



WARRNAMBOOL
CITY COUNCIL

Customer Service Charter

2023 - 2027



www.warrnambool.vic.gov.au

Connect to Council

Acknowledgement of Country

Warrnambool City Council acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land on which the municipality is situated and pays respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.



The Council vision

Warrnambool is a thriving city at the heart of coast and country.

Purpose

Council is committed to providing high quality customer services that are accessible, responsive and inclusive.

Council strives for the fairest and best possible outcomes in customer interactions. Understanding our customers and providing excellent customer service is essential in helping us meet the needs of our community.

Our organisational values

Our customer service is guided by our values.

Respect: we will treat everyone with dignity, fairness and empathy, providing others with the opportunity to share views and to be heard.

Accountability: we will be responsible and take ownership of our actions by being ethical, honest and transparent.

Collaboration: we will foster effective relationships through engagement, communication and co-operation, supporting decisions and outcomes for the benefit of all.

Progressiveness: we will evolve and grow by encouraging development, change and continuous improvement in all that we do.

Wellbeing: we will commit to providing a safe and healthy workplace that promotes staff engagement, performance and achievement, allowing employees to flourish for the benefit of themselves and the organisation.

Our commitment to you

We commit to:

- act with integrity;
- respond in a timely fashion to inquiries;
- accept accountability for results;
- act on a basis of mutual respect; and
- aim for excellence.



What you can expect?



When you call us

When you call us we will answer your call promptly and identify ourselves by name. If the person answering the phone is unable to help you, you will be referred to the most appropriate staff member or agency should the matter fall outside of Council's service areas.

Please note however, there are times when the person or department you need to speak to may not be available, in these cases your enquiry will be recorded for the appropriate officer to respond to.

When referring your call internally or externally, the staff member will explain the situation to the person receiving your call, so you do not have to repeat yourself.



When you visit us

We will attend to you in a timely manner, and not leave you waiting unnecessarily. If we are unable to answer or resolve your matter in the first instance we will take the necessary steps to ensure a satisfactory response.



When you send us an email

Your email enquiry will be forwarded to the most appropriate staff member. We will acknowledge receipt of your email within one working day and will endeavour to respond to your email within five working days.

If the email relates to a request for services it will be referred to the appropriate staff member.

If the email relates to a dispute or complaint the email will be referred to the relevant service and handled within our complaint handling procedure.



When you contact us via our website

If you lodge a customer request via our website you will be provided with acknowledgement and your request will be forwarded to the appropriate staff member to respond to.


If the inquiry relates to a request for services, you will be provided with a reference number with which to track the progress of the request, and referred to the appropriate staff member.

Customers can also engage directly with Council's City Assist team using the live chat function on the website.

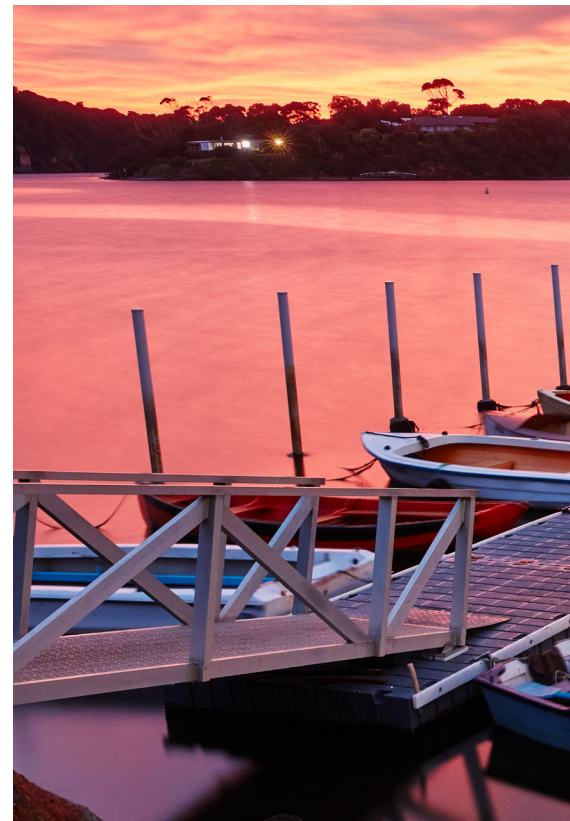


When you write us a letter

We will respond to your written correspondence within 10 working days. If the letter relates to a request for services it will be referred to the appropriate staff member.



Service Standards



Responsiveness

We will attend to you, as our valued customer, in an efficient and timely manner.

We will communicate respectfully and will not discriminate on the basis of age, gender, cultural background or sexuality.

We will endeavour to resolve your enquiry at the first point of contact, or direct you to the most appropriate officer to help you.

We will make contacting us easy, enabling you to talk to us in person, via phone or through our website.

We will acknowledge your electronic correspondence within five working days. We will respond to phone messages within three working days or the next available working day for part-time staff.

We will respond to a letter within 10 working days.

As customers you will be provided with reference information to enable you to follow up on your enquiries.

We will inform you of expected response times and processes for further contact, with all your enquiries and be realistic about what we can do.

We will identify ourselves by name and unit responsible for action on your enquiry.

As soon as updates are available we will inform you about the status of your request and let you know when it has been finalised.

Conduct and knowledge

We will treat you in a courteous and professional manner.

We will act with integrity and respect.

We will be attentive to your needs, expectations, and provide an explanation if your needs and expectations are not able to be met.

You will be provided with accurate and consistent information in your liaison with Council.

We will ensure that front line customer service employees are identifiable with a name badge for ease of communication and identification.

We will endeavour to provide you with a single point of contact for updates on your issue.

We will ensure all relevant communication is captured and recorded in our corporate systems.

We will respect your privacy.

Equity and accessibility

General information on council services will be available to you, with access to this information, 24 hours per day via telephone and/or internet.

We will readily provide information in a variety of formats to increase accessibility (print, digital, audio)

We will accept payments on a variety of platforms to meet your needs – EFTPOS, credit card, B-Pay, online or direct debit.

We will provide and maintain Council's website with up-to-date information.

Interpreters and other communication aids will be made available upon request.

We understand many people in the community have special needs. We will support the use of the National Relay Service which aids in accessibility to Council services.

We will maintain our social media platforms that encourage interaction and feedback, and provide timely responses as required.

Information obtained from you will be treated in accordance with the provisions of the Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014.





Service quality and improvements

We will provide online and office-based customer service feedback mechanisms for all stakeholders.

We will seek customer feedback via telephone, online surveys and in person.

We will use staff feedback to improve service delivery and support teamwork

We will use a variety of means to enhance our ability to engage with and connect to our community and customers.

We will communicate with you in clear and concise language.

We will provide annual training and coaching for customer service staff.

We will ensure Council maintains a defined system for managing complaints.

We will evaluate our performance and identify opportunities for improvement.

We will strive for excellence and establish key performance measures with results against these measures to be published annually.

Customer feedback

We will treat all compliments, complaints or requests received by you in a professional manner.

In every case we will explain the resolution process and provide assistance in an appropriate format.

We will share customer feedback regularly with staff, and develop and implement improvements.

Freedom of Information requests will be treated in accordance with the Victorian Freedom of Information Act 1982.

Expectations of our customers

When you contact us we expect you to treat our staff with dignity and respect; aggressive or abusive behaviour will not be tolerated.

Please provide as much information as possible including supporting documentation when making an enquiry. Please ensure all required information is provided including contact details and signatures when submitting forms or applications.

Please provide up-to-date contact details and to let us know when your circumstances change.

Please provide us with open and honest feedback on our performance so we can continue to improve our service to our community.

Your rights to resolution

We are a large and diverse organisation and endeavour to resolve issues at first point of contact. This is not always possible. If you are not satisfied with the response or action you have received, you may wish to lodge a formal complaint.

Complaints are handled in accordance with Council's Complaints Policy which can be found at www.warrnambool.vic.gov.au





Contacting Council

Whether you have a compliment, complaint or a request we would like to hear from you.

Visit

Civic Centre at **25 Liebig St Warrnambool**. Opening hours are 8.30am to 5pm Monday to Friday.

Telephone

(03) 5559 4800

1300 003 280 (local call charges apply)

After hours

(03) 5559 4800

Council provides a contracted after hours service for emergency Council services only. The nature of these calls will be assessed by this service to determine the best course of action. All messages to this service are recorded for Council review.

In writing

Warrnambool City Council

PO Box 198

Warrnambool VIC 3280

Email

contact@warrnambool.vic.gov.au

Website

www.warrnambool.vic.gov.au

The Warrnambool City Council website is a comprehensive source of information and will be able to assist with many of your queries in the first instance. Through the Contact page on our website you can lodge a customer request for our staff to action on your behalf.

Live Chat

You can contact us for an online chat via our website. Simply press the Live Chat icon on the home page.

TTY/voice calls

If you have a hearing or speech impairment you can call through the National Relay Service (NRS)

- TTY users can phone **133677** then ask for **(03)55594800** or **1300 003 280**
- Speak & Listen (speech to speech) users can phone **1300 555 727**, then ask for **(03) 5559 4800** or **1300 003 280**
- Internet relay users can connect to NRS on www.relayservice.gov.au then ask for **(03) 5559 4800** or **1300 003 280**