

HARRY GWALA DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY



WATER SERVICES CUSTOMER CARE STRATEGY 2013

SISONKE DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY
WATER & SANITATION CUSTOMER CARE STRATEGY

1. INTRODUCTION

Sisonke District Municipality as a water service authority (WSA) has the responsibility to provide water and sanitation services for all the communities within its jurisdiction. The District Municipality covers 5 Local Municipalities; uBuhlebezwe Municipality, Ingwe Municipality, uMzimkulu Municipality and the Greater Kokstad Municipality.

It is the responsibility of Sisonke District Municipality as a Water Services Authority that water services to all consumers/customers in its area of jurisdiction are provided progressively in an efficient, affordable, economical, sustainable and in an equitable manner. Sisonke District Municipality has undertaken a process of rationalising these services in order to achieve its constitutional responsibility.

2. AIM OF THE STRATEGY

The water customer care strategy will provide us with the framework to maintain a high level of customer care that is responsive to the requirements of our customers. In preparing and implementing this strategy we are demonstrating our commitment to providing water and sanitation service and support which meet the highest standards. In order for the strategy to be successfully implemented, Sisonke DM staff members will be key in providing a personal and caring service which will contribute to our customer satisfaction.

3. THE PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF THIS STRATEGY

It is imperative for Sisonke District Municipality as Water Service Authority to reach and maintain high standards emanates from providing consumers and customers with safe drinking water, affordable tariffs, knowledge pertaining to water conservation; health and hygiene promotion as well as setting up efficient customer care centers in order to build relations with our customers and consumers which will result in customer satisfaction.

4. OUR COMMITMENT

- To provide quality service to all stakeholders interacting with the Municipality.
- To ensure that customers are provided with the relevant information as and when is needed in the appropriate format.
- To ensure customer complaints are addressed promptly, timeously and to the full satisfaction of the customers and consumers
- To ensure that customers, both internal and external to the Municipality receive a consistent and fair treatment at all times
- To reduce financial and time costs incurred arising from poor customer service due to repeat calls from and to customers
- To equip our staff with knowledge and competencies to continuously enhance the service standards according to changing customer needs
- Provide greater customer choice by using electronic service delivery to allow people to access municipal services at times that suit their lifestyle, while also maintaining existing channels for members of the public who may not have access to technology.

5. INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

Sisonke District Municipality has undertaken a process of rationalising water and sanitation services in order to achieve its constitutional responsibility as the Water Service Authority.

During the rationalisation period, a response to its customer needs Sisonke District Municipality has established the Water Services Customer Care Unit which is at the main office of Water Services Department. The unit is dealing with the day to day customer complaints and make sure that the complaints are urgently attended to. The share call line; 0860 103 651 is the line open to be used by all customers to report all their complaints pipe-burst and breakages experienced in their areas and any complaints related to Water & Sanitation Services Provision.

The Customer Care Manager of the unit reports to the Director Water Governance who reports to the Head of Department (Executive Director Water Services Department). The Manager Customer Care, with the call centre staff will keep a record of all complaints and the rectification of such. Sisonke DM is looking at upgrading this service by installing a smart system of an innovative technology that will assist the department in providing an efficient service.

These institutional arrangements will assist the WSA to:

- Have an updated data on the needs of its customers
- Promptly attend to the complaints and keep a track record
- Be able to follow up on the reported complaint
- Measure the effectiveness of the Water Services Providers (WSP)
- Evaluate the efficiency of the WSP
- Assist in the determination of improvement methods
- Monitor implementation of service delivery principles

The call centre staff will also create job cards and send them to relevant technical staff in case the complaints are technical. Finance and billing complaints will be directed to the Finance department to the relevant personnel for immediate response.

6. WALK IN CUSTOMER CARE CENTRES

Corollary to the endeavour of Sisonke District Municipality rationalising the water services provision for a better services delivery, there are walk-in customer care offices across the District, strategically placed in all the local Municipalities to provide these services to our customers. They are placed in strategic areas in order to respond to our customer needs promptly.

The call centre at the main office, 40 Chapell Street is open from 6am to 10pm. The offices at other satellite offices are open from 8am to 4.30pm. The number to be called after 10pm is provided at the end of this document to provide a 24hour constant communication with the Sisonke Customer Call Centre.

7. COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

In the way Sisonke Water Services is trying to meet their customer complaints:

- A complaint will be launched at the customer call centre and a customer's reference number will be generated against the complaint which will be sent to relevant satellite office to the relevant official.
- A job card will be opened together with the reference number and assigned to a relevant maintenance officer who will carry out the work required to address the complaint. Depending on the complexity of the matter coupled with the availability of resources a complaint should be attended to within 24hours of its receipt.
- On completion of the works a signed job card will be transmitted by facsimile to customer call centre to clear up the complaint. Meanwhile during the complaint attendance process the customer call centre will

communicate to all complainants on progress made on their complaints quoting customer reference number.

8. OUR STRATEGY TO IMPLEMENT OUR CUSTOMER CARE POLICY

The Sisonke District Municipality will back up Customer Care Policy by specific Customer Service Charters and Customer Care Standards for each service delivery Unit which will be our promise of delivery to Customers.

- We will ask our Customer Care Staff to sign a Pledge in which they commit themselves to upholding these standards.
- We will monitor our performance through continuous monitoring, through benchmarking ourselves against other similar municipalities and being subject to regular Performance Audits.
- We will develop methods of receiving customer feedback to find out whether customers are satisfied with the standard of service they have received. These will be through;
 - Requesting customers to complete a Customer Satisfaction Questionnaire and post transaction telephone follow-up of a sample of returns to continuously evaluate customer perceptions of our service.
 - Organizing annual Focus Group Sessions to measure and understand the perception gap between what customer's perceptions of our service delivery are and what we think we are achieving.
 - Actively advertising in all our Satellite Offices a Call Centre/ Customer Care Help Line where customers can report poor service.
- These monitoring methods will assist us to develop programmes to address any Short comings in the standard of our service.
- Comments, compliments and complaints from our customers are an important part of the process that will help us to build a people centered and Customer First municipality.

9. OUR CUSTOMER CARE STANDARDS

Sisonke District Municipality is committed to the continuous improvement of the standards of service it gives to its customers. We will endeavor to provide services and manage complaints in a timeous, efficient and effective manner.

In developing our Customer Care Standards Sisonke DM will set standards which put the Customer First, are friendly, customer focused and measurable.

By:

- Setting clear statements as to how the staff should behave in dealing with customers.
- Setting performance targets which can be reviewed.
- Ensuring that staff is trained to achieve these standards and that they fully understand the standards that are expected of them.
- We are committed to equal opportunities and will provide;
 - Support, interpretation and translation services
 - Clear signage to direct our Customers to where they want to go
 - Buildings which are visible, accessible and welcoming
 - Disabled access wherever practicable
 - Private areas for customers to discuss personal or sensitive matters.

10. CONTACT DETAILS

Sisonke District Municipality Customer Services Centre- 40 Chapel Street, Ixopo	
Opening Hours	Mon-Fri 06:00 - 22:00, Sat - Sunday 06:00-22:00
Phone Number	086 010 3651

Text (SMS)	076 984 9866.
Fax	086 750 1531
Address-	40 Chapel Street, Ixopo
E – Mail	nkabanen@sisonkedm.gov.za
After 22:00	0839491565
Walk in Offices per Local Municipality	<p>Greater Kokstad Municipality 84 Main Street, Kokstad</p> <p>KwaSani Municipality 3 Reservoir Street, Himeville</p> <p>Ingwe Municipality _____ Street, Bulwer</p> <p>Umzimkulu Municipality 23 Bird Street, Umzimkhulu</p> <p>UBuhlebezwe Municipality 40 Chapel Street, Ixopo</p>

The Municipality encourages regular communication with the consumers.
Please send your suggestions to:

Sisonke District Municipality

Private Bag X 501

Ixopo

3276

Or you can make use of our suggestion box available at the above address.