

Township of Brock Corporate Policy



Policy Name: Customer Service Policy

Policy Type: Administration and Personnel

Policy Number: AP34

Reference:

Date Approved: May 30, 2022

Date Revised: XXXXXXX

Approval By: Council

Point of Contact: Clerk's Department

1. Purpose

- 1.1. To define standards for staff when providing service to their customers. Standards have been developed for each of the five communication options our customers may use to obtain information / service from the Township of Brock.
- 1.2. To ensure a fair and consistent level of service for our customers, independent of the Department providing the service. Further, communication of these standards will assist managing customer expectations.
- 1.3. To provide clear performance expectations and accountability for staff and Council to further enhance the Township of Brock customer service culture.

2. Standards

- 2.1. To ensure that staff and Council are aware and adhere to the following Customer Service Standards:

2.1.1. Customer Commitment

- Instinctively think about customer needs and customer service
- Understand the value of the customer
- Be visible, attentive and accessible to customers
- Focusing on anticipating and responding to customer's needs; listen with an open mind
- Demonstrate personal responsibility for outstanding customer service

- Look after the customer yourself without handing them off to someone else whenever possible
- Make customers always come first

2.1.2. Respect and Inclusiveness

- Demonstrate pride in self and in our organization
- Show care and respect for customers and fellow employees
- Treat customers in a fair and equitable manner
- Respect, encourage and celebrate diversity
- Be accessible

2.1.3. Competence and Knowledge

- Ensure that we have the knowledge, skills and tools to fully respond to customers
- Demonstrate competence and knowledge in all that you do
- Be committed to achieving goals

2.1.4. Integrity, Accountability and Ethics

- Communicate openly and honestly with customers and staff
- Behave with integrity, honesty and respect
- Hold ourselves to the highest ethical standards in our work
- Be accountable: take responsibility for the consequences of our actions
- Support new change and ideas and react well to change

2.1.5. Quality and Excellence

- Continually strive for excellence
- Produce quality work, all the time
- Understand the Township of Brock business
- Evaluate procedures on a regular basis to look for improvement in the way we do business
- Communicate with customers well and at all levels of the organization

2.1.6. Creativity, Innovation and Recognition

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- Fill needs creatively and seek new ways at looking at old problems
- Support advancements in quality initiatives by seeking, facilitating and promoting learning, research and education
- Value contribution and commitment to excellence
- Recognize “tries” and results of others
- Take initiative; understand what needs to be done and take appropriate action

2.1.7. Sustainability

- Balance the services we provide with the resources we have available
- Invest in what is effective in meeting customer needs
- Ensure that services are managed with efficiency

3. Definitions

3.1 Customer:

Includes the following list of those who obtain service from or engage in business with the Corporation of the Township of Brock:

- Residents
- Business Owners
- Community Groups / Organizations
- Visitors
- Volunteers
- Contractors / Vendors
- Other Levels of Government
- Members of Council
- Township of Employees

3.2 Response:

Staff acknowledges receipt of the customer request. This may include responding to the request at this time or, as required, providing a suitable response time frame.

3.3 Staff or Employees:

Means any paid employee, including, but not limited to, full-time, part-time, paid apprenticeships, seasonal employees, and students.

3.4 Website / Social Media:

Includes all corporate webpages and social media accounts including but not limited to:

- Township of Brock Corporate Website
- Township of Brock Facebook Account
- Township of Brock Instagram Account
- Township of Brock LinkedIn Account
- Township of Brock Twitter Account
- Township of Brock Sport & Recreation Facebook Account
- Township of Brock Animal Shelter Facebook Account
- Township of Brock Fire Department Twitter Account
- Township of Brock Fire Department Instagram Account
- Township of Brock Tourism Website

3.5 Written correspondence:

Includes documentation physically mailed to or dropped off to the Township of Brock.

4. General

Responsibilities

4.1. All staff are responsible for adherence to the standards and are expected to provide feedback and suggestions to their immediate Supervisor regarding their ability to meet and / or exceed these expectations.

4.1.1. All staff are to ensure customer requests are responded to in a timely manner.

4.2. Supervisors are responsible for providing leadership to promote and monitor adherence to service standards by:

- implementing and managing customer service focused processes
- measuring and reporting against quality measures
- identifying and coordinating training needs (i.e. accessibility, phone system use)

4.3. All documents shall be developed using the Township of Brock Guide to Creating Accessible Documents and in accordance with the Township of Brock Alternate Formats policy.

5. Procedure / Guidelines

5.1. Customer Service Standards

5.1.1. Telephone / Mobile Device Standards

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Calls from customers are responded to within two (2) business days, to acknowledge receipt of the inquiry.

Staff will assess the caller's need(s) to eliminate unnecessary transferred calls.

- If staff assess the caller should be transferred, the staff person will clearly advise which department and to whom the call is being transferred to.
- Prior to transferring the call, the staff member will advise that should the call go to voicemail and that a detailed voicemail should be left by the customer, so that the call be returned.

Employees will maintain a personal outgoing voicemail message and update it when the employee is scheduled to be away for more than one (1) day. All greetings at a minimum should include name, date and alternate contact.

The following sample script can be used for general outbound voicemail message:

- You have reached the voice mail of (Your Name and Title) for the Township of Brock. I am either away from my desk or on another call. Please leave your name, contact information and a brief message and I will respond within 48 hours. Thank you.

The following sample script can be used when the employee will be away:

- You have reached the voice mail of (Your Name and Title) for the Township of Brock. Please be advised that I will be away from the office <from XX date to XX date> and will return all calls and emails as soon as possible upon my return. If you require immediate assistance, please call <alternate's name> at <extension> or email <general department email>. Thank you.

If the feature is available, staff will place their telephone on "Do Not Disturb" (DND), when not available so incoming calls go directly to their voicemail.

Every reasonable effort will be made to adhere to this standard including Departments / Divisions who experience high call volumes from time to time.

Should an employee have an unexpected absence, the supervisor shall contact the Manager of IT to arrange call forwarding.

5.1.2. Written / Fax Correspondence Standards

Staff will respond to written / fax correspondence as soon as possible but no longer than five (5) business days, unless special circumstances require additional time.

5.1.3. E-mail Correspondence Standards

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A response to e-mail correspondence is to be provided within two (2) business days. Should the email impact other staff or departments, those impacted will be cc'd. If additional information is required, an acknowledgment of the e-mail is provided. This standard applies to both internal and external e-mails received.

Any emails received in the general department email inboxes are to be forwarded to the appropriate staff member within one (1) business day for response.

If an email is flagged for follow up, it is the responsibility of the staff member who flagged said email to complete the follow up. When follow up is completed, remove the flag and file accordingly.

If an employee opens an email in a general inbox and is not intending to respond, they must mark that email as un-read so it is dealt with in a timely manner by another staff member.

When responding to emails from a general department inbox, staff will ensure that the "from" field is their employee specific email account and will cc' the general department email so that the entire email thread is available for the department to access.

Staff are expected to set-up their "Out-of-Office" notification when scheduled to be away for one (1) or more days during the employees' normal work hours. An alternative contact person will be provided as part of the automatic reply.

For security reasons, staff should always state in their automatic reply that they are out of the office even when they are away on vacation.

The following sample script can be used when the employee will be away:

"Thank you for your email. I am currently away from the office until (enter date). If you require immediate assistance, please contact (Department email address) or 705-432-2355 and someone will contact you as soon as possible."

Staff are to use the Corporate email signature template.

Should an employee have a scheduled leave, an email will be sent to all staff at that working location (i.e. Administration Building) advising of the absence. This will assist with directing calls and walk-in customers.

5.1.4. In-person Visit Standards

Staff are available during the core business hours of their department to manage customer inquiries and requests. Appointments for service are encouraged to ensure that the appropriate staff person is available.

Customers are to be served in the order that they appear. The only exception is for customers who have scheduled appointments with Township staff.

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Where front counter staff are responsible for managing both walk-in as well as customers on the telephone, walk-in customers should always be responded to directly and given priority. Front Counter staff will call the department they are directing the walk-in customer to, to ensure that a staff member will be present prior to sending the customer to that counter. Telephone calls are then to be responded to as soon after as possible.

5.1.5. Website / Social Media Standard

Staff are responsible for ensuring content on the Township of Brock Website and social media pages are up to date.

Forms filed through the Township of Brock website are automatically emailed directly to the appropriate department and are subject to the above Email Communication Standards.

Comments and direct messages received on corporate social media accounts shall be responded to within two (2) business days by the corporate account.

Personal social media accounts shall not be used when conducting municipal business. When providing general information to an inquiry or comment made on a corporate social media account, staff will include a link to the appropriate page on the Township website in your response. Should additional information be required from the commenter the response will be as follows:

“Hello (name). Thank you for your message. Please contact the (department) at 705-432-2355 or by email at (department general email) for more information/to have this issue addressed.”

6. Policy Non-Compliance Review Process

- 6.1.** Should concerns arise due to the parameters of the policy not being met, the supervisor for the department in question shall be responsible in determining the status of the correspondence and any reason for delays in response times.

7. Related Documentation

7.1. Customer Service Feedback Forms

- [Municipal By-law Complaint Form](#)
 - Dog Bites
 - Property Standards
 - By-law Infractions
 - Etc.
- [Report a Problem](#) (Public Works Department)

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- Sidewalk
- Streetlight
- Winter Maintenance
- Potholes
- Etc.
- [Submit a Public Complaint](#)
- [Accessible Customer Service Feedback Form](#)

8. Related Policies and Procedures

- Township of Brock Accessible Customer Service Policy
- Codes of Conduct
- Social Media Policy
- Multi-Year Accessibility Plan
- Public Complaint Forms (as listed in section 7)
- Email Policy
- Corporate Strategic Plan and Goals
- Workplace Harassment and Violence Policy
- Telecommuting Policy
- Disconnecting from Work Policy