



# The Charity Commission's Service First Standards

## Contents

<b>A Standard for Correspondence</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>A Standard for Visitors</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>A Standard for Telephone Calls</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>An Information Standard</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Our Service Availability Standard</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Complaints</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Treatment of our staff</b>	<b>3</b>

## A Standard for Correspondence

- If you write to us we will endeavour to give you a full and clear response within fifteen working days from receipt of your letter. We will ensure that our response is both accurate and appropriate. This service standard applies to all forms of correspondence including e-mails and faxes.
- If we cannot give you a full response within fifteen days, we will contact you and let you know the reasons why this is not possible and indicate when we expect to be in a position to give you a full response. We will also let you have the name and contact number of the person dealing with your query.
- If you contact us centrally by e-mail we will initially acknowledge receipt of your enquiry. Whilst we recognise that e-mail offers great advantages in terms of speed, many of the queries we receive can be complex requiring careful consideration and advice from a number of sources within the Charity Commission. Your message will therefore be referred to the appropriate unit for handling and we will respond fully within the published service standard for other correspondence.
- We will monitor our performance against this service standard and publish the results.

## A Standard for Visitors

- Our operational activities vary at each of our offices and, for this reason, all visits to our offices are by appointment only. If we have arranged a meeting with you at one of our offices, you will be seen within ten minutes of your scheduled appointment time.
- We will monitor our performance against this standard and publish the results.

## A Standard for Telephone Calls

- If you ring us we will answer your call promptly, courteously and helpfully. If the person you wish to speak to is not available, we will take a message and arrange for your call to be returned by them or some other suitable person.
- We will assess our performance against this standard and ensure that action is taken to improve standards where this is found to be necessary.
- We are committed to the development of a more detailed standard for our helplines and will incorporate this into our Service First commitment in due course.

## An Information Standard

- We will provide clear and straightforward information about our services to our customers. This will be available on request including through our helplines, guidance leaflets and on our website where you will also find our central e-mail addresses.
- We will supply this information in a wide variety of languages and formats to ensure that we accommodate the needs of our non-English speaking customers and those with special needs.

## Our Service Availability Standard

- We will endeavour to make our services widely available to all of our customers including people with special needs such as those with disabilities, elderly people, parents with young children and those who are not fluent in English.
- In delivering our services and thinking about how to refine them we will consult with customers and potential customers and let you know the outcome of this research by publishing our findings. We have appointed a Consumer Champion who will be the voice of our customers.
- In consulting with customers we will use a broad range of communication media and formats to ensure that anybody who wants to be involved is not prevented from doing so.

## Complaints

If we fail to meet our published service standards or if you are in any other way unhappy about the standard of service you have received from us, we will put you in touch with one of our Customer Service Managers who will tell you how you can make an official complaint or send you [information about the procedure](#) on request.

## Treatment of our staff

The Commission regards the safety and welfare of its staff as being of paramount importance and considers any abuse, assault or harassment – whether oral, written or physical, threatened or actual – against any of its staff, whilst acting in the course of their work, as totally unacceptable.

All incidents of abuse, assault or harassment are reported to the Commission's management and are fully investigated. Where appropriate, we will report incidents to the police and also consider legal action.