the eight principles set out in it are the foundation of national Government’s approach to guide all interaction between Government institutions and its public:

6.1.1 **Access:** Equitable access to integrated service delivery;

6.1.2 **Openness and Transparency:** Creating a culture of collaboration;

6.1.3 **Consultation:** Listening to the needs and problems of citizens;

6.1.4 **Redress:** Apologising when necessary and finding speedy solutions when possible;

6.1.5 **Courtesy:** Services offered with courtesy and consideration;

6.1.6 **Service Standards:** Anticipating needs and informing citizens of the level and quality of service they can expect;

6.1.7 **Information:** Complete, accurate information about the municipality and its services; and

6.1.8 **Value for Money:** Delivering solutions economically and efficiently.

6.2 This approach is strengthened by the values underpinned in Schedule 2 of the Municipal Systems Act, 32 of 2000; the Code of Conduct for municipal staff members.

7. CUSTOMER CONTACT

7.1 Customers want accessible, efficient and responsive services and the Overberg District Municipality will strive to meet their demands.

7.2 Customer contact will be dealt with by means of the following:

7.2.1 Face-to-face;

- 7.2.2 Meetings;
- 7.2.3 Telephone;
- 7.2.4 Letters;
- 7.2.5 E-mails;
- 7.2.6 Fax;
- 7.2.7 Social Media; and
- 7.2.8 Websites.

8. THE IMPORTANCE OF CUSTOMER CARE

8.1 In practice, good Customer Care includes:

- 8.1.1 A customer must be able to contact the municipality easily, reaching the correct department to handle its request or enquiry;
- 8.1.2 A customer should have welcoming access to municipal buildings where adequate signage has been provided. Where practicable, access for the disabled should be provided. Incorporation of private areas for customers to discuss personal or sensitive matters should be considered where relevant and suitable;
- 8.1.3 A customer should be assisted in their language of preference in accordance with the municipality's Language Policy;
- 8.1.4 A municipal member of staff should identify him- or herself by name when communicating with a customer, listen attentively and respond appropriately;
- 8.1.5 Providing customers with relevant, accurate and up-to-date information, including an explanation when a service is not available;

- 8.1.6 Once a complaint, request or enquiry has been received, prompt action should be taken and a clear response should be given to the customer;
- 8.1.7 In the case of on-going or long-term problems, a customer should be kept informed of any anticipated delays and progress reported regularly on the way forward in addressing the complaints, requests or enquiries; and
- 8.1.8 In case of dissatisfaction, a customer should be explained the procedure for lodging a complaint, including relevant contact details.

9. OUR COMMITMENT

- 9.1 Customers can report comments, complains and queries regarding municipal services at any office of the Overberg District Municipality;
- 9.2 Customers are requested to ensure that their name, surname, contact details and the essence of the complaint are provided when providing feedback;
- 9.3 Should a situation not be resolved through normal service channels, customers can report the matter to the municipality as per the contact details below;
- 9.4 Customer complaints and queries will be handled within the timeframes set by management from time to time;
- 9.5 New staff will be made aware of the customer care policy during their induction; and
- 9.6 The Overberg District Municipality would also like to recognise employees who go beyond the call of duty.

10. CONTACTS

Head Office: 26 Long Street, Bredasdorp, 7280
Tel: 028 425 1157,
E-mail: info@odm.org.za

11. RELATED POLICIES

The following documents are related to this policy:

11.1 Language policy

12. REVIEW

12.1 This policy will be reviewed at least annually and updated if needed.

13. EFFECTIVE DATE

This policy shall come into effect on 1 July 2017.