



# Customer Service Action Plan

**Adopted by CIB 2018**

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## Introduction to our Customer Service Action Plan

The Citizens Information Board (CIB) provides independent information, advice and advocacy on public and social services to the people of Ireland.

We do this through:

- our public information website: [citizensinformation.ie](https://citizensinformation.ie)
- the Citizens Information Phone Service (0818 07 4000)
- the network of Citizens Information Services.

We are also responsible for:

- the Money Advice and Budgeting Service (MABS)
- the National Advocacy Service for People with Disabilities (NAS)
- the Sign Language Interpreting Service (SLIS)
- the Register of Irish Sign Language Interpreters (RISLI)

## Our commitment to customer service

We commit to making sure people receive independent, reliable information, advice and advocacy wherever they are in Ireland and in a way that suits their needs.

Our Customer Service Charter sets out the principles that underpin our services. This Customer Service Action Plan describes how we will apply these principles.

To measure how we are meeting the commitments in this Action Plan, we will regularly consult with:

- customers,
- delivery partners, and
- other stakeholders.

## Principle 1: Clear, comprehensive and accurate information

**We will provide clear, detailed information about public and social services to help you identify your needs and access your entitlements.**

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### Key Action Points

1. Provide up-to-date, accurate and comprehensive information, using simple and clear language that meets our customers' needs.
2. Provide money, advice and budgeting services to people with problem debt through the Money Advice and Budgeting Service (MABS).
3. Implement internal systems to ensure that all published information is checked for accuracy on a regular basis.
4. Ensure that written information meets agreed standards.
5. Ensure that [citizensinformation.ie](https://citizensinformation.ie) and all other supported websites continue to meet the highest standards of user friendliness and accessibility.
6. Ensure that all our websites are regularly updated, and all publications are available online.
7. Ensure that we fully use the potential offered by Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and new technologies across all our services.

## Principle 2: Prompt, courteous and efficient responses

**We will be responsive to your needs, and we will deliver our services sensitively and efficiently.**

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### Key Action Points

8. Respond to all enquiries and complaints within five working days.
9. Ensure systems are set up to answer all correspondence we receive.
10. Ensure that standard staff email and voicemail messages are put in place.
11. Provide customers with a contact name and details for all interactions whether by telephone, post or e-mail.
12. Ensure that correspondence is accurate and in a format that is appropriate to the customer (This could be by email, post, telephone call).
13. Keep customers informed of progress if any delay occurs when dealing with a query.
14. In circumstances where staff cannot help a customer with a query, the customer will be informed and referred to an appropriate organisation.

## Principle 3: Equality and Diversity

**We will respect diversity and ensure your right to equal treatment.**

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### Key Action Points

15. Ensure the right to equal treatment for all customers, established by equality, diversity and inclusion legislation.
16. Ensure that the ways we communicate with our customers meet the needs of our diverse customer base.
17. Carry out research to identify where vulnerable groups have problems in accessing services and seek to remove these obstacles wherever possible.
18. Improve access to services by people experiencing social exclusion due to poverty or social isolation.
19. Promote staff awareness of equality, diversity and inclusion issues by providing suitable training:
  - During induction for new staff
  - On an on-going basis for all staff

## Principle 4: Choice

**We will plan and deliver our services so you can access them in a way that suits you.**

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### Key Action Points

20. Ensure that our Customer Service Charter and Customer Service Action Plan are produced in relevant formats so they can be accessed by all our customers.
21. Share documents and publications in various accessible formats.
22. Ensure that key information is available in accessible formats.
23. Deliver high-quality information, advice and advocacy services to the public, through three channels:
  - [citizensinformation.ie](https://citizensinformation.ie)
  - Citizens Information Phone Service (CIPS)
  - The network of eight regional Citizens Information Services
24. Provide advice on personal debt and money management through the Money Advice and Budgeting Service (MABS).
25. Provide an independent advocacy service to adults with disabilities through the National Advocacy Service for People with Disabilities (NAS).
26. Provide services to support quality interpreting in Ireland for Deaf people, the public and other services through the Sign Language Interpreting Service (SLIS).
27. Support the Register of Irish Sign Language Interpreters (RISLI) to maintain a standards-based registration system for Irish Sign Language Interpreters.
28. Provide clear procedures for referral between CIB Service Delivery Companies such as MABS and Citizens Information Services and vice versa.
29. Develop the Citizens Information Board website to provide additional electronic services.
30. Develop Information and Communications Technology to improve the delivery of services.

31. Ensure that key information on rights and entitlements is available in English, Irish and in other languages, to meet the needs of migrant workers.

## Principle 5: Access

**We will ensure that all our services and offices are fully accessible.**

**Contact our Access Officer at [accessofficer@ciboard.ie](mailto:accessofficer@ciboard.ie).**

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### Key Action Points

32. Provide clean, safe and fully accessible public offices that ensure privacy and comply with occupational and safety standards.
33. Ensure that we regularly review and update our safety statement.
34. Ensure that there are appropriate evacuation procedures for people with additional needs and staff receive relevant training.
35. Ensure that our premises meet accessibility standards.
36. Ensure that the required number of staff are trained in Health & Safety, according to Health and Safety standards.
37. Ensure that we meet our obligations under the Disability Act 2005, Part 5, and Section 16 of the Equality Act. This means to take all reasonable measures to support and promote the employment of people with specific needs, as far as practicable.
38. Ensure that we check all venues we use to host external events to ensure their compliance with accessibility standards.
39. Ensure that we review the accessibility of our services and facilities and implement improvements when necessary or available.
40. Ensure that workstations are adjusted according to best practice and are safe for use by members of staff. This may include providing:
  - specialist telephone headsets
  - customised office furniture
  - PC screen magnification
41. Promote and support a variety of delivery channels to ensure quality accessible services to all. For example, our phone service, web, printed



materials.

42. Ensure that staff are aware of the role of the Access Officer and the current holder of the position.

## Principle 6: Official Languages

**We will provide our services through Irish and/or bilingually where required.**

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### Key Action Points

43. Meet our obligations under Section 11 of the Official Languages Act 2003 (as amended in 2021) to ensure better availability and a higher standard of public service through Irish.
44. Implement the Irish Language Scheme 2008 - 2011 within the organisation until the scheme is replaced with a system of Irish Language Standards.
45. Ensure that signage and stationery in all our offices is displayed in both Irish and English, on a replacement basis.
46. Reply in Irish to correspondence received in Irish.
47. Provide [citizensinformation.ie](https://citizensinformation.ie) through both English and Irish.
48. Ensure that at least 20% of annual advertising is in Irish.
49. Ensure that the CIB logo is in Irish or in Irish and English.

## Principle 7: Consultation and evaluation

**We will consult with a sample group of customers to establish their needs when developing, delivering and evaluating our services.**

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### Key Action Points

50. Provide a structured approach to meaningful consultation with, and participation by a wide range of customers in relation to the development, delivery and evaluation of our services.
51. Consult with our customers regularly using various techniques/approaches.  
For example:
  - Customer satisfaction surveys
  - Customer panels
  - Focus groups
  - Our comments and complaints procedures
  - Other ways of getting feedback
52. Actively seek feedback from our customers to better understand their needs.
53. Act on feedback from our customers to better understand their needs.
54. Review and evaluate our efficiency and effectiveness to ensure that the highest standards are maintained.
55. Establish an outcome-focused quality assurance service to assure our customers of the quality of our services.
56. Establish frameworks to measure service user impact for CIB Service Delivery Companies in order to improve our services.

## Principle 8: Internal customers

**We will support our staff to ensure that they can provide an excellent service to our customers.**

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### Key Action Points

57. Ensure that all staff are aware of the functions and responsibility of other services in the organisation and kept up to date with all new developments.
58. Ensure that staff are trained to the highest standard in the operation of new and existing internal systems.
59. Include the internal customers in developing, delivering and reviewing internal and external services.
60. Ensure that the Performance Management and Development System (PMDS) process is engaging and meaningful to staff and the organisation, and all staff are trained appropriately.
61. Provide for and actively encourage continuing professional development and training for staff.
62. Provide and maintain a supportive working environment for our staff that encourages and supports the right to dignity at work.
63. Develop and encourage open communication amongst staff at all levels to promote a healthy and equal working environment in an organisation that values the contribution of each individual.
64. Recognise and acknowledge the personal needs of staff and provide support in an appropriate, fair and sensitive manner.
65. Empower the Staff Consultative Committee in their work to participate in consultations relating to changes and initiatives in CIB.

## Principle 9: Co-ordination

**We will work closely with other organisations to deliver citizen-focused public services.**

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### Key Action Points

- 66. Improve the citizen's experience of services and outcomes, through developing, changing and integrating services in line with best practice.
- 67. Integrate information from different sources to meet customer needs.
- 68. Work with voluntary and community organisations and statutory bodies to deliver and provide our services in the most efficient way, avoiding any unnecessary duplication.
- 69. Participate in implementing and developing the Public Service Stability Agreement and the Building Momentum Agreement and successors.
- 70. Work with key government departments to influence policy and practice.
- 71. Ensure representation on relevant forums in pursuing common business objectives with other public and civil bodies, departments and other agencies.
- 72. Participate in the Quality Customer Service Network to ensure that our approach to customer service is consistent with best practice.
- 73. Promote opportunities to develop partnerships with government departments, relevant agencies and the voluntary/community sector.
- 74. Participate in [Media Literacy Ireland](#) events.

## Principle 10: Appeals

**We will maintain an accessible and transparent appeal and review system.**

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### Key Action Points

75. Develop and maintain a system of dealing with appeals that is:
- Well publicised
  - Accessible
  - Transparent
  - Simple to use
76. Ensure minimum delay when dealing with appeals and reviews for customers who are dissatisfied with decisions about services.
77. Monitor the number of appeals and reviews received.

## Principle 11: Comments and complaints

**We want to provide the best service possible to you and welcome all comments related to our services.**

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### Key Action Points

78. Maintain an accessible, transparent and simple-to-use system for dealing with comments and complaints.
79. Ensure that customers are aware of how to make complaints under our three complaints procedures
- Customer complaints procedures regarding Citizens Information Board Staff
  - Customer complaints procedures relating to CIB-funded organisations
  - Complaints about CIB for non-compliance with the Disability Act 2005
80. Deal with comments and complaints promptly, fairly and impartially.
81. Provide an opportunity for customers to give comments and complaints at all points of service delivery.

## How to contact the Citizens Information Board

You can contact us in the following ways in the table below.

Way of getting in touch	Details
By post	Customer Service Citizens Information Board Georges Quay House 43 Townsend Street Dublin 2 D02 VK65
Telephone	01 605 9000
Email	<a href="mailto:info@ciboard.ie">info@ciboard.ie</a>