



**Nottinghamshire
County Council**

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Customer Service Standards

April 2021

Why do we have Customer Service Standards?

Nottinghamshire County Council aims to deliver high standards of customer care and service to all residents that use or experience our service(s).

Every employee is personally responsible for providing good customer service.

People will form their view of the Council from their own personal experience of how we as an organisation serve them, therefore we need to ensure that we always aim to get it right - **first time - every time**.

Our standards are simple, user friendly and measurable. They apply to both staff and residents and outline what you can expect from us when contacting the Council by telephone, e-mail, our website, electronic forms, any other channel or in person.

Having a clear set of **customer service standards** against which we can measure our performance enables us to continually improve our processes, service design and our delivery and, where we are not meeting these standards, we'd like you to let us know so that we can fix this.

[Make a comment, compliment or complaint | Nottinghamshire County Council](#)

Standards of Customer Service you can expect

At Nottinghamshire County Council we will:

- Treat customers fairly; with respect and consideration.
- Be polite, helpful, open and honest in all communication.
- Listen and respond positively to what you are telling us.
- Do what we say we are going to do.
- Deliver good quality, affordable services.
- Organise our services around your needs.
- Give you choice over how you access services.
- Communicate clearly and understandably without using confusing jargon and acronyms.
- Be open and transparent and share information with you.
- Explain our decision making in a way that you can easily understand.
- Make the best use of our resources.
- Try wherever possible to provide the services you need, when and where you want them.
- Try wherever possible to answer your enquiry at the first point of contact.
- Provide you with easy-to-understand, useful and up to date information about our services.
- Deal with your feedback positively and quickly and use it to improve the service we provide.
- Respect your confidentiality and safeguard your personal information.
- Let you know how quickly we can take action to answer your enquiry or resolve your complaint.
- Direct you to where you need to go if you do not need our services.
- Ensure you can access information, advice and services easily and we meet legislation relating to accessibility standards.

If you telephone us, we aim to:

- Aim to answer within 30 seconds.
- At the customer service centre, answer 80% of calls within 30 seconds.
- Tell you the name of the service area and who you are speaking to.
- Provide you with appropriate contact details should you need to get back in touch.
- Return your phone calls on the same day or, if this is not possible, the next working day.
- Try to deal with your enquiry at the first point of contact. If this is not possible, we will pass your enquiry through to the right service area who can offer further help or expertise.
- Transfer you to the right person however, where this may not be possible, we will take your details and arrange for someone to call you back within an agreed, or appropriate, timescale.
- Respond to telephone messages within 2 working days, unless the voicemail or the specific service standards state otherwise.

If you visit our website, we will:

- Ensure you can access information, advice and services easily and that our website meets legislation relating to accessibility standards.
- Have a feedback mechanism in place for you to provide improvement suggestions
- Provide a facility for answering queries.
- Make papers available on our website either in a PDF format or electronic form (and ensure these meet accessibility standards).
- Ensure the information is accurate, easy to find and current.

If you write to us, we will:

- Provide an acknowledgement to your e-mail or letter within 2 working days.
- Provide a full reply within 5 working days for standard enquiries.
- In more complex cases we will send an acknowledgement which will clearly state the timescale outlining when a full response can be expected (this should normally be within 20 working days).
- Keep our correspondence simple and easy to understand.
- Tell you in our correspondence who is dealing with your enquiry.
- Provide you with contact details and an enquiry number should you need further advice.

If you visit one of our public buildings, we will:

- Ensure all reception points can be clearly identified.
- Ensure that reception staff are welcoming, helpful and polite.
- Give you an indication of how long it will be before someone can see you.
- Aim to deal with your enquiry within 30 minutes.
- If we are unable to deal with the enquiry directly, we will direct you to the appropriate service
- Deal with you professionally and efficiently.
- Provide you with clean, safe and comfortable surroundings.
- Provide you with a confidential meeting area (where possible).
- Try, wherever possible, to provide you with your preferred method of communication.
- Endeavour to see you within 30 minutes when you do not have a pre-arranged appointment.

If we visit you in your home, we will:

- Carry identification and show it straight away.
- Be prompt.
- Let you know as soon as possible if we are delayed or unable to attend the appointment.
- Explain who we are and the purpose of the visit.
- Tell you who to telephone if you want to confirm the identity of the visiting officer.
- Make arrangements, where it is possible, should you want a female or male officer to visit you.
- Let you know what will happen next as a result of our visit.

Complaints, Comments and Compliments

We want to hear from you if you have a complaint or wish to make a comment or compliment. We will:

- Welcome and act on all feedback.
- Acknowledge your communication within 2 working days.
- Try to resolve complaints informally as soon as possible.
- Take all complaints seriously.
- Help you by taking your complaint details over the telephone.
- Tell you if we need to deal with it under statutory procedures, which may impact timescales and if this is likely, we will make you aware.
- Provide a full written response to you within 20 working days, or another timescale which we will have discussed with you.
- We will learn from your comments and complaints and use them to make improvements.

Equality and Diversity

We aim to provide:

- Inclusive and accessible services.
- Telephone interpreting service.
- Access to signing and other interpretative services.

Data Protection and Freedom of Information

We will:

- Ensure that all employees are appropriately trained.
- Handle all information provided to us sensitively and confidentially.
- Make sure your information is not be discussed with, or disclosed to, any unauthorised person.
- Only ask you for information that is relevant.
- Respond within 3 months to requests for access to your personal information, as defined by the Data Protection Act 1998 and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). If the request is for straightforward information, you may receive it within 1 month.
- Respond within 20 working days to request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (unless the Public Interest Test applies, which allows us more time – we will let you know if this is the case).

Providing you with information

If we need to send you information following an enquiry we will:

- Ensure the information is accurate, up to date and relevant to your enquiry.
- Provide it in an appropriate format and use plain English.
- Ensure that it is sent to you within 5 working days.
- Use the most cost effect method of communication by sending information by email and 2nd class mail.

What we ask of you

We will aim to meet the standards that we have set out above. In return we ask you to:

- Treat our staff with respect.
- Be considerate and polite to other customers.
- Provide us with all the information we need to help you.
- Let us know if you have particular needs or requirements.
- Ask us to explain anything that you are not sure about.
- Tell us where we can make improvements to our services.