

Mayo Local Authorities Customer Care Charter

Introduction

Mayo Local Authorities mission is to *“improve the quality of life for people living in Mayo and enhance the attractiveness of the County as a place to live, work, enjoy, visit and invest”*.

In pursuance of the commitment given in Mayo Local Authorities Corporate Plan 2005 – 2009 *“Leading the Way Ahead”*, this Customer Care Charter has been put in place and sets out the standards of service you, as a customer, may expect from Mayo County Council.

Mayo Local Authorities provide a diverse range of services to the public and our aim is to provide a high level of quality service to meet the needs of our customer. We are committed to providing an excellent quality service to all our customers, both external and internal, in an efficient, effective and caring manner.

General Information

Courtesy and Consideration

We undertake to:

- Deal with you promptly and in a courteous manner;
- Treat you fairly and with respect;
- Give you the best possible service and provide helpful advice;
- Maintain privacy and confidentiality, where necessary.

Openness and Impartiality

We undertake to:

- Be honest and open in dealing with you;
- Discuss any aspect of your dealings with us;
- Explain the decision-making procedures;
- Ensure the rights to equal treatment established by the equality legislation are adhered to.

Our Performance

We undertake to:

- Review and evaluate our performance;
- Examine the development and delivery of our services in order to meet the needs of all customers;
- Provide appropriately trained employees to ensure quality service delivery;
- Maximise the benefits of Information Technology to continuously improve service delivery;
- Carry out Customer Satisfaction Surveys on an ongoing basis to assess the quality of services being provided.

Accessibility

- We will continue to proactively support a culture of universal accessibility for all our services;
- We will ensure that all our offices are accessible for people with disabilities and special needs and comply with all occupational and safety standards.

Services Through Irish

We will ensure that:

- Customers who wish to conduct their business in Irish can do so;
- Documents are available in Irish and English.

Written and Electronic Communication

We will

- Acknowledge all correspondence within 7 working days;
- Issue a comprehensive reply within 4 weeks of our receiving your letter. If we cannot reply within this timeframe, we will write to explain why and tell you when you can expect a full reply*;
**This undertaking does not in any way affect statutory deadlines.*
- Ensure that all correspondence includes a printed contact name, a contact number and a reference number where appropriate;
- Use simple language in all correspondence;
- Use automated email responses when employees are out of the office;
- Reply “as Gaeilge” when correspondence is received through Irish.

Telephone Calls

We will

- Answer telephone calls quickly and courteously;
- Give our name and section when answering calls;
- Be as helpful and informative as possible;
- Take your contact number if information is not immediately available, and write or ring with a reply within a nominated time;
- If it is necessary to transfer your call to a different department, we will tell you why and give you with the name of the person we are transferring you to and the telephone number;
- When transferring a call, we will advise the person, we are transferring you to, of the nature of your query.

Personal Callers

We will:

- Ensure that the reception area is staffed during office hours;
- Identify ourselves and be courteous in all interaction with customers;
- Respect your privacy and ensure that all matters are dealt with a confidential manner;
- Provide private interview room where possible and appropriate;
- Deal with your enquiry as quickly as possible.

Help Us To Help You

You can help us by:

- Quoting reference numbers, if known, when writing, emailing or telephoning us regarding an existing application or query;
- Providing a daytime telephone number and/or email address in your correspondence if available;
- Treating all our employees courteously and with respect;
- Using the Comments Sheets which are provided at all our public offices;
- Letting us know when we do something well;
- Letting us know how we can better improve our services.

Note: Please deal with our frontline employees as far as possible in relation to enquiries. For non-routine matters, or if you need to speak to a specific person, please be advised that you should make an appointment in advance. We will try to arrange meetings at a time to suit you.

Complaints

The foregoing defines the standards which you can expect to receive. If you feel you are not receiving these standards, you can make a complaint.

Excluded areas from the complaints system are where formal appeal/complaint procedures already exist, e.g. where you can appeal to An Bord Pleanála under Planning, or where you can request an Internal Review and/or appeal to the Information Commissioner under the Freedom of Information.

It is important that **every attempt is made** in the relevant Section to resolve the complaint in the office where the complaint originated. If however, the complaint cannot be resolved in that office, you may forward your complaint to the following:

**Mr. Joe Loftus,
Director of Services,
Corporate Affairs,
Mayo County Council,
Aras an Chontae,
Castlebar.**

Tel. No.: 094 9024444
Fax No.: 094 9023937
Email: jloftus@mayococo.ie

Your complaint will be acknowledged within 5 working days and will be fully and impartially investigated. A full reply will issue within 21 working days. If you do not receive a response within 21 working days or you are not satisfied with the response given, you may contact the Office of the Ombudsman. The details are as follows:

**Office of the Ombudsman,
18 Lower Leeson Street,
Dublin 2.**

Tel: 01 639 5600
Lo-Call: 1890 223 030
E-mail: ombudsman@ombudsman.irlgov.ie