

MINISTRY OF FINANCE, NATIONAL PLANNING AND TRADE
CUSTOMER FEEDBACK MANAGEMENT POLICY



Importance of a Customer Feedback Management Policy

A Public Feedback Management Policy, is to act as a public barometer on our delivery of service at the Ministry. Establishing such a structure will enable the Ministry to measure its performance, identify trends and issues in order to improve its services. By having such a mechanism in place, the Ministry will be in a better position to analyse its performance.

The mission is towards the improvement of service delivery performance, and increase interactions with members of the public, not only by the Ministry in general, but at all organizational levels.

This policy sets out the structure and standards to handle customer feedbacks.

The successful implementation of the policy, centers on the cooperation and participation of all staff in the process.

The Ministry does NOT want a feedback, in this case a ‘complaint’ to be escalated to other authorities, because of a lack of cooperation from staff, thus, jeopardising its reputation and credibility.

1. Key principles of Customer Feedback Management

- Public focus
- Accessibility and transparency
- Responsiveness
- Fairness and objectivity
- Empathy
- Listen and understand
- Follow ups and feedback
- Improvement and Prevention
- Staff training and support

2. What is a public/customer feedback?

A feedback from a member of the public/client can either be positive or negative. A positive feedback is a boost, while a negative feedback is a disappointment.

A negative feedback or a ‘complaint’ is described as an expression of dissatisfaction about a service received or an action taken by the Ministry, or its staff. Normally, the feedback will be lodged/filed by the person who is directly affected.

Members of the public contact the Ministry for many reasons. Some, do have actual grievances/complaints, while others do not. Staff must be trained to identify what is and what is not a complaint (triage mechanism).

2.1 Feedback can be about:

- Service provided by a staff to a member of the public
- A decision taken by the Ministry or failure to make such a decision
- An act, or failure to act by the Ministry
- Preparation of a proposal/intention by the Ministry
- The drafting of, or failure to draft a new law/policy
- The approval of, or failure to approve a new law/policy
- Expressing concern about a matter
- Suggestion on how to improve the service
- Reporting an incident by providing information

2.2 What is NOT a complaint

- Request for information as per the Public Access to Information Act
- The customer is not directly affected by a decision/action of the Ministry

3. Channel available to lodge/file a feedback

A form will be devised to enable a customer to file/lodge his/her feedback. For ease of accessibility, the form will be available online on the Ministry’s website.

A specific email address will be set up to allow customers/clients to lodge/file their feedback off site.

All feedback shall be filed/lodged via the Customer Feedback Form online. The form is to enable traceability, accountability, and transparency.

All entities under the purview of the Ministry, will be provided with a link to upload on their website (homepage) to enable easy access, which will connect users directly to the Ministry’s website for filing of their feedback.

4. Who is to handle feedbacks?

The Communications Unit will handle all feedback forms and carry out a triage exercise and forward to respective divisions/departments/entities for action.

It will be the responsibility of the Communications Unit to ensure follow ups once the forms have been dispatched for action.

The staff shall be accessible to members of the public, via a direct phone line and email.

The staff will provide support to customers to fill in the appropriate form, and explain the process as well.

5. Response Time

The time it takes to give a response or feedback to the customer will depend heavily on the complexity of the feedback lodged/filed.

However, a delay of 48 hrs is set to acknowledge receipt of feedback form.

The target is to resolve a matter as quickly as possible.

5.1 Categorising the feedback for response time

- A simple customer feedback – some can be resolved at point of receipt- maximum 5 working days
- Feedback requiring some inquiry – 10 working days maximum
- Feedback requiring further investigation and referral – 30 days
- Feedback requiring internal review – no specific time frame, as it will depend on the complexity of the matter

Staff handling and dealing with the feedback to provide a resolution, if any, should respect the time frame stipulated as much as possible.

IMPORTANT: If the time frame is not to be respected, a response to the customer is nevertheless appropriate as a form of courtesy. Where applicable, providing feedback at each stage of the process is vital.

5.2 Feedback requiring an immediate public response

In some circumstances, a negative feedback, might require an immediate public response to mitigate the damage, and serve as an assurance to the public. The Communications Unit will liaise with the relevant person to work and issue press releases and organize interviews, as and when is necessary.

6. Customer responsibilities

While it is the right of a member of the public to file/lodge a feedback, this right comes with responsibilities. Please be advised of the followings:

- Abusive, aggressive or disrespectful conduct/language will not be tolerated.
- The customer must be cooperative and courteous at all times.
- The customer must provide a clear idea of the problem.

- The customer must be clear on his/her desired solution.
- All appropriate/relevant information must be provided when the feedback is filed.
- The customer must ensure that all information provided is accurate and factual.
- The customer must show patience while the feedback is being handled.
- The customer must provide some basic personal information: name and contact
- The customer must understand that some decisions/outcome cannot be overturned/changed
- The Ministry will **NOT** entertain any customer who is abusive, aggressive or disrespectful.

7. Monitoring/Review System

A monitoring system must be in place, to keep track of all feedback received and lodged. A database register should be set up for recording all feedback received.

Once registering is over, and acknowledgement of receipt of form is issued, a triage is carried out, between those that can be resolved straight away, and those that need further attention from specific divisions/departments.

A review of the feedback shall be made and a resolution presented, if any, as much as possible within the time frame determined.

The resolution is then sent to the customer, after which, the case is closed.

8. Reporting Mechanism

A report is to be compiled every month, to be presented with the Management of MoFNPT, as well as all heads of entities falling under the purview of the Ministry.

9. Creation of a Communications Unit

In the current structure of the Ministry, a set up to handle feedback from members of the public does not exist. The proposal is that the Public Relations Office is turned into a 'Communications Unit', and will have the overall mandate to deal with all external enquiries or requests for information, from members of the public, other authorities and the media.

The office will serve as a one stop shop, and act as a channel between the Ministry and agencies under its purview, and the public. All public requests/interactions will be coordinated by the office.

In that regards, the Communications Unit will be mandated to:

- Devise an overall communications plan for the Ministry
- Handle and deal with all feedbacks from members of the public
- Accept all suggestions/compliments from members of the public

- Handle all requests for information under the Access to Information Act, 2018
- Handle media request for information
- Organise media interviews/press conferences
- Develop and issue press releases
- Organise publicity campaign
- Organise outreach programmes on behalf of the Ministry
- Manage the Ministry's image, keeping it favourable at all times
- Design/compile and issue a quarterly internal newsletter
- Ensuring the message/role of the Ministry is visible at all times, by managing the different modes of communications (television/radio/newsletter/social media/website)

A Communications Unit, directing the flow of information to and from the public, and other partners, which interacts with the public with respect and in a courteous manner, will ensure the credibility/reputation of the Ministry and the trust of the public and its partners.

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