



**CHRIS HANI**  
**DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY**  
SUSTAINING GROWTH  
THROUGH OUR PEOPLE

**CUSTOMER CARE POLICY AND SERVICE CHARTER**  
**2022-2027**

## Table of Contents

### PART ONE

1. Preamble.....	3
2. Definitions.....	4
3. What are our values?.....	5
4. What are The Batho Pele Principles?.....	6
5. What is the Back to Basic Pillars .....	7
6. Who are our customers?.....	7
7. What is Customer Care and Why is it Important?.....	8
8. What are Customer Care Satellite Offices?.....	8
9. How will we Measure Our Success?.....	9
10. Customer Care Standards and Management Controls.....	10

### PART TWO

1. Introduction.....	11
2. Purpose.....	12
3. Vision.....	12
4. Procedure Guidelines: Complaints Management .....	12
4.1 A Complaints Registration.....	13
4.1 B Assigning a complaint and communication .....	13
4.2 Water and Sanitation Samples.....	13
4.3 Response Time to Reported Outbreaks.....	13
4.4 Billing/Account Disputes.....	13
4.5 Meter Reading.....	14
4.6 Billing and Account Statements .....	14
4.7 injuries in open Manholes.....	14
4.8 Interruptions to Water Supply.....	14
4.9 Water or Sewerage Flooding.....	15
4.10 Areas with no Water Infrastructure.....	15
4.11 Unresolved Complaints/ disputes/ Enquiries.....	16
4.12 Municipal Responsibility.....	16
4.13 Customers' Responsibility.....	17

## PART ONE

### 1. Preamble

The Chris Hani District Municipality's vision is to become '*A people-centred developmental rural district municipality*'. To achieve this, a customer care policy must be developed and adopted to ensure that in our dealing with customers we uphold a high-level customer service. This policy is based upon the National Batho Pele principles which has been translated into putting "People First" and the Back-to-Basics Approach putting emphasis on the values of the "Customer First". Customer care unit is a primary customer contact point set for efficient and quality delivery of services to customers.

The guiding framework is section 152 (1) (b) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 108 of 1996 *WHEREIN the Constitution provides* that one of the objects of local government is to ensure that the provision of services to communities occurs in a sustainable manner.

AND WHEREAS section 195 (1) of the Constitution provides that the public administration must be governed by the democratic values and principles enshrined in the Constitution, including-

- The promotion of the efficient, economic, and effective use of resources.
- The provision of services impartially, fairly, equitably and without bias; and
- The fact that people's needs must be responded to.

AND WHEREAS section 4 (1)(c) of the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000 provides that members of the local community have the right to have access to municipal services which the municipality provides, where applicable and subject to the policy for indigent debtors, pay promptly for services fees, surcharges on fees, other taxes, levies, and duties imposed by the municipality.

AND WHEREAS section 6 (2) (c), (e) and (f) of the Municipal Systems Act provides that the administration of a municipality must take measures to prevent corruption; give members of a local community full and accurate information about the level and standard of municipal services that they are entitled to receive; and inform the local community about how the municipality is managed, of the costs involved and the persons in charge.

AND WHEREAS Chapter 9, sections 95, 96, 97, 98, 99 and 100, of the Systems Act provides for Customer Care Management, Debt Collection responsibility of the municipality, contents of the Policy, Bylaws that give effect to the Policy, Supervisory authority and Implementing authority.

Promotion of Access to Information Act, the Batho Pele Principles, and the government Back to Basics Approach. Chris Hani DM has specific powers and functions expected to honour, amongst others these include Water Services Provision & Authority, Municipal Health Services, Disaster Management, Fire Services, Local Economic Development, coordination of the Presidential Hotline queries, and facilitate access to information through various platforms.

## **2. Definitions**

For the purpose of this policy, the following definitions will apply and any word or expressions to which a meaning has been assigned in any relevant Act or legislation shall bear the same meaning in this Policy, unless the context indicates otherwise.

**Act:** means the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act No. 32 of 2000), as amended from time to time.

**Billing:** means proper formal notification on an account to persons liable for payment of amounts levied for assessment rates and other taxes by the municipality and the charges of the fees for municipal services and indicating the net accumulated balance of the account.

**Council:** the municipal council of the Chris Hani District Municipality.

**Credit control and debt collection** means the functions relating to the collection of all money that is due and payable to the municipality.

**Customer:** refers to someone who buy/purchase municipal products and/or services. It also refers to those who are temporarily subsidised by government as per the indigent policy and/or in rural areas.

**Customer management:** means a dedicated focus on the needs of customers, clients, and partners in a responsive and reciprocal relationship between persons liable for these payments and the municipality, and when applicable, a service provider, thereby limiting the need for enforcement.

**Defaulter:** means a customer owing the municipality money in respect of taxes and/or municipal service charges not paid on the due date for payment.

**Technician:** means a person in charge of the civil engineering duties of the municipality,

**Interest:** constitutes a levy equal in legal priority to service levies and is equivalent to the prime banking rate applicable from time to time.

**Municipal account:** shall include levies or charges in respect of the following services:

- water consumption
- sewerage services
- interest, and municipal health related

**Municipal manager:** means the person appointed by the Municipal Council as the Municipal Manager of the municipality in terms of section 82 of the Local Government Structures Act, 1998 (Act 117 of 1998) and includes any person

- acting in such position, and
- to whom the municipal manager has delegated a power, function or duty in respect of such delegated power, function or duty.

**Municipal services:** those services, rates and taxes reflected on the municipal account for which payment is required by the municipality,

**Chief Financial Officer:** means a person appointed by the Council to manage the Council's financial administration.

### 3. What are our values?

To achieve customer service excellence, it is necessary that CHDM employees have a common set of values that will guide their interaction with customers. As an organization, CHDM will remind employees that there must be a commitment to the following Values that will guide our interactions with customers:

- **Commitment**-to always serve
- **Humanity**- empathize with the plight of our community
- **Respect**- we value the relationship with our customers
- **Integrity**- truthfulness in executing our responsibilities
- **Sincerity**- serve with earnest
- **Honesty**- be faithful and reliable
- **Accountability**- take responsibility for our actions
- **Nurturing**- develop and encourage those in need

- **Innovation-** creativity beyond imagination for the good of our community

#### 4. What are The Batho Pele Principles?

The name Batho Pele means “People First” and the eight principles set out in it are the Government institutions and the public.

- **Consultation-** Citizens should be consulted about the level and quality of the public services they receive and, wherever possible, should be given a choice about the services that are offered.
- **Service Standards-** Citizens should be told what level and quality of public services they will receive so that they are aware of what to expect.
- **Access-** All citizens should have equitable access to the services to which they are entitled.
- **Courtesy-** Citizens should be treated with courtesy and consideration.
- **Information-** Citizens should be given full, accurate information about the public services they are entitled to receive.
- **Openness and Transparency-** Citizens should be told how the Clusters and Service Units of the Municipality are run, how much they cost, and who is in charge.
- **Redress-** If the promised standard of service is not delivered citizens should be offered an apology, a full explanation, and a speedy and effective remedy; and when complaints are made, citizens should receive a sympathetic, positive response.
- **Value for Money-** Public services should be provided economically and efficiently to give citizens the best possible value for money.

#### 5. What is the Back to Basic Pillars

CHDM recognises the need to do things differently to get different solutions. “We cannot solve today’s problems with the same level of thinking that created the problems in the first place” (Albert Einstein). The situation needs a change of paradigm that focuses on serving the people. This is the essence of the ‘back to basics’ approach government is committed to achieve. At the most basic level, CHDM is committed to:

- Putting people and their concerns first and ensure constant contact with communities through effective **public participation** platforms.
- Creating conditions for decent living by consistently delivering municipal **services to the right quality and standard.**
- Being well **governed** and demonstrate good governance and administration-cut wastage, spend public funds prudently, hire competent staff, ensure transparency and accountability.
- Ensuring sound **financial management** and accounting, and prudently manage resources to sustainably deliver services and bring development to communities.
- Building and maintain sound **institutional and administrative capabilities** administered and managed by dedicated and skilled personnel at all levels.

## **6. Who are our customers?**

In many cases customers are loosely referred to as Ratepayers or Consumers. This create an unequal balance as customers are seen either as taxpayers or as people who consume essential services that we, as the CHDM provide. Our aim is to change this mind-set and always remind ourselves that we are dealing with Customers. Thus, the need to create a mutual relationship. In other words, our customers are individuals, and/or households and entities who buy/purchase our products and/or services. This also refers to those who are temporarily registered as indigent and subsidised by government as per the indigent policy and/or in rural areas.

## **7. What is Customer Care and Why is it Important?**

Customer care is treating customers courteously, promptly, and whenever municipal employees are in contact with them. It is important for CHDM to ensure that customers receive a clear response to any service request, enquiry, and complaint within a predefined period. Whilst customer service has been defined as a set of behaviours that an organisation undertakes in its interaction with its customers; customer care is the phrase that is used to describe the taking care of our customers to their absolute convenience. We see good Customer Care as:

- Treating customers with courtesy, dignity, and respect

- Treating customers, the way they would like to be treated
- Treating customers in their language of preference in accordance with the CHDM Language Policy.
- Seeing things according to the customer's point of view
- Providing a good quality service in a friendly, efficient, and helpful manner.
- Giving people the information, they need and providing an explanation if the service is not available.
- Keeping the customer informed of progress in addressing their complaints/requests or enquiries.
- Providing clients quality services, privileges, acknowledgements
- Providing partners quality services and privileges
- Instigate communication with customers listed as defaulters to avoid recurring interests and non-payment of municipal account

#### **8. What are Customer Care Satellite Offices?**

To bring services closer to the people, CHDM has established customer care satellite offices in all local municipalities. This is to put into practice the Batho Pele principles and Back to Basics Approach in dealing with our customers. It is a mobile service providing a basket of services that contains all the elements of the Customer Services. The CHDM is committed to upholding the principles of developmental local government and providing equitable access to government services to all its customers. These principles are at the heart of the CHDM Integrated Development Plan.

#### **9. How will we Measure Our Success?**

The CHDM will back up the Customer Care Policy by specific Customer Service Charter and make it realistic by implementing the Customer Care Strategy for each service delivery department which will be our promise of delivery to customers. All staff members sign a Pledge in which they commit themselves to upholding these standards. We will continuously be monitoring our performance through benchmarking ourselves against other 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/or telephone follow-up of a sample of returns to continuously evaluate customer perceptions of our service.
- Organizing annual focus group sessions and/or customer satisfaction surveys 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 advertise in all our offices CHDM 24/7 toll-free Customer Call Centre where customers can report complaints, poor service, and misuse of municipal properties.

These monitoring methods will assist us to develop programmes to address any shortcomings 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 "Customer Focused Municipality".

#### **10. Customer Care Standards and Management Controls**

At the centre of the CHDM Customer Care Policy is the principle of putting the 'Customer First' in every task and process undertaken. This forces the Municipality to continuously evaluate its processes and how it serves its people. Compliance with and/or adherence to the Customer Service Standards as reflected in the Customer Service Charter must be reflected as a Key Performance Indicator for each service delivery directorate.

The municipality must build continuous training and/or awareness programmes to capacitate staff to realize the importance of customer care. The municipality must ensure that it establish uniform customer care standards across the municipality by adopting common Customer Service Charter to be implemented in line with this customer care policy.

In addition, the municipality must continuously inform customers what standards of customer care they can expect whenever they engage with any employee of the CHDM. These standards are carefully constructed in the Customer Service Charter attached to this Customer Care Policy. Failure to uphold and abide by the adopted Customer Service Charter is considered a serious breach of service standards and therefore, relevant consequence management processes may be affected against that employee.

## PART TWO-CUSTOMER SERVICE CHARTER

### 1. PLEDGE

We, the council of Chris Hani District Municipality representing the institution and all its employees:

**Affirm** our commitment to upholding the values and principles of public administration enshrined in Section 195 of the Constitution and other laws, policies, and frameworks.

**Express** that Chris Hani District Municipality is changing gear, towards creating an environment that will ensure adherence and enforcement of internal controls, high ethical standards in executing our responsibilities and commitment to serve our people.

**Uphold** the vision, mission and values of Chris Hani District Municipality clearly articulated in the rules of order of council in delivering services to the citizenry.

**Note** the continued efforts of coordinating all spheres of government in building better communities inclined towards addressing the needs of CHDM citizens and visitors.

**Equally** concerned about the manifestation of corruption in the local sphere of government and the negative impact it has on the socioeconomic and political landscape of the country.

**Believe** in the rich liberation history of our democratic dispensation which entrenches values and principles of human rights, social, economic, and political rights.

**Motivated** by the proven value of collaboration in building a new South Africa and encouraged by the willingness of all the parties and structures in working towards a common goal of finding mutually beneficial solutions to our common challenges.

**Acknowledge** service delivery challenges and backlogs within the district municipality.

**Promote** a non-racial South Africa

**Commit** ourselves to upholding all 9 articles of the Local Government Service Charter as adopted by parties in the South African Local Government Bargaining Council 9 June 2016.

## **2. PURPOSE**

The Customer Care Charter seeks to ensure that communities are aware that Chris Hani District Municipality is committed to render quality services related to the following core areas, water and sanitation, municipal health, disaster management and fire services. These includes support departments such as budget and treasury, corporate services and integrated planning and economic development.

To ensure that customers have access to CHDM, for purposes of reporting complaints/enquiries and receiving responses to those complaints in a coordinated manner.

## **3. VISION**

This Customer Service Charter is aimed at ensuring complete customer care through providing efficient, affordable, equitable and sustainable services to all, through the partnership with our customers, the local municipalities and the community-based organizations that represents a portion of our customers. Upholding service standards that will enhance effective service delivery within CHDM.

## **4. COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE:**

### **4.1 Complaints Registration**

All CHDM customer complaints shall be registered with the customer call centre 0800 100 100 or email [customercare@chrishanidm.gov.za](mailto:customercare@chrishanidm.gov.za).

Walk-ins' complaints may be received from any of our offices and registered with customer care satellite offices or customer call centre. Complaints register book and/or any electronic complaints management system must be utilised for proper data management and effectiveness. This means every employee must take reasonable steps to take complaints from customers and redirect it to the customer call centre. Customer care satellite offices situated in all local municipalities must always have access to the system to register walk-in complaints and other complaints. Every complaint must be recorded, a reference number generated, and an acknowledgement of receipt given to the complainant.

#### 4.1 Assigning a complaint and communication.

Communication quoting the complaint reference number must be done to the relevant technician/officer/plumber who will carry out the work required to address the complaint. A job card must be issued and marked with the reference number. Depending on the complexity of the matter coupled with the availability of resources, a complaint shall be attended to according to the timelines as per customer charter stipulated below. Customers are most welcome to measure the district municipality against these standards

#### 5. SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT

We have developed the following service level agreements (SLA) for the municipality. Customers will have the opportunity to measure us against these.

<b>HEALTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICES</b>		
<b>SERVICES TITLE</b>	<b>SERVIC DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>SERVICES LEVEL DAYS</b>
COMMUNITY SERVICE	General Correspondence	10
EVENTS	Events and Festivals	30
FIRE SERVICES	Chemical Spills	Immediately
	Building Fires	Immediately
	Field, hazardous and vehicle fires	Immediately
WATER QUALITY		2
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	Environmental Health: General enquiries	1

<b>CORPORATE SERVICES</b>		
<b>SERVICE TITLE</b>	<b>SERVICE DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>SERVICE LEVEL DAYS</b>
ADMINISTRATION	Response to correspondence	5
	Request for records	14
CORPORATE SERVICES	General – correspondence	10
HUMAN RESOURCES	Job applications – Not shortlisted	30
	General - CV `s	5
LEGAL SERVICES	Complaints By: Laws enforcement	14
	Complaints: Contract management	14

<b>FINANCIAL SERVICES</b>		
<b>SECTION TITLE</b>	<b>SERVICE DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>SERVICE LEVEL DAYS</b>
ACCOUNT ENQUIRIES	Account accuracy	5
	General enquiries Financial – Finance	5
	Tariffs	5

ASSETS & INSURANCE	Acknowledge receipt of insurance claim	5
	Processing time (after receipt of all documents requested from other departments)	14
	Notification of decision (after receipt of decision from insurers)	14
CREDIT CONTROL	Indigent applications	21
	Payment arrangements	1
	Rebates	21
CUSTOMER INFORMATION	Change of address	1
	Name change: meter	1
FINANCIAL SERVICES	General -Correspondence	10
TRADE SERVICES	New connections	14
	Reconnections	2
	Meter reading	3
	Suspended	3

INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES		
SERVICES TITLE	SERVICE DESCRIPTION	SERVICE LEVEL DAYS
METERING	Faulty meters	1

	Meter tampering	1
SEWERAGE	Blockages: Sewer Reticulation	2
	Broken sewer pipes	2
	New connections: sewer	7
	Sewer smells: Investigate	2
TECHNICAL SERVICES	General – correspondence	10
WATER	Pipe burst	1
	Faulty meters	1
	Fire hydrant leakages	1
	Meter testing	2
	New connections: water	7
	Valve leakages	1
	Water tanker delivery	1
	Water quality check	1
	Burst pipe: main leakage	1

<b>INTEGRATED PLANNING &amp; ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT</b>		
BUILDING INSPECTORATE	Inspection of municipal buildings	10
HOUSING	Emergency housing kits: Fire damage	5

	Emergency housing kits: storm damage	5
	Enquiries: General	5
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT	General – correspondence	5

Please direct all complaints, enquiries, disputes and report a blocked sewer, a burst water main, a leaking pipe etc. to the any of our customer care satellite offices, CHDM 24 hour call centre on 0800 100 100 alternatively email [customercare@chrishanidm.gov.za](mailto:customercare@chrishanidm.gov.za)

### EFFECTIVE DATE

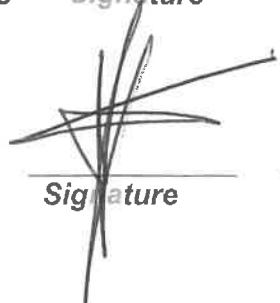
The Customer Care Policy and Service Charter takes effect from **01<sup>st</sup> of July 2024**.

Council Resolution number: C143  
2023-2024

Signed by Municipal Manager:

G. Mashiri  \_\_\_\_\_  
Initial & Surname Signature Date

Signed by Speaker of Council:

J. CENGANI  \_\_\_\_\_  
Initial & Surname Signature Date