



LAGOS STATE GOVERNMENT

PUBLIC SERVICE MANAGEMENT

Lagos State **Service Charter Policy**

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1.0 Background

In his inaugural address, Governor Babatunde Raji Fashola promised Lagosians that his would be *"...a government with a clear vision...a clear compelling purpose from which its priorities shall logically flow..."* His government envisions that,

"In the next decade, Lagos State will truly be a centre of excellence and Africa's economic hub. Our Lagos State will have a strong cultural identity, will be a driver of social and political trends and the Lagos metropolitan area will become one of the top 10 megacities in the world in terms of urban living indices".

This vision is to be actualized by government's determination, as articulated in its mission statement, to *...efficiently provide a conducive and sustainable environment where citizens engage in legitimate activities of their choice in pursuit of a healthy life and prosperity, in harmony.*

These are all encapsulated in the Lagos State Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (LASEEDS), the Ten-Point Agenda (T-PA), and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and other high level policy instruments which set out government's response to the challenges facing the state. Accordingly, the government had initiated several projects and interventions to address these challenges. One such project was the 'Project Wheel', launched in 2008.

A key output of the Project Wheel is the development of a Strategic Management Framework, a comprehensive transformation blueprint to guide the state towards achievement of its vision and mission statements. One of the recommendations of the blue print is the need for a Performance Management Framework including the introduction and use of Service Charters in all Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) in Lagos State.

This Service Charter Policy sets out government intentions and directives for the implementation of Service Charters to ensure improved customer-focused service delivery by MDAs to all citizens of Lagos State.

2.0 Effective date

This Policy takes effect from...

3.0 Scope and Applicability

This Policy applies to all LASG Ministries, Departments, Extra-Ministerial Departments and Agencies in Lagos State, their staff, customers and stakeholders. Specifically, the policy is applicable to:

- a) Lagos State Government Officials/service providers

- b) Citizens/residents/general public of Lagos State
- c) Customers of LASG MDAs
- d) Partners of LASG MDAs
- e) NGOs/CSOs
- f) Other Stakeholders of LASG

4.0 Definitions

In this Policy,

- a) **State** means Lagos State of Nigeria
- b) **MDA** means Ministry, Department or Agency of Lagos State Government where services are delivered
- c) **Customers/Client** means any adult or child who receives, or is entitled to receive, a service from the Lagos State Government or any of its MDAs, either directly or indirectly.
- d) **MSRD** means Management Services and Reform Directorate
- e) **OoT** means Office of Transformation
- f) **Public Services** mean the range of services delivered by the State Government, its Ministries, Departments and Agencies, under relevant constitutional or legislative directives.
- g) **Service Windows/Service Frontlines** mean the point at which the service provider delivers a service or product directly to the public; where there is a direct interface between a public servant and a customer/citizen.
- h) **Public/Government Official /Staff** means any person employed by the State Government, its Ministries, Departments and Agencies.
- i) **Stakeholders** mean any person who has a stake or interest in the success or failure of Lagos State Government or its MDAs.
- j) **Partners** mean all who assist, support and cooperate with an MDA in providing service to its customers.
- k) **Service Charter** means document produced by an MDA in consultation with its customers, Partners and Stakeholders containing service pledges, service standards and commitments to which citizens are entitled

- l) **Service standards** mean specific statements of service delivery targets which customers can expect to receive from an MDA
- m) **Service Charter Committee** means the Committee set up to drive and coordinate the development and implementation of an MDA's Service Charter including all provisions of this Policy.
- n) **Service Delivery Officer** means an Officer designated to spearhead, monitor and coordinate the implementation of Service Charter and service delivery improvement in MDAs
- o) **Service Improvement Officer:** means officer appointed to assist Service Delivery Officer in the MDA.

5.0 Policy Objectives

5.1 Objectives

The objective of this Service Charter Policy is to outline Government's commitment to improved service delivery in line with state development strategies, using Service Charters as a tool to promote customer-focused service delivery in Lagos State.

The Policy is also aimed at empowering citizens by increasing their awareness of government services, encouraging them to demand same, thereby challenging government officials to improved customer sensitivity as public service providers.

5.2 Expected Outcomes

The Service Charter Policy will stimulate continuous improvement in service delivery by promoting principles of quality service delivery in LASG MDAs through the inculcation of concepts of transparency, accountability and responsiveness.

Implementing the Policy will help link target setting to performance management and annual reporting.

It will ensure wider public involvement in the setting and monitoring of service delivery standards and empower them to demand that the standards be met.

By demanding for the commitments made by MDA in their Service Charters, citizens help raise the quality of service delivery and enhance providers' customer focus. A customer-focused public service will lead to improved public perception of government and governance in Lagos State.

6.0 Policy Requirements and Responsibilities

6.1 Office of the Head of Service

The responsibility for the overall management and implementation of this Service Charter Policy is within the leadership of the Head of Service (HoS) who provides guidance, advice and direction that would facilitate its implementation. Specifically, the HoS, in addition to ensuring the expeditious adoption and operationalization of this Service Charter Policy, will be required to issue/facilitate the issuance of the following service-wide Executive Directives/Circulars:

- a) Establishment of **Service Delivery Unit (SDU)** to be headed by a **Service Delivery Officer** (not below GL13) to be assisted by a **Service Improvement Officer** (not below GL 12) in every MDA (including deadline).
- b) Establishment and inauguration of Central **Service Charter Committee** in every MDA (including deadline).
- c) Development of Service Charter and Submission of Draft Service Charter to Office of Transformation (MSRD) for endorsement (including deadlines for launch and implementation)
- d) Authorizing Compliance Evaluation of MDAs with Service Charter standards by MSRD and publishing the results from time to time.

6.2 Office of Transformation

The Office of Transformation is responsible for oversight, supervision and coordination of the implementation of the Service Charter Policy. Specifically, the DG Transformation will be required to:

- a) Identify the **specific Unit/Department within the MSRD** which will be dedicated to championing and driving the implementation of Service Charter in LASG MDAs.
- b) Appoint three Desk Officers, namely **Service Charter Officer, Service Improvement Officer** and **OSPES Officer** to assist the head of the dedicated Unit/Department. The One-Stop Public Enquiry Service (OSPES) Desk will coordinate the Complaints and Feedback monitoring aspects of implementing Service Charters as well as the one-stop activities.

6.3 Management Services and Reforms Directorate (MSRD)

The MSRD is located within the Office of Transformation which serves as the engine for implementing Reforms within the State Government. The dedicated Unit/Department which may also house the One-Stop Public Enquiry Services (OSPES) is required to provide leadership for the promotion and implementation of Service Charters throughout Lagos State MDAs including all aspects of the Service Charter Policy. Specifically, the dedicated Unit/Department will:

- a) Provide technical support, advice and guidance to MDA Service Charter Committees in the development, implementation, monitoring and review of Service Charters throughout the Lagos State Government
- b) Provide technical support, advice and guidance to MDAs and their Service Delivery Units in implementing all aspects of the State Government's Service Charter Policy

- c) Maintain a regular and functional link with the Service Delivery Units of MDAs
- d) Provide guidance and advice on the establishment, implementation, monitoring and review of MDA complaints and feedback systems through the One Stop Public Enquiry Service (OSPES).
- e) Serve as arbiter in resolving complaints between MDAs and aggrieved customers by facilitating continuous engagement of both and ensuring that complaints are resolved to customers' satisfaction (OSPES).
- f) Provide support and guidance on customer service issues in MDAs including customer consultation and satisfaction surveys.
- g) Conduct regular Charter Compliance Evaluation of MDAs with service standards published in MDA Service Charters.
- h) Maintain and regularly update a database on MDAs, their profiles and service delivery indices
- i) Publish on regular basis report of Compliance Evaluation of MDAs

In addition, the Consultancy Unit of the MSRD will:

- a) Work with relevant state agencies and development partners to coordinate customer service training as may be required by relevant MDA staff for effective implementation of this Service Charter Policy.
- b) Work with MDAs and dedicated Unit/Department in MSRD to develop Service Improvement Plans.

6.4 Ministerial /Parastatal Service Delivery Units (SDUs)

Working within their MDAs in liaison with the MSRD, SDUs are to:

- a) Spearhead the implementation of service delivery improvement measures and in particular all aspects of this Service Charter Policy
- b) Coordinate and provide secretariat assistance to the Central Charter Committee of their MDAs facilitating the development of MDA Service Charter
- c) Monitor regularly the implementation of service standards of service windows and service frontlines as specified in MDA Service Charters
- d) Ensure regular measurement of performance against standards contained in MDA Charter and publish results at least once a year (e.g. in annual reports)
- e) Ensure that standards set are reviewed annually and progressively raised as they are met
- f) Ensure that Service Charters are displayed at service points, and publicised widely
- a) Facilitate awareness-raising and the provision of information to customer groups and to the general public on MDA services and all aspects of the MDA Service Charter.

- b) Monitor OSPES and complaints system within the MDA collecting, collating and analysing customer service and complaints information, and producing relevant reports for publication.

6.5 Ministries, Departments, Agencies

Working with the MSRD, MDAs will:-

- a) Implement this Service Charter Policy including all Directives and Circulars that may be issued with respect to the Policy, including appointing only proven dedicated officers as Service Delivery Officer
- b) Support and cooperate with SDUs and the Service Charter Committee in the development and implementation of MDA Service Charter, especially in standards setting and monitoring
- c) Ensure launch and wide publicity of MDA Service Charter
- d) Manage staff and organisational performance to ensure compliance with the MDA Service Charter
- e) Produce and implement service improvement plans from time to time.

7.0 Essential Components of a Service Charter

- I. Introduction/Background
 - a) Description of the organization's mandate
 - b) Statement of the purpose of the charter document
- II. Vision Statement
 - a) A statement of desired future that the organization aims to attain through its services
 - b) Could have a timeframe
- I. Mission Statement
 - a) The mission statement should clearly but briefly state the purpose/objectives of the MDA
- II. Details of Customers

A comprehensive list of customers or clients.
- III. Service Provision and Delivery
 - a) List of services provided by the MDA
 - b) Statement of specific standards which customers can expect from each service listed
 - c) Standards of service should include:
 - Quality of relationship with customer, e.g. friendliness, helpfulness, respect, courtesy, impartiality
 - Quality of service provision, e.g. clarity, accuracy, responsiveness, availability
 - Timeliness of service delivery, e.g. promptness, speed of response to clients (correspondences, telephones, processing applications/ licences, booking appointments, waiting times)
 - d) Special Needs Provision

- Take into consideration customers with special needs e.g. elderly, blind, people with disabilities, pregnant women, children, etc.
- e) Clear description of performance monitoring and reporting arrangement
- IV. Complaints/Grievance Redress Mechanism
 - Clear statement of MDA assurance on feedback to convey that MDA welcomes complaints, compliments, suggestions
 - a) Clear explanation of procedure for complaints
 - How to make a complaint, who to complain to including relevant postal, email addresses, and phone numbers. Include options (e.g. in person, comment card) and time limit to address complaint
 - How to give feedback specifically about the Charter itself;
 - That the feedback and complaints handling process is accessible, easy to use and free
 - That the agency records data on complaints, compliments and suggestions and this is used to help improve client service;
 - b) Available redress (e.g. apology, repeat service, refund, etc)
- V. Customer's Obligations
 - a) Clear and reasonable statement of what is expected of customers
 - to provide necessary information,
 - attend scheduled meetings,
 - comply with legal requirements, etc
- VI. Stakeholders' participation
 - Method and frequency of participation
- VII. Existing Limitations (if any)
 - A Clear explanation of existing limitations and how these may affect the achievement of promised level of service provision.
- VIII. Review
 - The service charter should be a living document that evolves in line with changes that occur within the MDA. This means that MDAs must regularly review their Service Charter as improvements are made on practices, processes and procedures to ensure its ongoing relevance and effectiveness. Issues to consider include:
 - a) whether the service commitments and standards are still relevant, realistic or challenging
 - b) whether the current content is accurate (e.g. change in name, mandate, profile, contact details or other information earlier provided)
 - c) frequency of review (annually or every two years)

7.0 Broad Guidelines for Developing a Service Charter

In implementing the Service Charter Policy, MDAs shall be guided by the following provisions:-

- I. Formation of a **Central Charter Committee** by the MDA with membership drawn from various Departments.
- II. The Charter Committee is to adhere to the following guidelines in formulating the MDA's Charter:
 - a) Articulate the mandate, vision and mission statement of the MDA
 - b) Prepare for stakeholder consultation
 - c) Conduct consultation with staff, customers, partners and stakeholders
 - d) Prepare first draft service charter containing specific service standards
 - e) Circulate 1st draft to stakeholders, customers and staff for comments, suggestions and assent
 - f) Submit modified 2nd draft to Management of MDA for approval and sign-off
 - g) Submit approved final draft to OoT (MSRD) for endorsement to confirm conformity with standard
- III. Arrange production of service charter in different forms: booklet, fliers, pamphlets, leaflets, posters, CDs and other electronic forms including various languages, local dialects, Braille, abridged version, etc.
- IV. Launch Charter
- V. Publicize charter (website, media, stakeholders, all service windows, state-wide, digital displays, etc).
- VI. Paste abridged versions in reception area of every service window and service frontline.

9.0 Monitoring and Evaluation of Service Charter Policy

The Office of Transformation and in particular the MSRD shall be responsible for monitoring the implementation of this Service Charter Policy to ensure compliance with all its provisions and directives. This involves evaluating the Charter, evaluating compliance with service standards and ensuring standards of service are improved upon from time to time.

9.1 Service Charter Evaluation

The OoT (MSRD) will evaluate Service Charters of MDAs to ensure that they meet the standards specified in this Policy before publication. They will monitor to ensure that Service Charters (especially the service standards) are widely published and made available to all staff of MDAs, their customers, partners and stakeholders. The OoT (MSRD) will also follow up on the review of Service Charters to ensure that MDAs make the revised version of the Charter available to all staff, customers and stakeholders.

9.2 Charter Compliance Evaluation

The MSRD will undertake comprehensive evaluation of the services of MDAs at regular and specified intervals to determine their compliance with the service delivery standards promised in the MDAs' Service Charters. The Directorate shall ensure that every MDA is assessed at least once a year and the report

presented to each MDA after evaluation. The results shall then be published so that performing MDAs are raised and praised while non-performing MDAs are named and shamed.

9.3 Service Improvement Planning

MSRD will work with evaluated MDAs to develop Service Improvement Plans based upon the evaluation experience. The SDUs will work with the MDA management to ensure that the Service Improvement Plans are implemented.