



Unified Code of Conduct for Customer Service

Government of Kingdom of Bahrain



Unified Code of Conduct for Customer Service

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Chapter I: Objectives of the Unified Code of Conduct for Customer Service



In compliance with the directives of His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al-Khalifa, Crown Prince and Prime Minister, May God Protect Him, to continue the development of government work and strive towards the advancement of the overall development goals of the Kingdom of Bahrain, a unified code of conduct for customer service was developed and published. The code of conduct enables customer service employees in government entities to achieve excellence and improve services for the overall quality of government transactions and services provided to citizens and residents of the Kingdom of Bahrain.

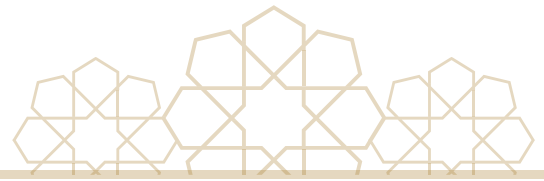


Thus, the Code of Conduct was developed to provide employees with the tools and knowledge essential to achieve excellence in customer service in the following aspects:

- **Promote** customer service to achieving customer satisfaction with government service providers.
- **Provide** customer service employees with clear instructions to perform their duties to the highest standard.
- **Motivate** customer service employees to excel and improve their performance.
- **Unified** service delivery levels across government entities.
- **Provide** entities with special standards to improve and develop the quality of services provided.
- **Enhance** efficiency of customer service employees.

This unified guide will provide instructions and guidelines on how to communicate with customers and provide services whether in service centers or remotely via phone, email, or virtual channels such as video calls.

Chapter II: Unified Customer Service Document



To continue the Government of the Kingdom of Bahrain's consistent approach to the persistent development of services provided to customers, and in order to maintain a high level of quality, a unified code of conduct document has been developed. The Unified Customer Service document is a demonstration of the set of values and principles that the government of Bahrain is committed to in providing the best services and achieving a unified standard for the government through employees who serve customers through various communication channels.



This document aims to:

- **Enhance** customer confidence and satisfaction with government services and provide customers with a distinct experience when dealing with government entities through various channels.
- **Educate** customers about their rights and duties.
- **Work** constantly towards developing government services that meet customer needs and provide exceptional services.



Our employees values

- **Meet customer needs:** Build a sophisticated relationship with customers and provide them with distinct services through professional cooperation and dealing.
- **Qualified Employees:** Full awareness of the procedures and policies regarding the services provided and efficient customer engagement.
- **Cooperation:** Work as a team to understand customer needs and provide the best services.
- **Continuous Development:** Strive to always develop the skills and abilities necessary to deliver an outstanding experience to the customer.

Chapter II: Unified Customer Service Document (Cont'd)



Our duties toward our customers

- **Respect**, appreciate and value ethical standards of friendliness and professionalism.
- **Pay full attention** to you and provide outstanding services to meet your expectations and needs.
- **Equal** treatment of all customers with priority given to older persons and persons with special needs.
- **Save** your time and serve you as soon as possible.
- **Maintain** personal privacy and confidentiality in dealing with you and your information.
- **Provide** our services at your convenience and through accessible channels.
- **Provide** a qualified and skillful staff to work with you and provide the best services to you.
- **Provide** clear information about each service and its requirements.
- **Receive** your complaints and comments and work to resolve them as soon as possible.
- **Listen** carefully to your opinions and suggestions to develop our services.



What we expect from you for an exceptional service

- **Respect** the values, principles and traditions of Bahraini society.
- **Appreciate** our staff's efforts and treat them with mutual respect.
- **Provide** accurate and precise information when filling out service forms.
- **Provide** all supporting and necessary documents to receive the service in an accurate and proper manner.
- **Transparency** in responding to customer service team inquiries.
- **Report** if there is an error during service delivery or a change in personal information immediately.
- **Offer** your opinions and suggestions to improve our services.
- **Participate** in surveys and questionnaires to better serve you.



Customer complaints

Complaint handling values

- **Credibility**: Treat customers with transparency, fairness and equality.
- **Responsibility**: Receive customer complaints and deal with them promptly.
- **Efficiency**: Respond to all incoming cases without delay.
- **Innovation**: Innovative ideas that can be applied to the challenges of complaint resolution.

Chapter III: Capabilities Model for Exceptional Service Delivery



The capability model is considered an essential starting point for the provision of exceptional services, as it is rooted in national values and a set of human capabilities that begin with empathy, attention, care, partnership and trust. The model also includes a range of specialized capabilities which is required of the customer service employee such as professional communication, resilience and adaptability, positive impact and innovative initiatives. The model also classifies the principle of equality and inclusiveness in service delivery as follows:



I. Human Skills

- **Empathy:** Requesting customer feedback by following up on their request.
- **Attention:** Engage with the customer consciously during service delivery by providing a positive environment that contributes to an overall satisfaction with services being provided.
- **Care:** Professional communication with customers after service, to emphasize customer service employees' commitment to achieving services beyond expectations.
- **Involvement:** Involve customers in the development and improvement phases of services to provide services that meet actual needs.
- **Trust:** is the principle that defines the reciprocal relationship between all parties.



II. Interpersonal Skills

- **Professional Communication:** Communicate professionally with all customers with both citizens and residents.
- **Resilience and adaptability:** Adapt to latest trends and changes in the customer service center and dealing with the entity, work team and customers with flexibility.
- **Positive effect:** Demonstrate positive behaviour during service delivery to reflect the positive image of government services.
- **Innovative initiatives:** Develop the customer service system by providing personal and organizational initiatives.

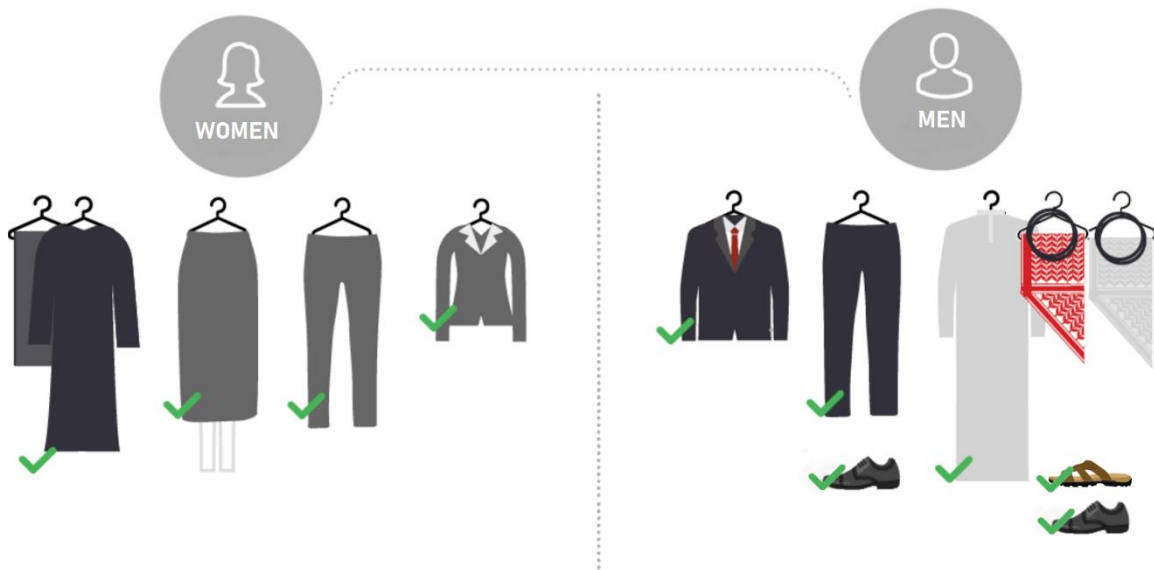
Chapter IV: Service Guidelines for Customer Service Centers



This chapter illustrates the guidelines customer service centers should follow according to best practices. The guidelines are divided by the service delivery process in customer service centers.



- Ensure adherence to the official uniform during duty:



- All employees should wear ID cards, if applicable, with their full name and job title in Arabic and English or ensure identification boards are visible on front desks.
- Ensure that the service delivery environment is clean and well prepared.
- Arrive 15 minutes before the service starting time to ensure presence before the arrival of customers, and to operate e-service systems.
- Avoid delays for the customer.

Chapter IV: Service Guidelines for Customer Service Centers (cont.)



During service delivery

- **Welcome** customers in a standing or sitting position with a smile and greet them by saying one of the following: Assalam alaikum, hello, good morning/evening, how can I help you?
- **Treat** customers with respect and kindness by demonstrating national values without prejudice to and adhere to the principles of fairness and inclusiveness in service delivery.
- **Pay full attention** to customers and ignore any distractions such as gatherings, the telephone, etc.
- **Demonstrate** readiness and willingness to serve customers and do not refuse to deal with any type of customer.
- **Adhere** to the following techniques while serving your customers:
 - Maintain eye contact .
 - Avoid using personal smart devices.
 - Maintain an appropriate seating position.
 - Work with a smile.
 - Distinguish offices with absent staff for any reason.
 - Keep offices clean and tidy.
 - Speak clearly and calmly and avoid speaking loudly.
 - Take your breaks outside of service desk areas to maintain the formality of the area.
 - Use proper and clear language when engaging with the customer.
 - Avoiding eating or chewing gum during service delivery and avoid smoking (including electronic cigarettes).
- **Identify** customer needs and explain service delivery steps and requirements clearly for each stage.
- **Employee should** be fully aware of the procedures and laws and be able to answer inquiries. If you are not sure, please inform your customer to wait until you get the answer in order to avoid providing false or inaccurate information.
- **Employee should** be responsible for any error. Employee should show a desire to resolve the error and avoid blaming colleagues and procedures.
- **Employee should** communicate positively and professionally.
- **Employee should** maintain the privacy of service delivery with the customers.



After service

- **Notify** the customer of the steps taken to provide the service and the expected time to complete the service.
- **End the service** in a positive manner by saying the following:
 - Is there anything else I can help you with?
 - Have a great day, happy to serve you, or have a nice day.
- **Pursue your** customer's request and keep them updated according to the standards of the Service Level Agreement (SLA), by text message, email or other means.

Chapter V: Guidelines for Customer Care via Call Centers



Phone calls are a widely used and important tool for customers, therefore employees should be competent in dealing with customers through phone calls. Customer service employees should be aware of all guidelines and instructions to improve the process of customer engagement through phone calls.



The following demonstrates the best practices that employees should adhere to:

- **Quickness:** Prompt response to phone calls and not delaying the customer.
- **Customer satisfaction:** Try to meet customer requirements from the first phone call.



The following illustrates the guidelines for dealing with customers over the phone:

- **Greeting:** Greet the customer, mention your name and department and ask for the customer's name and offer your help. And that is according to the following:
 - Assalam Alaikum /Good morning or good evening.
 - Mention your name and department.
 - May I know your name so I can serve you?
 - Please, how can I can help you?
- **Listening and attentiveness:** Don't interrupt the customer, listen carefully and respond with interest and consideration to customers feelings.
- **Formality and tactfulness:** Use simple communication language with your customers by using clear and understandable official terms. Try to avoid general or technical terms which are difficult to understand.
- **Attention:** Avoid distraction with other tasks while talking to your customer over the phone and focus on service delivery.
- **Save information:** Employee should save the information of each transaction.
- **Readiness and ability to answer.**
- **Proactiveness and positivity.**



Steps to end the phone call session:

- **Brevity:** Notify the customer of what they want by reminding them of their request and ensuring their requirements are understood, and following up with what actions and steps will be taken.
- **Customer Satisfaction:** Show the customer your appreciation, thank them for calling, apologize if the process was lengthy and ask if there is anything else you can help with.
- **Ending the phone call:** Do not end phone calls before the customer.



Steps to put customer on hold:

- **Ask** for permission to keep customer on hold and mention the estimated waiting time.
- **Thank** the customer for waiting.



Steps to follow if the phone call needs to be transferred to another employee:

- **Explain** the reasons for transferring the call to another specialized employee and notify the customer of the employee's name.
- **Request** permission to transfer.
- **Inform** the other employee of the caller's identity and subject matter so that they are fully prepared. If the other employee does not respond, the call should return to the first employee.

Chapter VI: Guidelines for Customer Care via Virtual Channels



a) E-mails

Recently, the percentage of customers who prefer to communicate via e-mail when submitting their services request and inquiries has increased. Given the large number of e-mails that entities and authorities receive from customers, which requires effort on the part of the employees to respond to, all sectors should **adhere to best practices in responding to e-mails** to ensure that customers' needs are fully met.



Important instructions before responding to emails:

- **E-mails should be answered** according to the entity's Service Level Agreement (SLA) and within 24 hours if not specified.
- **Make sure** you use clear and formal language free from spelling and grammatical errors.
- **To ensure** workflow continuation in the absence of an employee, colleagues should be involved when responding to emails.
- **When receiving** e-mail messages, employees should read the message thoroughly and understand the customer's requirements.
- **Prepare** the points required to answer the customer and determine the best way to respond, whether by email or phone.



Responding to email messages:

- **Subject:** Mail subject should be brief and relevant.
- **Title:** Make sure to address your customers using "Mr./Mrs./Ms." before the customer's name " or "Dear Customer". After that, greet and thank the customer for their message.
- **Text:** The text should be clear, brief and should respond to all inquiries. If transferring to a specialized employee is required, the email should be shared with the specialized employee.
- **Signature:** End the email by writing a greeting with the employee name, job title, administration, and contact number.



Avoid the following points:

- Using inappropriate font size.
- Writing phrases that can be misunderstood or using slang.
- Discussing confidential information via email.

Chapter VI: Guidelines for Customer Care via Virtual Channels (Cont.)



b) Video Calls:

Video call platforms for customer service have recently been gaining momentum as they offer face-to-face communication with customers and allow employees to read customer facial expressions and enhance virtual communication.

Role of customer service employee during video calls:



Key instructions before initiating a video call with a customer:

- **Customer service employee should** ensure that the system and computer are set up and working, prepare all the necessary paperwork and tools, and open the camera during the conversation.
- **The place** should be quiet with proper lighting and no disturbances.
- **Ensure** video call is convenient and acceptable to customer by scheduling an appointment in advance.
- **Maintain** an elegant and tidy appearance.
- **Use** an appropriate and formal background or use a formal and standardized departmental virtual background.



During a video call, the customer service employee should:

- **Ensure** full face visibility.
- **Welcome** and greet with a smile.
- **Speak** in a calm tone and communicate by looking at the camera.
- **Be** prepared and have the ability to answer.
- **Try to** simplify the procedures.
- **Don't end** the call before customer.



c) Live Chat:

Live chat is a good tool to solve the problems of delay in responding to customer inquiries and always provides immediate support to customers, especially while customers are browsing the website. Live chat adds a human touch to the website and provides a sense of reassurance to customers that someone is present to help in completing the service. Therefore authorities should provide a live chat feature on websites to enable customer provision on their websites. The following are instructions for how to handle live chat features if managed by employees and not by Chatbot:



Live chat benefits:

- During live chat, the employee **can send** a link to the customer to immediately direct them to the appropriate location to finalize their request.
- **Provide** immediate and continuous support to customers.



Responsibilities of live chat employee:

- **Should be familiar with** technical and technological aspects to quickly serve customers on the website.
- **Should be familiar** with all services provided and required actions.
- **Well trained** to use error-free language.
- **Highly skilled** in submitting rapid written responses.



Dealing with customers through live chat:

- **Greeting:** Welcome your customer, state your name and offer assistance.
- **Be attentive:** Give full attention to customer's request and try to provide solutions.
- **Be fast:** Respond quickly and avoid delays.



Ending the session:

- **Ask** the customer if they require another service.
- **Thank** the customer for visiting the website and the live chat.
- **End** the session formally.

Chapter VII: Handling Customer Complaints Guideline



Customer satisfaction is what determines the effectiveness of government service centers. Therefore awareness of satisfaction and dissatisfaction levels are important to improve and develop the level of service provided.

Government entities should make their customers aware of the means of submitting complaints and proposals by placing multi-language posts in visible sites, on their websites and through their social media accounts.

In order to maintain transparency and trust, customers should be encouraged to use the “Tawasul” App to submit complaints and proposals, as well as the ability to meet with the Director of the Customer Service Center easily to submit complaints or observations if they wish to do so.

Instructions:



- **Awareness:** Be fully aware of the existence of the problem while avoiding agitating the customer and apologizing when necessary. Take into account the customer’s feelings and contain any problems when they arise. Inform the customer that their problem is understood and examine the available routes to solve it.
- **Solution:** If the problem is unclear, the customer service employee should tactfully request additional information from the customer and try to provide appropriate solutions.
- **Directions:** If the appropriate solution cannot be provided, the customer service employee should be transparent about the reasons and direct the customer to alternative solutions.
- **Patient:** Customer service employees should be patient, understand the customer's problem, and maintain a consistent and balanced tone of voice.

Chapter VIII: General Rules



- Employees should be assigned to each communication channel to ensure serving as many customers as possible.
- Entities should develop guidelines for employees to answer frequently asked questions and update them periodically.
- Entities should provide customer service employees with the necessary training, familiarize them with laws and procedures, and coach them on social and emotional intelligence skills.
- Entities should ensure that services are provided in both Arabic and English.
- If the employee is verbally abused by the customer, the employee is requested to contact the immediate administrator to report the matter.
- Entities and employees should make the process easier for older customers and customers with special needs.
- Consider the Code of Conduct and Public Positions Ethics (Civil Service Instruction Attachment No. (16) of 2016).
- It is important to select and employ the appropriate customer service team and ensure they have all the required skills prior to the team selection process.
- Continuous assessment of the team by establishing goals and key performance indicators associated with the unified code of conduct for customer service and evaluate employees accordingly.

This guide was developed with reference to Customer Service Quality Assurance principles, instructions and rules, along with the application of global best practices. Relevant government entities and partners were involved in the process of preparing the guide.
