



Customer Service Statement

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What you can expect from us

We are committed to providing a high standard of service at all times.

This leaflet sets out the standards of service you can expect. If we don't meet our standards, then you can expect a full explanation from us.

We realise that sometimes people only contact us when they want to complain, but we'd also like to hear from you if we've done something particularly well or if you have suggestions about how we can improve our services. Your feedback helps us to put things right if they've gone wrong and to improve the standard of our services.

General standards

We will:

- explain our services clearly and straightforwardly in a variety of formats
- answer your questions, telephone calls, letters, faxes and emails quickly and clearly
- treat you respectfully, considerately, professionally and fairly
- listen to comments about our services and make every effort to make sure that they are suited to their purposes both now and in the future
- do all that we can to make our services available to people from all parts of the communities we serve

Visiting us

If you have an appointment and are unfamiliar with our location, we will give you a location map and directions. We will also give all visitors to our offices a contact name and telephone number. If you require special access, we will make the necessary arrangements.

When you arrive at our office we will meet you and take you from reception to your meeting within five minutes of the time of your appointment, or explain if there has been an unavoidable delay. In the event of an emergency, the person you are meeting will be responsible for ensuring your safe evacuation from the building.

If you don't have an appointment our reception staff will contact the appropriate team to help you.

If you need privacy we'll arrange suitable quiet accommodation.

If we have to cancel a meeting we'll do our very best to give you at least 24 hours notice unless there are exceptional circumstances which prevent this.

Answering your letters

We will:

- answer your letter, fax or email within 5 working days of receiving it
- include in our reply: the name, email address, direct line telephone and fax number of the person replying to your letter, and our full address
- reply to your letter clearly, concisely and courteously and in plain English, avoiding jargon, abbreviations and acronyms wherever we can
- If we think it will take more than 5 working days to reply to your letter, we will let you know we have received it and tell you how long it will take to provide a full reply

Answering your telephone calls

Our switchboard is open from 0800 to 1700 Monday to Friday (except during public holidays). Our number is 0191 428 3300.

Outside of these hours, you will be able to leave a recorded message. All answer-phone messages left after 1700 will be dealt with as soon as possible the following working day.

If we cannot deal with your enquiry we will do our best to provide you with a contact number for the organisation we consider most likely to be able to help you.

We will always aim to:

- answer our telephones promptly
- tell you the name of the person to whom you are speaking
- transfer your call internally if we consider someone else is better able to help. We will always give you the person's name and extension number in case you are cut off and need to call back
- tell you when the appropriate member of staff can be contacted if they are not available. Alternatively, we will leave them a message to contact you by a given time
- treat you respectfully, considerately and fairly

What we expect from you

We expect that you'll be on time for appointments we arrange with you, or let us know if you are delayed or unable to attend.

We expect that you will treat us with respect. While recognising the importance of good customer service, we also recognise that there will be occasions when customer behaviour is unacceptable. We will not tolerate harassment, threats or assaults. If you call or visit us and behave in a threatening or abusive way, or use threatening or abusive language, we may terminate the telephone call or ask you to leave the office. If you write to us using threatening or abusive language we may not reply to your letter.

TEDCO has a duty of care to protect staff from abuse from members of the public. Where appropriate, TEDCO will take legal action to protect staff from persistent harassment, threats of violence or violence.

Complaints about the service we provide

We take all complaints about the quality of our services seriously. We will provide a speedy response and a full and fair investigation of your complaint, respecting your right to confidentiality.

We have a three stage complaint process to ensure that if you are unhappy with the response we give you in Stage 1, you can ask more senior staff to consider the issue again in Stages 2 and 3.

Stage 1: You should first take up your complaint directly and informally with the person with whom you have been in contact. You can express your dissatisfaction in person or by letter, fax, e-mail or telephone. We will ask you if you want a formal response. If you do, you can expect a written or e-mail reply from us within five working days.

Stage 2: If you are not satisfied with the response you should then write to your first contact's manager setting out your complaint clearly and in detail. We will acknowledge your letter as soon as possible setting out how we will deal with your complaint. We make every effort to deal fully with all complaints within 20 working days.

Stage 3: If you are still not satisfied with our explanation you can write to the Chief Executive. You will receive a full response within a further 10 working days.

Helping us to improve our service

We aim to improve our service by:

- clearly stating the services we offer
- listening to your views and ideas about them, the ways in which we provide them and other services we may deliver
- taking full account of your comments and complaints
- undertaking customer surveys to understand relevant wants and needs better and to understand users views of current services
- monitoring our performance
- reviewing and evaluating our performance annually and publishing the results
- implementing a continuing programme of staff training and development

Any comments and suggestions you have which might help us to improve our service can be sent either directly to the person with whom you have been dealing or to enquire@tedco.org

Contacting us

TEDCO

TEDCO Business Centre

Viking Industrial Park

Jarrow

NE32 3DT

Tel: 0191 428 3300

Fax: 0191 428 3388

e-mail: enquire@tedco.org (if you know the name of the member of staff, individual e-mail addresses take the form

forenameinitialsurname@tedco.org e.g. jsmith@tedco.org)

web: www.tedco.org

Access to Information

TEDCO holds information about clients to provide better services to clients and to meet its contractual obligations. The Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA) enables you to access this information about you held by TEDCO. DPA requests have a £10 charge each. A valid request will be answered within 40 calendar days of its receipt.