



Citizens **Information** Board  
*information · advice · advocacy*

# Customer Service Action Plan

Adopted by CIB 2018

Most recent refresh November 2023

The Citizens Information Board (CIB) provides independent information, advice and advocacy on public and social services through [citizensinformation.ie](https://citizensinformation.ie), the Citizens Information Phone Service (0818 07 4000) and the network of Citizens Information Services. We are responsible for the Money Advice and Budgeting Service (MABS) and provide the National Advocacy Service (NAS) for people with disabilities. The Citizens Information Board's commitment is that people will receive independent, reliable information, advice and advocacy wherever they are located in Ireland and in a way that suits their needs.

CIB's Customer Service Charter sets out the principles that underpin our service and our Customer Service Action Plan describes how we will apply these principles.

We will regularly consult with customers, delivery partners and other stakeholders to measure how we are meeting the commitments in our Customer Service Action plan.

The eleven commitments in our Customer Service Charter are linked with Key Action Points to achieve each commitment.

## Principle 1: Clear, comprehensive and accurate information

We will provide clear, detailed information about public and social services to help you identify your needs and access your entitlements.

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### Key Action Points

1. Provide up-to-date, accurate and comprehensive information, using simple and clear language that meets our customers' needs.
2. Provide money advice and budgeting services to people with problem debt through the Money Advice and Budgeting Service (MABS).
3. Implement internal systems to ensure that all published information is checked for accuracy on a regular basis.
4. Ensure that written information meets agreed standards.
5. Ensure that [citizensinformation.ie](https://www.citizensinformation.ie) and all other websites continue to conform to the highest standards of user friendliness and accessibility.
6. Ensure that all our websites are regularly updated and all publications are available online.
7. Ensure that the potential offered by Information and Communications Technology (ICT) is fully utilised across all our services.

## Principle 2: Prompt, courteous and efficient responses

We will be responsive to your needs and we will deliver our services sensitively and efficiently.

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### Key Action Points:

8. Ensure that customers are aware of Citizens Information Board opening hours. Offices are open between 9:00am and 5:30pm (including lunchtime in head office). All offices close at 5.00pm on Fridays.
9. Respond to all enquires and complaints within five working days.
10. Ensure that when staff are away from the office, reception is informed and systems are set up to ensure that correspondence is answered.
11. Ensure that standard staff e-mail and voicemail messages are put in place.
12. Provide customers with a contact name and details in all dealings in person, by telephone, post, fax or e-mail.
13. Ensure that correspondence is accurate and in a format that is appropriate to the customer (i.e. by e-mail, post, telephone call etc).
14. Keep customers informed of progress if any delay occurs when dealing with a query.
15. In circumstances where staff cannot help a customer with a query, the customer will be informed and referred to an appropriate organisation.

## Principle 3: Equality and diversity

We will respect diversity and ensure your right to equal treatment.

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### Key Action Points:

16. Ensure the right to equal treatment for all customers, established by equality legislation, and accommodate diversity.
17. Ensure that the ways we communicate with our customers meet the needs of our diverse customer base.
18. Carry out research to identify where vulnerable groups have problems in accessing information and services and seek to remove these obstacles wherever possible.
19. Improve access to services by those experiencing social exclusion due to poverty or social isolation.
20. Actively promote staff awareness of equality and diversity issues by:
  - Including training on equality and diversity during induction of new staff
  - Providing ongoing training on equality and diversity to staff

## Principle 4: Choice

We will plan and deliver our services so you can access them in the way that suits you.

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### Key Action Points:

21. Ensure that our Customer Service Charter and Customer Service Action Plan are produced in relevant formats so they can be accessed by all our customers.
22. Support the delivery of high quality information, advice and advocacy services to the public, through three service provision channels: citizensinformation.ie, Citizens Information Phone Service (CIPS) and the network of forty-two Citizens Information Services.
23. Support the provision of advice on personal debt and money management through the Money Advice and Budgeting Service (MABS).
24. Provide clear procedures for referral between MABS and Citizens Information Services and vice versa.
25. Develop the Citizens Information Board website to provide additional electronic services.
26. Develop Information and Communications Technology to improve the delivery of services.
27. Ensure that key information on rights and entitlements is available in English, Irish and in other languages, to meet the needs of migrant workers.
28. Disseminate documentation and publications in various formats.
29. Ensure that key information is available in accessible formats.

## Principle 5: Access

We will ensure that all our services and offices are fully accessible.  
Contact our Access officer at [accessofficer@ciboard.ie](mailto:accessofficer@ciboard.ie).

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### Key Action Points:

30. Provide clean, safe and fully accessible public offices that ensure privacy and comply with occupational and safety standards.
31. Ensure that we regularly review and update our safety statement.
32. Ensure that there are appropriate evacuation procedures for people with special needs and relevant training is provided in their operation.
33. Ensure that our premises meet accessibility standards.
34. Ensure that the required number of staff are trained in Health & Safety, according to Health & Safety standards.
35. Ensure that we meet our obligations under the Disability Act 2005, Part 5, and section 16 of the Equality Act, i.e. to take all reasonable measures to support and promote the employment of people with specific needs, as far as practicable.
36. Ensure that we check all venues used to host external events to ensure their compliance with accessibility standards.
37. Ensure that we review the accessibility of our services and facilities and implement improvements when necessary or available.
38. Ensure that work stations are adjusted according to best practice and are safe for use by members of staff (for example: provision of specialist telephone headsets, customised office furniture, PC screen magnification).
39. Promote and support a variety of delivery channels to ensure quality accessible services to all, e.g. phone service, web, mobile units, printed materials.
40. Ensure that staff are aware of the role of the Access Officer and the current holder of that position.

## Principle 6: Official languages

We will provide our services through Irish and/or bilingually where required.

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### Key Action Points:

41. Adhere to and fulfil our obligations under Section 11 of the Official Languages Act 2003 to ensure better availability and a higher standard of public service through Irish.
42. Implement the [Irish Language Scheme 2008-2011](#) within the organisation.
43. Ensure that signage and stationery in all our offices is displayed in both Irish and English, on a replacement basis.
44. Reply in Irish to correspondence received in Irish.
45. Provide [citizensinformation.ie](http://citizensinformation.ie) through both English and Irish.



## Principle 7: Consultation and evaluation

We will consult with a sample group of customers to establish their needs when developing, delivering and evaluating our services.

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### Key Action Points:

46. Provide a structured approach to meaningful consultation with, and participation by a wide range of customers in relation to the development, delivery and evaluation of our services.
47. Consult with our customers regularly using various techniques/approaches (for example: customer satisfaction surveys, customer panels, focus groups) in addition to our comments and complaints procedures and other feedback mechanisms.
48. Actively seek feedback from our customers to better understand their needs.
49. Act on feedback received when services are being reviewed.
50. Continuously review and evaluate our efficiency and effectiveness to ensure that the highest standards are maintained
51. Evaluate service performance against the actions set out in our Customer Service Action Plan and report on this progress in our Annual Report.
52. Establish an outcome-focused quality assurance system to assure our customers of the quality of our services.

## Principle 8: Internal customers

We will support our staff to ensure that they can provide an excellent service to our customers.

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### Key Action Points:

53. Ensure that all staff are aware of the functions and responsibility of other services in the organisation and kept up to date with all new developments.
54. Ensure that staff are trained to the highest standard in the operation of new and existing internal systems (for example, Sharepoint, records management system, Oyster, staff induction for new staff, internal and external customer care).
55. Include the internal customer in the development, delivery and review of internal and external services.
56. Ensure that the Performance Management and Development system (PMDS) process is engaging and meaningful to staff and the organisation, and all staff are trained appropriately.
57. Provide for and actively encourage continuing professional development and training for staff.
58. Provide and maintain a supportive working environment for our staff that encourages and supports the right to dignity at work.
59. Develop and encourage open communication amongst staff at all levels to promote a healthy and equal working environment in an organisation that values the contribution of each individual.
60. Recognise and acknowledge the personal needs of staff and provide support in an appropriate, fair and sensitive manner.
61. Use the Partnership process to ensure consultation with staff and comply with the principles of partnership working as set out under the relevant Partnership Agreement.

## Principle 9: Co-ordination

We will work closely with other organisations to deliver citizen-focused public services.

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### Key Action Points:

62. Integrate information from different sources to meet customer needs.
63. Work with voluntary and community organisations and statutory bodies to deliver and provide our services in the most efficient way avoiding any unnecessary duplication.
64. Actively participate in the implementation and further development of the Public Service Modernisation Programme and the Haddington Road Agreement and successors.
65. Work with key Government departments to influence policy and practice.
66. Ensure representation on relevant fora in pursuing common business objectives with other public and civil bodies/departments and other agencies.
67. Participate in the Quality Customer Service Network to ensure that our approach to customer service is consistent with best practice.
68. Promote opportunities to enhance and develop partnership arrangements with government departments, relevant agencies and the voluntary/community sector.
69. Improve the citizen's experience of services and outcomes, through developing, changing and integrating services in line with best practice.

## Principle 10: Appeals

We will maintain an accessible and transparent appeal and review system.

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### Key Action Points:

70. Develop and maintain a well-publicised, accessible, transparent and simple-to-use system of dealing with appeals
71. Ensure minimum delay when dealing with appeals/reviews for customers who are dissatisfied with decisions in relation to services
72. Monitor the number of appeals/reviews received.

## Principle 11: Comments and complaints

We want to provide the best service possible to you and welcome all comments on our services.

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### Key Action Points:

73. Maintain an accessible, transparent and simple-to-use system of dealing with comments and complaints.
74. Ensure that customers are aware of how to make complaints under our three complaints procedures
  - Customer complaints procedure regarding Citizens Information Board Staff
  - Customer complaints procedure relating to CIB-funded organisations
  - Complaints under the Disability Act
75. Deal with comments and complaints promptly, fairly and impartially.
76. Provide an opportunity for customers to give comments and complaints at all points of service delivery.
77. Review customer feedback from the operation of the customer comments and complaints email and keep it under review.
78. The Customer Service Officer will continue to:
  - Co-ordinate communication and responses to customers who have made comments and complaints
  - Refer comments and complaints to the appropriate level of management
  - Maintain records of comments and complaints received

### To contact the CIB Customer Service Officer:

Email            reception@ciboard.ie

Write            Customer Service  
Citizens Information Board  
Georges Quay House  
43 Townsend Street  
Dublin 2

Telephone      01 6059000