

Customer Service Charter

PURPOSE

For the City of Launceston (Council) to formally document its Customer Service Charter. In accordance with the *Local Government Act (Tas.) 1993, section 339F*, Our Customer Service Charter details council's service standards and explains what you can do if we have not delivered a service to that standard. Our Charter has been developed to further build and enhance relationships with our community and customers and to provide a system for continuous improvement in customer service delivery.

SCOPE

The Charter applies to our customers who can be anyone including individuals, families, carers, groups or organisations that have dealings, alliances or partnerships with council or its venues and facilities, including the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, Launceston Leisure and Aquatic Centre, University of Tasmania Stadium and the Launceston Visitor Information Centre.

Our Vision

Inspired people, working together to create the best outcomes for our community.

Our Purpose

We are a progressive organisation, working with our community to create a positive future for Launceston.

Our Values

City of Launceston is a values-based organisation, which means that we employ people who share and behave in a way that is aligned to our values.



**Our people
matter**



**We care about
our community**



**We bring an
open mind**



**We go home
safe and well**

Our commitment

We will:

- Provide a prompt, friendly and professional customer experience.
- Promptly answer your enquiries via whichever way you choose to communicate with us.
- Welcome your feedback at any time to help us improve.

Our principles relating to customer service are to:

- Listen
- Treat you with dignity and respect
- Be fair and honest.
- Provide clear and accurate information.
- Seek to resolve your request at first contact.
- Respect and maintain your privacy and confidentiality.
- Respect cultural diversity
- Keep you informed.

Please help us by:

- Providing accurate, timely and relevant information.
- Treating staff with respect and dignity.
- Respecting the rights of other customers.
- Respecting community property.
- Providing us with constructive and honest feedback

Our service delivery

We work hard to deliver services to the standards specified in the table below. If this is not achievable, we will let you know.

Service	Standard
All of Council	
Answer your telephone call	Always
Return your call	Within 1 working day unless otherwise specified
Acknowledge your communication (please note, if a detailed reply is required it may take additional time to research; we will let you know if this is the case)	Within 10 working days
Action formal complaints (provided in writing)	Acknowledge within 3 working days with an estimate of the date by which a detailed response will be provided
Notify you as soon as practical if there is a delay on our service commitment to you	Always
Provide after-hours service for emergencies	Always
Endeavour to refer you to an appropriate service provider if we cannot provide the service you require	Always
A counter service queuing time of less than	10 minutes
Reasons for our decisions whether they are agreeable to you or not	Always
To be seen on time if you have an appointment	Always

Service	Standard
Acknowledge and advise how we will handle your written enquiries	10 working days
<u>Expected Service Delivery for specific enquiries</u>	
Animal Control	
Respond to emergency dog attacks*	24 hours a day
Respond to routine dog complaints	3 working days
<i>* For safety reasons, Council only responds to after-hours emergency dog attacks where Tasmania Police has requested assistance. Council is not able to respond to after-hours calls about stray or lost dogs</i>	
Building	
Process a building permit	Within 7 working days
Undertake building inspections	Within 2 working days
Process a plumbing permit	Within 21 working days
Undertake plumbing inspections	Within 2 working days
Provide applicants with an initial review of decisions	Always
Drainage/Stormwater	
Respond to drainage emergencies	24 hours a day
Respond to seepage/drainage problems	Within 10 working days
Parks and reserves	
Inspect, assess and respond to requests in relation to park maintenance	Within 10 working days
Urban parks / sportsground maintenance	Fortnightly
Inspect, assess and respond to requests in relation to tree maintenance	Within 10 working days
Urban tree inspection and maintenance	Annually
Inspect, assess and respond to requests in relation to playground maintenance	Within 10 working days
Playground inspection and maintenance	3 monthly
Environmental Health	
Respond to food complaints	48 hours
Respond to urgent environmental nuisances and high-risk public health matters	24 hours a day
Inspect registered food premises	Every 3-24 months*
Conduct immunisation clinics	Weekly
Conduct school immunisation clinics	Annually
* as determined by the Tasmanian Food Business Risk-Classification System - Food Business Inspection Frequency Food Business Inspection Frequency RCS guide DoHTasmania.pdf (health.tas.gov.au)	

Service	Standard
Finance	
Payment of accounts	By due date
Respond to rates enquiries	Within 10 working days
Fire Hazards	
Respond to fire hazard notifications (during permit period)	Within 5 working days
Governance	
Legislative requirements	Always
Review our Strategic Plan	Every 5 years
Publish Annual Report	Every November
Have Council Meeting Agenda available	4 days prior to the meeting
Human Resources	
Acknowledge receipt of job applications	Within 10 working days
Provide outcomes of job applications	Within 10 working days
Planning/Subdivision	
Respond to a planning query email/letter	Within 5 working days
Lodge a received planning application	Within 1 working day
Process a planning application	42 statutory* days
Process a permitted application	28 statutory* days
*defined as all days between lodgement of a valid application and decision making (excluding days where further requests are outstanding)	
Roads	
Inspect, assess and respond to requests about potholes, edge breaks and cracks	Within 10 working days
Grade unsealed roads	Minimum of once per year
Attend to identified damaged street furniture	Within 10 working days
Road sweeping of Council-owned roads with kerb and gutter	Every 2 months
Waste	
Garbage collection	Weekly
Recyclables collection	Fortnightly
FOGO collection	Fortnightly
Provide new or replacement wheelie bins	Within 5 working days

Service	Standard
Emergencies	
An emergency is regarded as an issue relating to Council property or practices that may threaten life or property or one that may cause environmental harm.	Within 2 hours

Customer response prioritisation

Council's system has five response priority levels. When you contact us we will let you know what level your request has been assigned.

The five levels are:

- **Urgent** Immediate action required (same day)
- **High** Next working day response required
- **Medium** Response required by 10 working days
- **Low** Response required by 20 working days
- **Scheduled** Greater than 20 days in line with scheduled work.

Contacting us

There are a number of ways to contact Council.

- **Reporting damage to council property**
To report any damage to council infrastructure please call 03 6323 3000 or after hours on 03 6323 3333;
- **In person**
Customer Service Centre
Town Hall, 18-28 St John Street
Launceston TAS 7250
Open: Monday to Friday from 8.30am to 5pm
- **Phone**
Customer Service Centre
03 6323 3000
- **Email**
contactus@launceston.tas.gov.au
- **Post**
City of Launceston
PO Box 396
Launceston TAS 7250
- **Fax**
03 6323 3001

- **After Hours**

After hours emergencies involving City of Launceston facilities: 03 6323 3333
After hours emergency dog attacks: Tasmania Police 131 444

- **National Relay Service**

The City of Launceston is National Relay Service (NRS) friendly. If you are deaf or have a hearing or speech impairment, you can call us through the NRS and ask to be connected to 03 6323 3000. TTY users can call 13 36 77. Speak and listen (speech-to-speech) users can call 1300 555 727. To make other relay calls, visit the NRS.

- **Snap Send Solve**

Snap Send Solve is a free application for smartphones that allows you to quickly report issues to City of Launceston. Your report is sent from the app using your email address so that the City of Launceston can respond directly to you to solve the issue. To install, simply search for Snap Send Solve in Apple's app store or visit www.snapsendsolve.com

- **Councillors**

Contact details for each Councillor is located on our website www.launceston.tas.gov.au
Or call the Customer Service Centre on 03 6323 3000.

Community Engagement

- **Website www.launceston.tas.gov.au**

Visit the City of Launceston's website for online services, latest news and notifications, and Council's meeting agendas and minutes.



Look for this symbol to locate our website's accessibility menu. A translation service and screen reader are available on our website for those requiring assistance.

- **Tomorrow Together - Community Engagement**

We are committed to ensuring people who may be affected by Council decisions have the opportunity to be consulted. Tomorrow Together is the online consultation platform Council uses where you can have your say on key initiatives.

- **Council meeting live streaming**

In the interests of openness and transparency and encouraging community involvement in decision making, the audio from every Council meeting, except for matters dealt with in closed session, is streamed live to the internet and stored on our YouTube channel
<https://www.youtube.com/@colmeetingstream>.

- **Council meetings**

Council meetings commence on the fourth Thursday of January and then occur fortnightly. We welcome your attendance to ask a question on any matter relating to Council; or to speak for a maximum of two minutes on any item listed on the agenda. [Agendas and minutes can be found at https://www.launceston.tas.gov.au/Agendas-and-Minutes](http://www.launceston.tas.gov.au/Agendas-and-Minutes).

To ask a question or speak at the Council meeting we ask that you please register before the meeting begins. This helps us ensure we minute your attendance correctly. Forms are available outside the entrance to the Council Chambers, and Council Officers will be available to help,

- **Follow us on social media**

Stay informed about issues, news and feedback opportunities relating to the municipality by following City of Launceston.

[Facebook - https://www.facebook.com/CityOfLauncestonOfficial](https://www.facebook.com/CityOfLauncestonOfficial)

[LinkedIn - https://www.linkedin.com/company/city-of-launceston](https://www.linkedin.com/company/city-of-launceston)

Complaints

Council's Customer Service Centre is your first point of contact for all enquiries, compliments, and complaints. If your complaint is urgent or safety related, please contact us via phone so we are notified about it as soon as possible.

Formal complaints requiring a response should be provided in writing to the addresses above so they can be directed to the appropriate person for investigation. You will receive a confirmation that your complaint has been received and when to expect a written response, this is determined by the severity and complexity of the issue but we will always provide you with an estimated time to achieve a resolution. The responsible person may contact you via phone during this time to aid their investigation. Our Complaints Handling Procedure provides more detail about this process.

Definition of complaint:

It is important to note that a complaint is not an enquiry, request or disagreement.

Enquiry: Appeal for information

Request: Appeal for assistance and action

Disagreement: Conflicting opinion to a policy or the direction of City of Launceston.

Complaint: A complaint exists when there is a gap between the service provided and the customer's expectation. A complaint exists when a customer initiates further contact after an initial service has been provided and expresses dissatisfaction with that service.

It is necessary to differentiate between service provided and services available. If it is identified that a service is not available or provided by council then this not a complaint - it is a suggestion for future services expansion.

Experience has shown that the majority of complaints will be satisfactorily resolved, however if you are unhappy with the outcomes you may ask for a review of your complaint by the Chief Executive Officer, who will investigate your complaint further and inform you of the findings.

A summary of all complaints, including the number and nature, is provided annually to Councillors.

If there is insufficient evidence to action an issue we will not take any further action and your complaint will be closed. In some circumstances you may be required to resolve a dispute

privately or via legal proceedings, if this is the case you will be informed by our officers that Council cannot assist further.

There is an Ombudsman who may review actions and decisions taken by the City of Launceston. The Ombudsman is responsible to Parliament for investigating complaints made about administrative actions (or inactions) of Tasmanian Government Departments, most Statutory Authorities and Local Government. Visit the Ombudsman's website www.ombudsman.tas.gov.au for more information and how to get in contact.

Customer Behaviour:

Our employees work hard to provide services and respond to queries and are entitled to feel safe and respected while at work. Customers who display aggressive, abusive or inappropriate behaviour can be refused service and may have to make their enquiry by other means.

RELATED POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Complaints Handling Procedure 05-Prx-001

Unreasonable Customer/Complainant Conduct Policy 05-Pix-021

Threatening or Abusive Conduct by the Public Procedure 22-HLPr-001

RELATED LEGISLATION

Local Government Act 1993 (Tas)

REVIEW

In accordance with the *Local Government Act 1993, section 339F (4)*, this policy is to be reviewed within 12 months of a Council election.