



Policy and Charter for Customer Relations Management

VISION AND MISSION OF THE MUNICIPALITY

By 2030, Harry Gwala District Municipality has a vision to be one of the Water Service Authority and Water Service Provider that provide its communities with a high quality drinking water and discharge high quality effluent to the environment.

Our mission is to Work together with our communities and stakeholders in achieving this vision. Harry Gwala District Municipality will ensure the provision of clean drinkable uninterrupted water services and proper sanitation facilities and strive to improve its relationship with the users of the service.

LEVEL OF SERVICE

The Harry Gwala District Municipality is striving to improve its communication with the consumers. The aim is to build relations with consumers and build a sound understanding between the municipality and the consumers in terms of water services provision. The Harry Gwala DM is committed to provide the following services to the consumers:

Basic Level Services

Water	Sanitation
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In order to make water available to customers at an Affordable cost, the municipality provides various levels of services.

domestic customers:

- Full pressure water supply fed directly to the household from the municipality’s supply network.
- 6 kilolitre of water per day available to all the domestic consumers
- Standpipes/water dispensers that are provided to supply rural areas and informal settlements
- Water carting or tankered in the case of prolonged service interruptions
- Water boreholes and hand pumps where there is no water reticulation

The accepted levels for sanitation are:

- Conventional waterborne sanitation
- Connection to sewerage infrastructure.
- Waterborne sanitation with on-site disposal – septic tank and associated soak-away.
- Waterborne sanitation with on-site collection and off-site disposal e.g. conservancy tanks with emptying and disposal by tanker.
- Ventilated Improved Pit toilets in areas where there is no water borne systems

FREE BASIC SERVICES

Water

- All customers receive the first 6 kl of water per month free of charge.
- Rising block tariffs are applicable with customers receiving a Semi-Pressure supply having certain reduced rates.
- All water supplied via communal standpipes tap is provided free of charge.
- Indigent families living in higher value houses may apply to gain access to free basic services.
- The municipality reserves the right to grant access to free basic services based on the municipality’s assessment and based on the

Sanitation

- The sewage disposal service is charged on a volume based charge system.
- Rising block tariffs apply to customers receiving a semi pressure supply but with reduced rates.
- All the Improved Ventilated Pit toilets are provided free of charge to customers residing in rural areas.
- Rising block tariffs are applicable to all full pressure customers.

WATER SUPPLY

The Municipality is committed to provide the consumers with a reasonable water supply as per section 47 of the municipality water services by-laws.

If the consumer requires a provision of a connection pipe, the household owner shall make an application on a prescribed form and pay the determined charge for installation of the pipe.

The connection application will be approved based on the availability of the water and the required pressure in the system.

Only the qualified plumber shall perform the connection. The municipality's minimum standards shall be followed.

The conditions of the water will apply as per section 56 of the water Services by-laws.

The municipality reserves the right to specify the minimum and the maximum pressure to which water will be supplied, 56 (5) of the water services by-laws.

WATER QUALITY

Harry Gwala District Municipality will always strive to provide the water quality that complies with the minimum standards as set out for the provision of water supply services in terms of section 9 of the Water Services Act and SANS 241-11.

Provision of high water quality drinking water and effluent that is safe for the environment is the priority focus of the municipality. In case of the failure in water quality the municipality's Incident management Protocol is implemented for an urgent response and prompt rectification of the situation.

WATER MEASUREMENT

The municipality will measure the quantity of water supplied on a regular basis. The municipality has a measuring/metering device at the household level as well as at the bulk points. This is done for the purpose of water supply monitoring and conservation. In case where there is no meter or the existing meter is broken, the municipality will install and or fix the faulty meter.

The municipality reserves the right to restrict the consumption of water for a specific purpose, during specific hours of the day, or in specific hours. The restriction of water provision will be communicated before commencement as per section 57 of the water services by-laws.

No person other than the municipality's official or a person authorised by the municipality shall:

- a) Disconnect the measuring/metering device and its associated apparatus
- b) Break a seal that the municipality has placed on the measuring device
- c) In any other way temper with the metering device

CHARGES AND BILLING

- The Municipality shall ensure that meters are read monthly and as close to the same date as is humanly practical each month.
- The municipality shall ensure that meters accurately record consumption.
- In case where the meter is somehow faulty or has a technical problem in any month, the municipality will estimate the consumption for the month in question, **and to that end**. The estimation will be based on the average consumption for the six preceding months. Where the next account based on an actual reading results in a need to adjust account for any excess amount or shortfall in the estimated account such adjustment will be done in the following month.
- The faulty meter shall be fixed or replaced with the period not longer than 3 months
- Customers shall be allowed to request verification of meter readings.

- Where a customer is still not satisfied with consumption raised, after verification of meter reading, the customer can request for the testing of the meter in question after paying the relevant charges as set out in the municipality Debt Collection and Credit control policy

PAYMENT FOR WATER SERVICES

- The municipality will send the accounts to customers on a monthly basis for services supplied and for basic charges.
- All accounts shall reflect how the amount thereof is made up, and shall include, where applicable, an indication of the units consumed.
- Accounts shall be simple understandable and accurate.
- The due date for payment shall be indicated on each account.
- Accounts shall be sent to the address of the customer that is recorded with the Municipality.
- Changes to customer personal details shall be done upon written request or information received by municipality during any data cleansing exercise.

BILLING ENQUIRIES

- The customer who believes that any account incorrectly reflects the amount owed by him or her may lodge a query regarding such account through the municipality's customer care centre.
- Billing query must be in writing and must specify the nature of the query and the manner and extent to which the customer believes the amount stated in the account differs from that actually owed, and the basis for such belief.
- The query must be lodged before the due date for payment of the account.
- The query must be accompanied by at least the payment of the average of the last three months' accounts where history of the account is available or an estimated amount provided by the municipality before payment due date.

- Any subsequent accounts shall remain due and payable by due date and any failure to make such payments will render the customer liable according to the municipality credit control processes and municipality's water services by-laws.
- The centre will register the query and provide the customer with a reference number.
- The query will be resolved within the period of 30 days.

PROCEDURES FOR LODGING A COMPLAINT

The municipality shall endeavour to provide quality service to the consumers of the water services. Our turnaround time is 24 hours. Should a customer have any complaint about any service rendered by the Municipality, he or she may lodge a complaint by contacting the customer care call centre on the provided call centre lines, in writing or by using any of our walk in offices that are in all satellites. The satellites are strategically situated per Local municipality.

The call centre shall record the query and the customer will receive the reference number for the call.

Such remedial action shall, however, be ratified by the Executive Director Water Services Department before it is implemented. In case the query is billing related, the remedial action will be ratified by the Chief Financial Officer

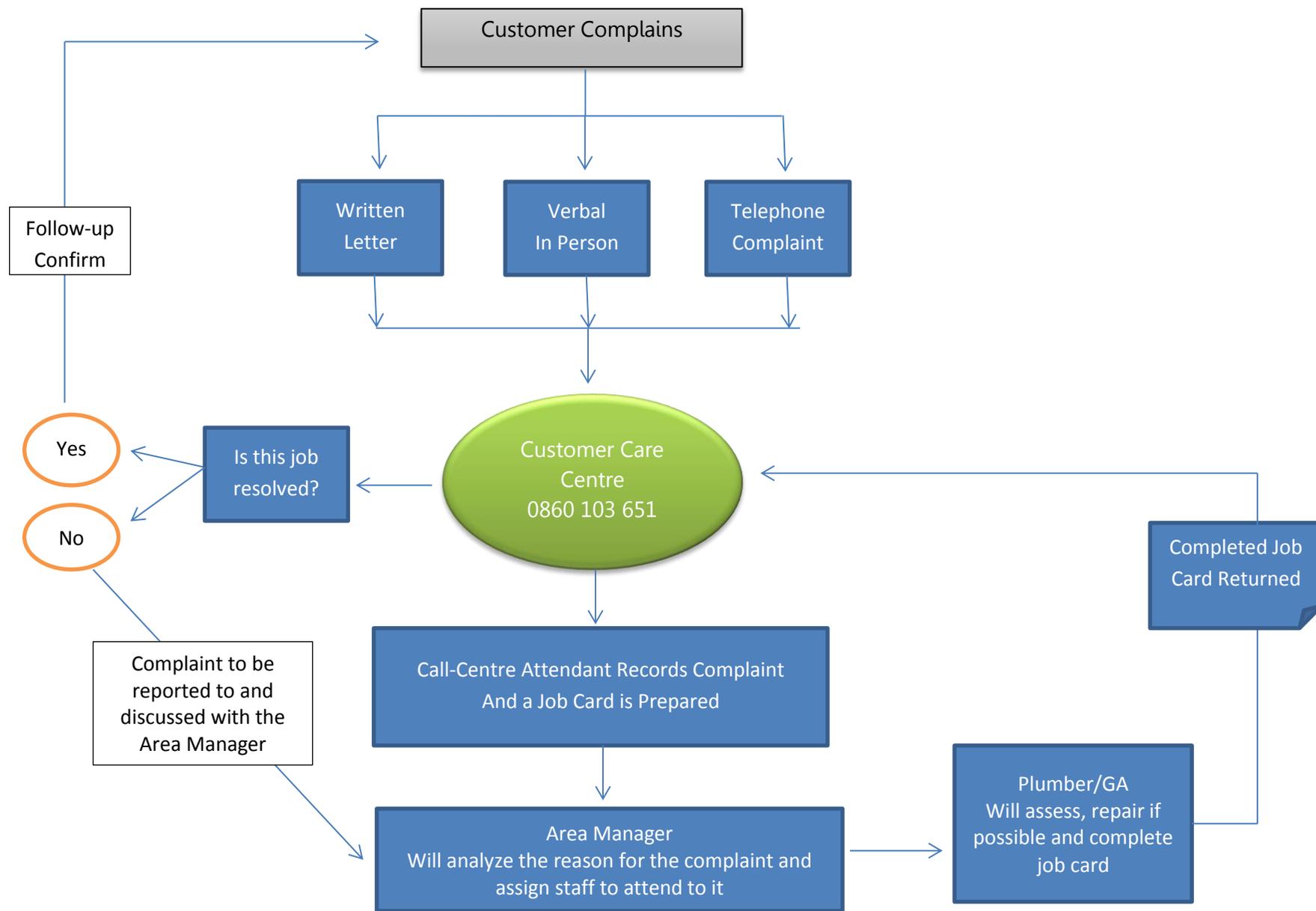
The response time and efficiency in dealing with any complaint shall be monitored by the Customer Care Manager and the Director Water Governance at the Water Services Department.

The municipality will make effort to resolve any water and sanitation complaint within the 24 hours of the complaint. In case where the problem is beyond our turnaround time due to complexity, the customer will be notified properly.

The call centre attendants will call the customer to notify him or her on the progress of the complaint. In case of the billing queries, the customer shall be notified in writing of the outcome of any investigation and any remedial action concerning the query.

In case where the customer is not satisfied from the call centre the following complaint protocol applies:

Harry Gwala District Municipality Customer Care Procedures for Water Complaints



CONSUMERS RESPONSIBILITY

The consumer is responsible for the following responsibilities:

- Pay for the services received in full by the due date, as displayed on your bill;
- Please report tampering and do not illegally tamper with the Municipal water systems;
- Maintain pipes and fittings on your side of the meter and report leaks on the Municipal side to the 086 0101 3651
- Ensure the water meter on your property is easy for us to access; and
- Use the water wisely to help conserve this precious resource.

CONSUMER RIGHTS

As a consumer you have the following rights:

- Easy access to the municipality and prompt helpful response from the staff
- Voice your opinion concerning water service delivery
- To communicate with the municipality in the language of your choice and be treated fairly and equally irrespective of special circumstance
- To escalate the complaint to the higher level of the municipal official in case you are not satisfied by the response at the call centre

WATER SAVING TIPS

- Wash clothes on a full load
- Turn off the shower when soaping
- Turn off the tap while brushing teeth or use the cup for rinsing of your teeth
- Use the bucket instead of the hose pipe while washing the car
- Use kitchen grey water for garden watering
- Use the watering-can instead of the hose pipe for garden watering

CONTACT DETAILS

Harry Gwala 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@Harry Gwaladm.gov.za
After 22:00	0839491565
Walk in Offices per Local Municipality	Greater Kokstad Municipality 84 Main Street, Kokstad KwaSani Municipality 3 Reservoir Street, Himeville Ingwe Municipality _____Street, Bulwer Umzimkulu Municipality _____Street, Umzimkhulu UBuhlebezwe Municipality 40 Chapel Street, Ixopo

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

Harry Gwala District Municipality

Private Bag X 501

Ixopo

3276

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

Or send your suggestion to our Facebook page: _____

Together We Deliver and Grow