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Department:
Public Service and Administration
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

GUIDE ON DEVELOPING A SERVICE DELIVERY CHARTER

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1. INTRODUCTION TO SERVICE DELIVERY CHARTER

Responding to the challenges presented by the legacy of the past and of having to rise to the legitimate demands of citizens to be treated as service beneficiaries, as opposed to mere users of public services, has been acknowledged as an enormous and daunting task.

The Public service exists to serve the needs of the people. All citizens have a right to expect high-quality public services, which meet their needs.

The main challenge facing the public service is to move from “knowing” to “doing”. It has to discover ways of working that encourage new attitudes and organisational cultures and which develop new skills and competencies.

To help transform attitudes and the culture of the Public service from a “can’t do” rules bound mindset to a “can and will do” service delivery commitment, government introduced the concept of Batho Pele – putting people first. The White Paper on the Transformation of Public Service Delivery (Batho Pele) lists eight basic principles to enhance service delivery.

All public servants are exhorted to internalise these principles and make Batho Pele a way of life.

THE EIGHT PRINCIPLES OF BATHO PELE

1. **Consultation:**
Citizens should be consulted on the level and quality of public services they receive and, wherever possible, should be given a choice on the services that are offered.
2. **Service standards:**
Citizens should be told what level and quality of public service they will receive.
3. **Access:**
All citizens should have equal access to services.
4. **Courtesy:**
Citizens should be treated with courtesy and consideration.
5. **Information:**

Citizens should be given full, accurate information about services.

6. Openness and transparency:

Citizens should be told how Departments are run, how much they cost and who is in charge.

7. Redress:

If the promised standard of service is not delivered, citizens should be offered an apology and a speedy and effective remedy.

8. Value for money:

Public services should be provided economically and efficiently in order to give citizens best possible value for money.

THE SERVICE DELIVERY PLANNING CONTEXT

A Service Delivery Planning (SDP) framework and methodology was developed in 2011 to put in place the capacity for planning, developing, implementation and institutionalization of service delivery tools, systems, processes, mechanisms and intervention programmes that are meant to improve and institutionalise quality service delivery to all. Central to this, is the development of the service delivery planning and implementation value chain that includes individual frameworks and toolkits stipulating the minimum required norms and standards for Service delivery modeling, business process mapping, review and management, standard operating procedures, unit costing, setting of service standards, **service charters** and the sustainability of service delivery improvement plans, compliance, monitoring and reporting.

Our aim is to help operational managers develop and implement a Service Delivery Charter for their department or component.

This will have an immediate three-fold benefit in that it will:

- reinforce the department's or the component's commitment to service delivery improvement for all end-users;
- help the department or component rise to the challenge of treating citizens as service beneficiaries and meeting their demands equitable and fairly; and
- immeasurably enhance communications with customers.

The responsibility for developing and implementing a Service Delivery Charter vests with the institutions or bodies responsible for delivering services to the public. Operational managers must involve their frontline staff in the process of developing a Service Delivery Charter. They must be encouraged to take

ownership of the values and principles expressed in the Charter. In the final analysis, the responsibility of implementing the Charter vests with the individuals who are at the coalface, namely, the frontline staff. Without their commitment and support, improving service delivery will remain a distant, idealistic dream.

2. HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

The aim of this guide is to introduce the Service Delivery Charter and to provide a frame of reference for developing a Service Delivery Charter

This guide will give:

- A definition of Service Delivery Charter
- Explains how developing a Service Delivery Charter can be used as a learning opportunity;
- Provides guidelines and best practices on developing a Service Delivery Charter
- Outlines the objectives, outcomes and key performance indicators of a Service Delivery Charter
- Illustrates the links to legislation and the Batho Pele White Paper;
- A step-by-step guide on how to develop a Service Delivery Charter;
- Offers some key considerations to think about during the process;

3. WHAT IS A SERVICE DELIVERY CHARTER?

A Service Delivery Charter is a statement of commitment that a department or component makes towards service delivery. It should be developed to suit the needs of individual departments or components.

There is no rigid format, but it should address the following as a minimum:

- The name of the department or component.
- The physical, postal and e-mail addresses of the department/component.
- The days and times that the department/component is open to the public.
- A list of the (core) services provided.
- A statement of the service standards that service beneficiaries can expect.
- An explanation of how queries and/or complaints will be dealt with.
- A statement of the service beneficiary's rights.
- A statement of the service beneficiary's obligations.
- A pledge to maintain service delivery standards.

4. SERVICE DELIVERY CHARTER AS A LEARNING OPPORTUNITY

Developing a Service Standards to be published in the Service Delivery Charter is a consultative process and affords managers an opportunity of learning about the organisation itself and communities it serves.

Consultation as such lends to the following learning opportunities:

- understanding the circumstances of your service beneficiaries
- knowing what your service beneficiaries need and expect;
- understanding one's own shortcomings;
- understanding one's own limitations;
- realising what is realistic and "doable" and what is not; and
- coming to a deeper understanding of Batho Pele or putting "people first".

Improving service delivery is a continuous, progressive process, it is never complete and as standards are met, new standards should be set. This on-going process allows for learning and improvement.

5. GUIDELINES FOR DEVELOPING A SERVICE DELIVERY CHARTER

The following guidelines should be borne in mind developing a Service Delivery Charter:

- get buy-in and commitment;
- set realistic targets;
- communicate widely; and
- reward staff.

Each of these will be dealt with in detail.

5.1 Buy-in and commitment

It is crucial to involve staff in the development of a Service Delivery Charter so that you get their buy-in and commitment to improve service delivery. Encourage staff to become custodians of the process so that they can take ownership of the Charter. It is also important for the staff to know and understand the committed service standards.

5.2 Set realistic targets

When consulting service beneficiaries during setting of service standards, do it intelligently and realistically. Make them aware of resources and the bigger picture of the transformation process. Set realistic targets.

5.3 Communicate widely

Develop and implement a well-structured communication strategy to ensure that it serves as a vehicle for Batho Pele. Think creatively about imparting information to all audiences and again consider the cost implications.

5.4 Reward staff

Announce positive results of the programme and reward individuals who have been particularly instrumental in making the Charter come alive.

6. THE OBJECTIVE OF DEVELOPING A SERVICE DELIVERY CHARTER

The objectives of developing a Service Delivery Charter are many. However, in the main, the purpose of such a Charter is to express a commitment to service delivery in which:

- published standards of service delivery are maintained;
- the treatment of all end-users as service beneficiaries is encouraged;
- service beneficiary's' rights are protected;
- relationships with service beneficiaries are enhanced; and, finally,
- the transformation of the public service from a rules bound bureaucracy to a results driven organisation is accelerated.

7. LINKS TO BATHO PELE

The Batho Pele principles have already been listed. It is clear that a Service Delivery Charter embodies most, if not all of these principles, in that it must:

- Specify the services provided, which must be decided in consultation with the service beneficiaries.
- Provide information on where the services may be accessed.
- State the service beneficiary's rights and obligations to facilitate courtesy.
- Provide full information on what services are provided and where they can be accessed.

8. LINKS TO LEGISLATION

Apart from the White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery, which has already been mentioned, the most powerful mandates for the development and implementation of a Service Delivery Charter come from:

- The Constitution.
- The Promotion of Administrative Justice Act. No3 of 2000.
- The Promotion of Access to Information Act, No2 of 2000.
- The Public service Regulations of 2001.

8.1 The Constitution

The nine principles governing public administration provided in section 195 of the Constitution insist that public services should be announced and that public servants should commit to provide services of a standard that meet the needs of the service beneficiaries.

8.2 The Promotion of Administrative Justice Act no. 3 Of 2000

This act confirms the service beneficiary's right to consultation and redress if his or her rights are adversely affected by an administrative action and a Service Delivery Charter should stipulate how these rights will be upheld.

8.3 The Promotion of Access to Information Act no. 2 of 2000

The Act gives effect to a citizen's constitutional right of access to information held by the State and any information that is held by another person and which is required for the exercise or protection of any rights, in order to:

- foster a culture of transparency and accountability in public services by giving effect to the right of access to information; and
- promote a society in which the people of South Africa have effective access to information to enable them to exercise and protect all of their rights.

A Service Delivery Charter is an important means of complying with these mandates and giving full expression to provisions of the law.

8.4 The Public Service Regulations of 2001

Part C of the Regulations states that an executing authority shall establish and sustain a service delivery improvement programme for his/her department that must include:

- a) an identification of the type of actual and potential service beneficiaries and the main services to be provided to them;
- b) the existing and future arrangements with the department's actual and potential service beneficiaries;
- c) the service beneficiary's means of access to the services, the barriers to increased access and the mechanisms or strategies to be utilised progressively to remove the barriers so that access can be increased;
- d) the existing and future service standards for the main services to be provided;
- e) the existing and future arrangements on how information about the department's services are provided; and
- f) the current and future complaints system or mechanisms.

An executing authority shall establish an annual statement of public service commitment (a Service Delivery Charter) which will contain the department's service standards that citizens and service beneficiaries can expect and which will explain how the department will fulfill each of the standards.

Whilst the executing authority remains accountable for the service delivery of his or her department and the development of Service Delivery Charters by institutions or components within the department which interface directly with the public, all employees have a responsibility to implement the tenets of the Charter(s) and to improve service delivery.

9. KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

The following aspects are key performance indicators:

- A Service Delivery Charter developed and displayed at strategic points;
- Standards are met and continuously raised – improved service delivery;
- An increase in the number of compliments or complaints – an indication that service beneficiaries know what standards to expect.

10. OUTCOMES

The primary outcomes of successfully implementing a Service Delivery Charter will be:

- improved service delivery;
- greater job satisfaction for public servants;
- more satisfied service beneficiaries; and
- the accelerated transformation of the Public service.

Secondary outcomes will be:

- greater consultation with service beneficiaries;
- better communications with service beneficiaries; and
- fewer complaints by service beneficiaries.

11. STEP BY STEP GUIDE ON DEVELOPING OF A SERVICE DELIVERY CHARTER

There are seven main steps to follow when developing a Service Delivery Charter as outlined below:



11.1 Step 1: Who Are We?

The answer will take the form of: “We are the Department of “

11.2 Step 2: Where Can We Be Found?

All the physical locations of the department where services are delivered to end-users must be identified and listed, clearly giving the address details.

In addition, telephone and fax numbers must be provided for each location, as well as e-mail addresses, if applicable. Where call centres have been established, these must be identified with their corresponding address details. It is critically important that the days of the week and times during which the services may be accessed are clearly stated.

It is preferable to provide all this information by geographical area so that end-users can establish the most suitable location for their needs. For remote locations it is advisable to provide full directions of how to get to the service point.

11.3 Step 3: List All Services and Products

It is necessary here to list all the services provided by the department and then to specify which services are available at each location.

In addition, full information must be provided on what the service beneficiaries need to do or take with them in order to access the services, for example, ID documents, birth certificates, photographs, medical histories, educational qualifications and certificates, etc.

A commitment to the Batho Pele principles will enhance the Charter. It is suggested that a statement along the following lines be included here: “The provision of our services will be based on the principles of Batho Pele and we undertake to honour these principles by ... (indicate here how you will give force to each of the Batho Pele principles in delivering the relevant services). “

This is not a simple exercise and requires thought and discussion with staff as well as end-users. Some of the best ways to consult with staff and service beneficiaries is by way of focus groups. These groups should be representative and often work best with a mixture of staff and service beneficiaries. The facilitator must be a mature and preferably senior member of staff, well-versed in the services of the department.

It must be accepted that the findings of these focus groups may require the department to review or even revise some of its services and how they are provided.

Once the focus groups have been held it is useful to send out questionnaires to a cross section of end-users, asking the same sort of questions addressed during the focus groups. This may provide additional important information and will serve as a useful control mechanism. The same focus groups and questionnaires can be used to provide the input to the next two steps.

11.4 Step 4: Our Service Standards

Having established realistic and relevant service standards through the focus groups each service should be listed with the standards applicable to this particular service. The standards may be introduced with the following statement: “We have set the following minimum standards for the level and quality of the services we provide.”

Remember that your service beneficiaries, as a result of previous disadvantage, may not be in a position to articulate appropriate standards and may thus not expect much from you. On the other hand their expectations might be totally unrealistic. The focus groups should help them understand more clearly what they can rightfully expect from your department.

Times change and service beneficiaries’ needs may change with them. In order to monitor standards and service beneficiary satisfaction it will be necessary, at regular intervals to review the standards. Again, focus groups can be used to facilitate this process. However, a simple questionnaire at service points is a useful interim device to ensure that service delivery is still on track and meeting the needs and expectations of service beneficiaries. This questionnaire can also be used to determine changed needs or new expectations.

11.5 Step 5: How We Will Deal With Queries and Complaints

Here service beneficiaries will be reassured about their rights by committing your department to *redress* procedures and courteous assistance.

If your department has set up a complaints/help desk, this must be clearly stated, with full particulars and an explanation on how to access this service, with full details, including the names of staff in attendance. You may wish to follow the following guidelines in completing this section of your Charter:

- When you write to us we shall:
 - Acknowledge your letter or e-mail within () days of receiving it.
 - Provide you with the name of the person handling your query.
 - Provide you with a reference number, where applicable.
 - Tell you when you can expect a full response.
 - Provide you with telephonic and e-mail contact details, for example, “You can call or e-mail Mr/Ms ... on (telephone

number and area code) or at (e-mail address) between () and () from Monday to Friday.

- If you have a complaint:
 - Tell us.
 - We shall apologise and try to put things right immediately.
 - If you are not happy with our response you can contact Mr/Ms ... on

- Please tell us what you think of our services and standards and whether you think we are meeting them. We would appreciate any comments and/or criticism you may have. Please contact: Mr/Ms () at: Telephone (..) Fax: () e-mail (..)

Finally, under the heading of standards, it is useful to give an undertaking to publish the results of the department's performance in a publication available to the public. The following statement may be helpful: "We shall publish the results of our performance against our standards for the year 2012 in (name of publication) on (date)."

11.6 Step 6: Your Rights

Here you must list the service beneficiary's rights. We suggest the following:

You have the right to all the Batho Pele principles, especially the following:

- Courteous behaviour at all times.
- Full information.
- Prompt and efficient service.
- Redress and an apology for lapses in our service.

The above may need to change, depending on the department and the nature of the services provided.

11.7 Step 7: Your Obligations

While it is critically important that the Service Delivery Charter should spell out the rights of service beneficiaries, they need to be reminded that service delivery is a two-way street and that they have certain obligations as well. For example, you may wish to remind them that they too need to be courteous and civil and respect the dignity of officials they encounter.

12. SOME KEY CONSIDERATIONS

Once the Service Delivery Charter has been completed it should be widely distributed to service beneficiaries and displayed within the department, especially at service points.

13. SERVICE POINT SPECIFIC

Once the Service Delivery Charter has been completed, it is important to ensure that it is customised to reflect service point specific information. E.g. The National Department of Home Affairs may not necessarily provide the same service as one of the provincial or district offices. The service point specific charters must in turn be published at the specific service point.

ANNEXURE 1: FORMAT OF A SERVICE DELIVERY CHARTER

SERVICE DELIVERY CHARTER

The Department of.....

Who are we?

We are the Department of.....

Where can we be found?

We can be found at the following centres:.....

The services we provide

We provide the following services:.....

You will be able to make use of these services by:.....

You will need the following documents to access these services:.....

Our service provision is based on the principles of Batho Pele and we shall fulfil these principles by

Our Service standards

We have set the following minimum standards for the level and quality of services we provide

- ✓ When you write to us we shall:
- ✓ Acknowledge your letter within () days of receiving it.
- ✓ Provide you with a contact name for future queries. Advise you when you can expect a reply.
- ✓ Provide you with telephone, fax and e-mail details.

Our performance against our standards

- ✓ We shall publish the results of our performance against our standards each year in our annual report

- ✓ You have the right to all the Batho Pele principles, especially the following:
- ✓ -Courteous behaviour -etc.
- ✓ We expect you to be civil, courteous and respect the dignity of our officials at all times