

Building Department – Customer Service Policy

Approved By: Council
Approval Date: TBD
Effective Date: TBD
Revision Date:

Policy Statement

To outline the responsibilities of the customer and expectations of staff to provide for effective, efficient and accessible customer service.

Staff will provide the best customer service possible and are empowered to make decisions to ensure that each customer experience is meaningful, fair and respectful.

Equally, our customers are responsible for behaving in a respectful manner to promote an environment that can be shared by all. The success of the Building Department depends on our ability to work and perform functions in the most effective and efficient ways, balancing the needs of the individual with the overall needs of the community as a whole.

Preamble

Summary from Ontario Building Officials Association 'A Guide For New Chief Building Officials And Municipal Councils':

In providing a public service, building officials are expected to interact in a professional and courteous manner and to be helpful and willing to educate at all times.

However, this can be interpreted as contrary to the objectives of the building official when enforcing construction regulations that protect the health and safety of the public. The public and elected officials must concede that customer service does not imply that the building official must be accommodating to the wishes of the applicant or builder and simply give them what they want.

A building official must be respectful to the people they are dealing with, not only when compliance is being gained voluntarily, but also when dealing with difficult enforcement situations. Good customer service does not cost anything.

It is an important distinction that the foremost responsibility of the Building Official, which inherently extends to all Building Department staff, is noted in Policy P4 to

'Always act in the public interest, particularly with regard to the safety of building works and structures.

Recognizing that work volume can influence customer service levels by virtue of reduced response capacity and longer response times, this Policy and associated Procedure is written and implemented on the basis that Municipal operations are occurring normally and not otherwise impacted by emergency situations or staff absences.

Purpose

To ensure all communications focus on, and adhere to, the Building Department's commitment to customer service through: accountability, dedication, honesty, respect, and teamwork. This Policy and the associated Procedure will establish the Building Department's customer service standard ensures a consistent, standard practice that reflects the Building Department's commitment to customer service excellence.

This Policy and corresponding Customer Service Procedure – P9A will outline the requirements and expectations of staff to review, research and respond to the large variety of inquiries received by the Building Department.

The Building Department recognizes that work volume can influence customer service levels by virtue of reduced response capacity and longer response times. Further, the Building Department is required to meet legislative obligatory timelines. Building Officials are frequently out of the office, as the position requires, is reflected in the response times of inquiries and responses. Targeted response times will be discussed in the procedure.

Application: This policy applies to all Building Department staff, or any other individual undertaking any portion of those duties.

Exclusions: None

References & Related Policies:

Code of Conduct — Chief Building Official P4

Code of Conduct Policy A14

Complaint Handling Policy A23

Customer Service Procedure – Building Department P9A

Ontario Building Officials Association – 'A Guide for New Chief Building Officials and Municipal Councils', ([CBO Guide - OBOA - Ontario Building Officials Association](#))

Review Cycle: This policy shall be reviewed on an as needed basis.