

POLICY MANUAL	Policy 2-12
For Municipality of South Dundas	Effective Date: May 7, 2019 Revised: October 11, 2023
Subject: Customer Service Standards Policy	Department: All Departments

1. STATEMENT

The Municipality of South Dundas is a government body that provides service to the people living within its jurisdiction. The Staff of the Municipality of South Dundas strive to provide customer service excellence to all people living within the Municipality, community partners and any other party with which they have interaction.

2. PURPOSE

The Municipality of South Dundas recognizes its responsibility and the importance of providing adequate customer service to all residents and customers. Customers include staff, business owners, visitors, tourists, investors, and other stakeholders.

The purpose of this policy is to recognize all the methods and protocols pertaining to the delivery of top-quality customer service in all aspects of the workplace. The following policy will establish standards for the handling of customer service at all levels and municipal locations within the Municipality of South Dundas.

The standards outlined in this document reflects “Exceptional Service and Governance” and the Municipality’s commitment to:

- a) Provide exceptional customer service
- b) Enhance communications with customers and staff
- c) Provide service excellence at all levels within the Municipality
- d) Focus on the key drivers of customer satisfaction to:
 - Respond and acknowledge receipt of customer contact within a reasonable time frame
 - Provide accurate information and/or the avenue for the customer to receive the correct information.
 - Provide fair and consistent treatment
 - Be polite and respectful
 - Provide a response and ensure completeness of service or request
- e) Align with the Municipalities values:
 - Service Excellence
 - Teamwork
 - Accountability and Transparency
 - Respect
 - Integrity

These processes set minimum standards to communicate with customers efficiently and respectfully.

3. CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION

The Customer Service Standards Policy provides a standard for quality delivery of services through the following customer communication channels:

- In Person
- Telephone/Voicemail
- Email/Correspondence
- Social Media

4. IN PERSON COMMUNICATION

South Dundas Staff strive to provide exceptional customer service to all customers and residents. To do so, staff will undertake the following:

- Staff will greet customers in a warm and professional manner.
- Service will be prompt and customers will be served in the order of which they arrive.
- Every customer will be treated with courtesy and respect.
- When tending to a customer, staff will provide enough correct information where possible. If the staff member is unable to provide sufficient and correct information, staff will direct the customer to an appropriate staff member that can assist.
- Should staff be required to tend to telephone and counter enquiries simultaneously, counter enquires will take priority with telephone enquiries tended to as soon as possible afterward. Callers have the option to leave voice messages, which will be returned promptly after the customer at the counter has departed.
- At times, staff may be required to step away momentarily, at which point the public service area will be monitored by another designated staff member.
- We ask that customers who require a consultation with specific staff members or departments book an appointment in advance to ensure staff are available and equipped to serve the needs of the customer.

5. TELEPHONE/VOICEMAIL

Telephone greetings and voicemails often represent the first impression that callers will have of the organization. Knowing this, the following sections provide standards for telephone and voicemail customer service. Corporate cell phone users will follow the same general telephone standards for internal corporate telephones as established in the policy.

i. Telephone Response Time

- a) Customer calls will be returned as soon as possible when they are received and telephone calls should be returned within two (2) business days.
- b) Depending on the nature of the call, staff's response within two (2) business days may not always provide a complete resolution and staff will acknowledgement that the message has been received.

- c) Staff will also provide an indication of any action that will be taken to resolve the issue/enquiry.
- d) If a call is received outside the standard administration (business) hours, customers will be notified of the regular hours of operation. Customers will be prompted to leave a voicemail if they wish, and the message will be tended to by staff during standard business hours.

ii. Transferring A Call

- a) Before transferring a call to another staff member/department, provide the caller with the name of the staff member.
- b) Phone calls directed to staff member who are out-of-office will be told the length of their absence. When staff members are going to be absent for longer than two (2) consecutive business days, their voice message should reflect their time away. This standard shall not apply to unexpected absences such as the staff member being absent due to an unexpected illness.

iii. Placing a Customer on Hold

- a) If you need to place a customer on hold, ask permission. If they are not able to wait provide an alternate solution on how you will contact them. After placing the customer on hold, check back periodically. Thank them for holding.
- b) Should an employee need to place a caller on hold for longer than two (2) minutes, it is suggested that the employee call the customer back when appropriate.

iv. Voicemail Structure

Typical Voicemail Greeting Script

"You have reached the office of (name), (position). I am currently unavailable, but please leave your name, contact information and reason for your call, and I will return your message. Thank you."

Out-of-Office Voice Mail Greeting Script

"You have reached the office of (name), (position). I will be out of the office from (date) to (date) and will be unavailable during this time. Please leave your name, contact information and reason for your call, and I will respond to your message upon my return. For immediate assistance, please dial zero "0" and our receptionist will assist you. Thank you."

6. EMAIL/CORRESPONDENCE

Written communication can include but is not limited to emails, letters, Memos, faxes, etc.

i. General Correspondence Guidelines:

- All correspondence should be written and formatted in accordance with accessibility standards and regulations to ensure accessible content for users.
- Utilize the spell check tool whenever necessary for all corporate documents.

- If you are unable to provide a complete resolution to the issue, respond to the customer and outline the next steps.
- If you have received a written/verbal request in error, re-direct the request to the appropriate employee/department as soon as possible for resolution.
- All correspondence should include staff contact information for the customer to contact you directly.

ii. Email Correspondence

Only email accounts assigned to staff by the Municipality shall be used to conduct and respond to Municipal business. Customers can expect to receive an initial response to an email inquiry within two (2) business days. This refers to both internal and external communication. If a staff member is absent for two (2) consecutive days, the customer will be provided with contact information for an alternate staff member who can assist.

iii. Email Signature

A standard email signature is required by all Municipal staff and should resemble the following:

Crystal LeBrun
Clerk

Municipality of South Dundas
Phone: 613-543-2673 ext. 4766
34 Ottawa St. P.O. Box 740 Morrisburg ON K0C1X0
Web: www.southdundas.com
Email: clebrun@southdundas.com



iv. LETTERS

Customers will receive a response to a general inquiry with five (5) business days unless Council action is required.

v. SOCIAL MEDIA

Staff who have the authority to access the Municipality of South Dundas social media accounts are responsible for adhering to appropriate technology use as set out in the Communications Policy 3-15, as amended from time to time. Content posted on Municipality of South Dundas social media pages should be professional, straightforward, appropriate and relate to South Dundas. South Dundas social media accounts are made to promote the communities and inform residents of municipal services, events and activities. Post not directly related to South Dundas should be approved by the relevant Department Head prior to being posted.

7. REQUESTS TO SPEAK WITH COUNCIL MEMBERS

If a customer indicates that they would like to speak with the Mayor or Council regarding an issue:

- Staff will ask if they are able to provide assistance. It may be an issue that staff can assist with that can be logged into the complaint system.
- If it is a matter that cannot be resolved by staff, or the customer wishes to speak with the Mayor/Councillor directly, staff will provide them with Mayor/Councillor's contact information it appears on the website.

8. UNREASONABLE CUSTOMER BEHAVIOUR

The Municipality of South Dundas endeavors to provide exemplary service to all members of the public and aims to address customer service requests equitably, comprehensively, and in a timely manner.

Vexatious, frivolous, and/or unreasonably persistent requests may compromise the Municipality's ability to deliver good customer service in an equitable, efficient and effective manner.

Staff are not required to accept any form of obscene or threatening interactions. Such interactions should be terminated and reported to the Staff's immediate Supervisor.

Staff are to utilize the "panic button" located underneath the reception desk, to directly call the police should a threat be uttered, or any violence be shown.

9. COMPLAINTS

The Municipality of South Dundas is committed to a consistent and uniform process to respond to complaints received from members of the public regarding programs, facilities, municipal services, municipal staff, and procedures. These are issues that cannot be resolved at the first point of contact. All complaints are managed in accordance with Customer Feedback, Complaints, Inquires and Requests Policy No. 3-17.

Examples of complaints are:

- Bylaw Infraction
- Downed Sign, Light or Tree
- Municipal service issue
- Parking Complaint
- Pothole
- Road/Sidewalk problem
- Snow clearing

The Municipality recognizes the importance of public feedback and welcomes constructive complaints as a valuable form of feedback regarding our services,

operations, and facilities. The information gained from complaints helps improve the quality of the services provided by the municipality and the client experience of residents.

As per Policy No. 3-17 all public comments are encouraged to be submitted to the Municipality in writing and will be entered into the official Municipal complaint system.

Please visit our website southdundas.com for the complaint form, or submit directly to the Municipality in person, by telephone at 613-543-2673 or mail@southdundas.com.

10. COMPLIMENTS/FEEDBACK

The Municipality recognizes the value of public input and seeks feedback and compliments to ensure continuous improvement. Compliments/feedback can be sent to the Municipality by:

- c) Email mail@southdundas.com
- d) In-person
- e) By phone