



# Request for Service Procedure

Procedure Number	C5
Responsible Officer(s)	Team Leader Community
Procedure Adopted	September 2023
Next Review Date	September 2027
Minutes reference	2023/09-15
Applicable Legislation	<i>Local Government Act 1999; Public Interest Disclosure Act (2018).</i>
Related Policies	Customer Service Policy; Records Management Policy; Information Privacy Policy.
Related Procedures	Complaint Handling Procedure; Council Decisions Internal Review Procedure; Public Interest Disclosure Procedure.

## 1. PROCEDURE PRINCIPLE

Wakefield Regional Council ("Council") acknowledges the diversity of its community and understands diverse rights and needs. Council strives to deliver an exceptional customer service. It also monitors requests to identify opportunities in which it can proactively improve its services.

In accordance with section 270 of the *Local Government Act 1999*, this procedure alongside the Customer Service Policy ensures requests for services are managed fairly, efficiently and transparently.

## 2. DEFINITIONS

<i>Actioning Officer</i>	The Officer assigned responsibility within the CSM to the work area, to process the request for service.
<i>Customer</i>	A user of products and/or services of the Council.
<i>Customer Service Module ("CSM")</i>	A system used to manage and resolve community requests for service and complaints across Council departments.
<i>Electronic Document Records Management System ("EDRMS")</i>	An automated system used to manage the creation, use, management, storage and disposal of hardcopy and electronically created documents and records for the purposes of supporting the creation, revision and management of digital records improving an organisations workflow and providing evidence of business activities. (Refer to Council's <i>Records Management Policy</i> )
<i>Level of Service</i>	A measurable and quantifiable standards to which it has been anticipated or planned that a Service will be provided. The Level of Service is dependent on the resources and priorities determined by the Council and taking into account legal obligations.
<i>Requests for service</i>	An application to have Council or its Employees to take some form of action to provide or improve a Council service.

### 3. PROCEDURE SCOPE

- 3.1 The procedure commences at the point that a request for service is received by Council.
- 3.1.1 **Council Employees** take delivery of request for service from community members via Council's website, email, post, telephone and in person.
- 3.1.2 **Council Members** take delivery of verbal and written requests from community members in the course of their duties. Council Members are required to forward all written requests for service to Community Support Officer at [admin@wrc.sa.gov.au](mailto:admin@wrc.sa.gov.au) for registration within Council's records management system, and assigned as a request for service to the actioning officer via the customer service module ("CSM").
- Verbal requests received by Council Members should be discussed with the Chief Executive Officer and/or relevant Manager for further action.
  - Requests in the form of a petition will be managed in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1999*, the *Local Government (Procedures at Meetings) Regulations 2013* and Council's *Information Privacy Policy*.
- 3.2 This Procedure does not apply to services that fall outside of the Council geographic area, or that Council is not responsible for. For these types of services, the customer will be referred to the relevant organisation, authority or third party as appropriate. This Procedure also does not apply to services where there is a legislative or other mechanism for requesting a service. In such cases, Council Employees and Council Members will follow the requirements of the legislative or other mechanism for requesting the service where applicable.
- 3.3 Council Employees and Council Members will act reasonably and transparently in, providing a quality customer service to ensure the delivery of an outcome for request for services in line with Council's *Customer Service Policy*.
- 3.4 Where the request for service is a Public Interest Disclosure, the request will be managed in accordance with Council's Public Interest Disclosure Procedure. Public Interest Disclosures should be referred to Council's Responsible Officers in accordance with Council's Public Interest Disclosure Procedure available on Council's website.

### 4. CORE COMPONENTS

In order to effectively manage a request for service, Council Employees responsible for the following action must:

- **Acknowledge** the request within 5 business days
- **Assess** the request. This includes distinguishing between requests, complaints and feedback to Council. Council Employees will decide how to respond to the request.
- **Respond** to the customer with a clear decision.
- **Follow up** any customer service concerns.
- **Record** requests in Council's records management system.
- **Review** similar requests to consider whether there are systemic issues which need attention and which can inform service improvements.

### 5. PROCEDURE

#### 5.1 Assisting with the lodgment of a request for service

- 5.1.1 Nobody will be excluded from lodging a request for service because of any difficulties they have representing themselves. Council Employees are expected to offer assistance, where

appropriate, in documenting the request in writing when circumstances warrant.

## 5.2 Request for service

5.2.1 Council receives requests for service from customers in the following ways:

- Council's website: [www.wrc.sa.gov.au](http://www.wrc.sa.gov.au)
- Telephone: (08) 8862 0800
- Email: [admin@wrc.sa.gov.au](mailto:admin@wrc.sa.gov.au)
- In person: Balaklava Civic Centre, Scotland Place, Balaklava SA 5461
- Mail: PO Box 167, Balaklava SA 5461
- My Local Services App

## 5.3 Registering a request via the Electronic Document Records Management System

5.3.1 When Council Employees receive a request for service, the request must be:

- Captured within Council's EDRMS;
- Allocated to the appropriate request type in the CSM, which will then:
  - Allocate the request to the appropriate officer; and
  - Prioritise the request appropriately.

5.3.2 Where Council Employees identify a need for a service or a Council response, a request for service must be registered in accordance with this clause 5.3.

5.3.3 When registering a request in the EDRMS, the following must be included:

- Date and time of actual contact;
- The name of the Employee who registers the request (automatically assigned);
- Customers name, address and phone number and/or email address;
- Comprehensive information about the nature of the request;
- Whether the customer wishes to be advised of the outcome of the request;
- Any documents, notes, photographs, correspondence or other information provided by the customer to support their request;
- Assessment number if applicable.

## 5.4 Written requests

5.4.1 All written requests received by Community Support Officers, whether by letter or email, are to be registered into Council's EDRMS and/or CSM (depending on the nature of the request) by Community Support Officers and actioned to the appropriate Employee.

5.4.2 All written requests received by individual Employees are to be entered into Council's EDRMS by the receiving officer, or forwarded to Community Support Officers, or the relevant department.

5.4.3 Written requests received by or forwarded to Community Support Officers will be entered into the EDRMS.

## 5.5 In person requests

- 5.5.1 Where a customer attends Councils principal office, it is the responsibility of the Employee who receives the request to determine whether they can attend to the matter immediately and close out the request, or otherwise forward to the relevant Employee or department. The matter must be registered in the EDRMS.

## 5.6 Telephone requests

- 5.6.1 Telephone requests must be recorded in Councils EDRMS. For Employees without access to the EDRMS, requests should be referred to the Community Support Officers or relevant department administration officer for registering.
- 5.6.2 All documents, notes, telephone calls, photographs, correspondence and any other information relevant to the request for service must be retained for registering with the record/request.

## 5.7 Acknowledgment of receipt

- 5.7.1 Where the request has been made in writing (email or letter), the actioning officer will within 5 business days, acknowledge receipt of the request in writing, provide a record number (where possible) and what action will be taken in response to the request. If there are extenuating circumstances that prevent the acknowledgment of receipt within that time, the actioning officer will acknowledge receipt as soon as possible and include an explanation of why the acknowledgment was not sent within the timeframe.
- 5.7.2 Request for service received in person or via telephone are verbally acknowledged at the time of receiving the request by the receiving officer.

## 5.8 Assessing a request

- 5.8.1 Each request must be assessed at the first instance to determine its nature and how it should be dealt with.
- 5.8.2 **Service standards/work programs** – requests should be processed in accordance with service standards, intended work programs or guidelines where applicable.

## 5.9 Complex requests

- 5.9.1 Some requests may require direction from a Manager, the CEO or occasionally, a decision of Council. These complex requests should be promptly forwarded by the actioning officer to the relevant Manager for determination of how to respond, and recorded in Councils EDRMS.
- 5.9.2 In such cases, where appropriate, the actioning officer should explain to the customer that the request has been forwarded and to whom, and the process and timeframes for the next action, if known.
- 5.9.3 Considerations for the Manager when determining how to respond to a request for service:
- The content of Council's Strategic Management Plan, Asset Plan, Annual Business Plan, Annual Works Program and Annual Budget: *Does the request fit within the directions and programs which Council has agreed to and budgeted for?*
  - Relevant Council Policies and Procedures: *Does the request fit in with other agreed positions documented by Council?*
  - Established service standards and response times from regular Council services, programs and operations: *Can the request be accommodated within Council's current operating standards? Are there any practical considerations that need to be taken into account?*

- An assessment of risk: *Does the request relate to a matter which may impact a strategic or operational risk?*
- Statutory responsibilities: *Is the request about a matter that Council has a statutory obligation to act upon?*
- Public safety and emergencies: *Is there a requirement for immediate action?*
- Using Council resources effectively and efficiently
- Guidelines and conditions which may apply to certain externally funded programs
- Complexity of the response by Council: *Does the request require an integrated response from more than one department?*
- Decision of the elected body: *Does the request require a decision from the elected body?*

5.9.4 **Works/services** – where requests are made for changes to service levels, they will be referred by the relevant Manager for assessment against the Budget and Annual Business Plan for Council consideration by the elected body for inclusion in the next Annual Business Plan (if appropriate).

## 5.10 Service Improvement

5.10.1 Understanding the number and type of requests initiated by customers may suggest changes to policies, service levels and systems. To improve service delivery, all requests for service should be recorded in Council's EDRMS by the Council Employee receiving the request, and records maintained by the actioning officer (or their delegate) in such a way that the information can be analysed for service improvement opportunities.

5.10.2 At intervals determined by the number of requests for service received, the data on such requests may be reported to Council's Senior Leadership Group to ensure that needs of the community are identified and considered.

## 6. TRAINING

Council Employees will receive internal training in the CSM, records management system and records keeping principles in accordance with Council's Records Management Policy. Council Employees can access refresher training as needed on request to Council's Records Officer.

## 7. REVIEW

This Policy shall be reviewed every 48 months, or more frequently if required by legislation or Council.

### Document history:

Version	Adopted	Description of Change
1.0	September 2023	New Procedure