



AN TÚDARÁS PÓILÍNEACHTA  
POLICING AUTHORITY

# Customer Action Plan

## 2022-2024



## **Policing Authority**

The Policing Authority ('the Authority') is an independent body that oversees the performance of the Garda Síochána of its functions relating to policing services.

Our ***Vision*** is for an ethical, effective, human rights based policing service that merits and enjoys the confidence of the increasingly diverse people it serves

Our ***Mission*** is to hold the Garda Síochána fairly and transparently to account in the interests of all, particularly the most vulnerable.

The primary focus of the Authority's work is to oversee how the Garda Síochána as an organisation delivers policing services in the State.

More detailed information on the functions of the Authority are available [here](#) on our website.

## **1. Introduction**

This is the Policing Authority's (Authority) Customer Action Plan which has been developed in conjunction with the Customer Charter to coincide with our Statement of Strategy 2022-2024. The Authority is committed to providing quality customer service in line with the 12 Quality Customer Service (QCS) principles which the Government has endorsed for the Public Service. The Customer Charter (available [here](#)) sets out the standard of service the public can expect from the Authority.

This Action Plan sets out how this will be achieved including the steps the Authority will take over the lifetime of the plan to deliver a high-quality service to its all customers—internal and external. We believe that internal staff members should be considered as customers and are entitled—as are all members of the public—to the highest standards of service delivery in their interactions with the Authority.

The Executive of the Authority operates in a cross functional approach and the various commitments to quality customer service will be incorporated in our work as appropriate and will be included in the objectives specified for each relevant staff member as part of the PMDS (Performance Management and Development System) process.

## **2. Purpose of Plan and Customers**

The Authority's Customer Action Plan is designed to

- Set out our commitment to Principles of Quality Customer Service;
- Set out how will we achieve the standard of customer service set out in the Customer Charter;
- Identify specific actions and commitments to measure our progress and performance.

The Authority's customers are:

- Members of the Public;
- Government Departments, agencies and public bodies;
- The Garda Síochána, its members and staff;
- Garda representative bodies and trade unions;
- Media;
- Authority members; and,
- Employees of the Authority

### 3. Our commitment to the Principles of Quality Customer Service

This section of the plan sets out our commitments under each of the twelve Principles of Quality Service for Customers and Clients of the Public Service.

#### Principles

1. **Quality service standards:** *Publish a statement that outlines the nature and quality of service which customers can expect and display it prominently at the point of service delivery.*

Commitment
We will publish a Customer Service Charter and Customer Action Plan for the period 2022-2024 on our website.
We will raise awareness of our Customer Service Charter and Action Plan in our communication with our customers.

2. **Equality/Diversity:** *Ensure the rights to equal treatment, established by equality legislation, and accommodate diversity, so as to contribute to equality for the groups covered by the equality legislation.<sup>1</sup> Identify and work to eliminate barriers to access to services for people experiencing poverty and social exclusion, and for those facing geographic barriers to services.*

Commitment
We will include customer service in our assessment of our obligations under Section 42 or the Human Rights and Equality Duty—and identify the policies and procedures to address such issues.
We will report on progress and actions undertaken in our annual report.
We will incorporate the principles of universal design and best practice on accessible communications into all our communications and publically accessible documents.
We will seek to ensure that any issues or difficulties in relation to physical access including at public meetings of the Authority are addressed.

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<sup>1</sup> Protected grounds include gender, marital status, family status, sexual orientation, religious belief, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller Community.

3. **Physical access:** *Provide clean, accessible public offices that ensure privacy, comply with occupational and safety standards and, as part of this, facilitate access for people with disabilities and others with specific needs.*

The Authority does not have a public office but anyone attending at the Policing Authority offices (e.g. to attend a pre-arranged meeting) can expect that we will provide appropriate facilities for meetings that ensure necessary privacy, comply with health and safety standards and facilitate access for people with disabilities.

<b>Commitment</b>
We will ensure access to our office for people with disabilities and any other customers with specific needs.
We will ensure our office is clean, ensure necessary privacy and complies with health and safety standards.

4. **Information:** *Take a proactive approach in providing information that is clear, timely and accurate, is available at all points of contact and meets the requirements of people with specific needs. Ensure that the potential offered by Information Technology is fully availed of and that the information available on Public Service websites follows the guidelines on web publication. Continue the drive for simplification of rules, regulations, forms, information leaflets and procedures.*

<b>Commitment</b>
We will provide accessible and accurate information on our website.
We will upgrade our website to comply with the European Union (Accessibility of Websites and Mobile Applications of Public Sector Bodies) Regulations 2020.
We will communicate with the public clearly, simply and concisely avoiding jargon and using plain English as much as possible.
We will provide customer service training to staff including on Plain English.

5. **Timeliness and Courtesy:** *Deliver quality services with courtesy, sensitivity and the minimum delay, fostering a climate of mutual respect between provider and customer. Give contact names in all communications to ensure ease of on-going transactions*

<b>Commitment</b>
We will answer the telephone promptly and return voice messages within one day.
We will ensure that when staff are unavailable for extended periods of time, appropriate voicemail and out of office e-mail messages are active.
We will ensure written correspondence is acknowledged or receives a comprehensive response within 3 working days.
If first acknowledged, we will provide a response within 15 working days. In cases where we cannot provide a full reply within this period, we will provide you with an interim reply explaining why and tell you when you can expect a full reply.

6. **Complaints:** *Maintain a well-publicised, accessible, transparent and simple-to-use system of dealing with complaints about the quality of service provided.*

We aim to provide a high-quality service to everyone. Should we fail to meet the standards outlined in the Charter we have a complaints procedure in place. A complaint form is available in Appendix B of the Customer Charter.

<b>Commitment</b>
We will ensure all customer service complaints are addressed in accordance with our complaints policy.
We will keep customers up to date by providing them with information on their customer service complaint as necessary.

7. **Appeals:** *Maintain a formalised, well-publicised, accessible, transparent and simple-to-use system of appeal/review for customers who are dissatisfied with decisions in relation to services.*

Should a complainant be unsatisfied with the outcome of their initial complaint, the Authority has an appeals policy set out in Appendix C of the Customer Charter. A customer can ask for a review of the decision, and subsequently to the Office of the Ombudsman.

<b>Commitment</b>
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Complaints officer will acknowledge each complaint within five working days.
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Complaints officer tries to resolve the matter appropriately within 10 working days.
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8. **Consultation and Evaluation:** Provide a structured approach to meaningful consultation with, and participation by, the customer in relation to the development, delivery and review of services. Ensure meaningful evaluation of service delivery.

<b>Commitment</b>
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We will consult with our internal and external customers to evaluate performance under the Charter and Action Plan.
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We will consult with our internal and external customers to inform the drafting of new Charter and Action Plan.
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9. **Choice:** Provide choice, where feasible, in service delivery including payment methods, location of contact points, opening hours and delivery times. Use available and emerging technologies to ensure maximum access and choice and quality of delivery.

<b>Commitment</b>
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We will provide a range of contact channels for our customers i.e. letter, email, online forms, social media (Twitter) and phone.
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We will meet our customers where appropriate or return calls at a time suitable to them.
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10. **Official Language Equality:** Provide quality services through Irish and/or bilingually and inform customers of their right to choose to be dealt with through one or other of the official languages.

<b>Commitment</b>
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We will publish a scheme under the Official Languages Act 2003 as amended which will detail the services we will provide through Irish, English, and both Irish and English.
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We will encourage and facilitate staff to improve Irish language skills through staff Performance Management and Development System (PMDS).
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**11. Better Co-ordination:** *Foster a more co-ordinated and integrated approach to delivery of public services.*

<b>Commitment</b>
We will explore the development of agreements with other public bodies to facilitate the performance of our functions.
We will participate in relevant Public Sector networks including on Innovation.

**12. Internal Customer:** *Ensure that employees are recognised as internal customers and that they are properly supported and consulted with regard to service delivery issues.*

We recognise that in order for staff to provide a quality service they must be familiar with the policies and practices and commitments outlined in the Customer Action Plan and Customer Charter.

<b>Commitment</b>
We will provide training for staff on quality customer service and ensure that these training and development needs are provided for through the implementation of the Performance Management and Development System (PMDS).
We will introduce and apply clearer policies and procedures to better deal with unreasonable conduct from members of the public.
We will provide training for staff to better respond to challenging and unreasonable behaviour.
We will provide appropriate supports for staff including access to psychological services where necessary.



#### 4. Contact Information

Contact Details For The Authority	
<b>By Phone:</b>	<i>Main number :</i> +353 1 858 9090 <i>Appointments Unit:</i> +353 1 858 9058 <i>Press Office:</i> +353 1 858 9090
<b>By Post:</b>	The Policing Authority, 4th Floor, 90 King Street North, Dublin 7, D07 N7CV
<b>By Email:</b>	<i>General Enquiries:</i> <a href="mailto:info@policingauthority.ie">info@policingauthority.ie</a> <i>Press Office:</i> <a href="mailto:pressoffice@policingauthority.ie">pressoffice@policingauthority.ie</a>
<b>Disability Access Officer</b>	Clare Kelly
<b>Data Protection Officer</b>	<a href="mailto:dpo@policingauthority.ie">dpo@policingauthority.ie</a>