Quality Customer Services
QCS

# Customer Charter

## "Our Service for You"

Department of Social & Family Affairs

May 2004

# Introduction

The Department is committed to delivering a high quality customer service. An Taoiseach set down a requirement by Government in December 2002, that all Departments should publish a Customer Charter.

Before preparing this Charter we asked our customers and staff for their views on our existing service. The following key areas were identified as most important from the feedback we received from that consultation process:

- Access to our Services
- Provision of Information
- Your Claim
- Comments & Complaints

We have included other commitments, which will further assist in the provision of the best quality service possible.

Our commitments (outlined is this leaflet) "What We will do for You", is our response to your views and suggestions. We will be focussing on the aspects of our service that mean most to you for the duration of this Charter.

We can all help to make our experiences as pleasant as possible in our dealings with one another, by working together to show respect, consideration and patience.

We have also included in this leaflet, a number of ways in which you can help.

# What We Will do for You

## Access to our Services

### We are committed to:

- Making our offices accessible for all including people with disabilities (80% of our offices are accessible for people with disabilities at present)
- Extending our opening hours in many of our Local Offices (check the opening hours displayed at your own Local Office)
- Respecting your privacy needs if calling to our offices
- Improving our services for visually impaired customers (LoCall 1890 500 000 ext 8442 or 8459 for this service)
- Improving our telephone answering service by aiming towards a target of answering all telephone calls within 30 seconds
- Phoning you back if you ask us to

## Help Us to Help You

- Have your Personal Public Service Number (PPS Number) and other reference numbers ready when contacting the Department
- Bring two forms of ID (such as a passport *or* the long version of your birth certificate *and* a driver's licence or Child Benefit Book/Bank Card/Rent Book)
- Bring your Social Services Card if you have one

## Your Claim

**We are committed to:**

- Letting you know how soon you may expect a decision on your claim
- Advising you how to get financial or other help in the meantime, if necessary
- Letting you know the different payment options available
- Informing you of the reasons for the decision on your claim
- Informing you of your right to appeal that decision and how to make an appeal
- Letting you know that you also have access to the Ombudsman's Office

## Help Us to Help You

- Fill in all forms fully, sign them *and* send or hand in all the documents needed with your claim
- Be on time for appointments or let us know if you will be late
- Let us know if there is any change in your circumstances (for example getting married; changing address; taking up employment)
- Make yourself aware of the rules and regulations governing the receipt of your payment and comply with them

## Provision of Information

**We are committed to:**

- Providing you with full, clear and correct information on our schemes and services when required. You can request claim forms and information leaflets by telephoning LoCall 1890 20 23 25 or you can download them from our website at ***www.welfare.ie***
- Ensuring our forms and leaflets are simple and easy to understand
- Providing help with filling in forms at your local Social Welfare Office or your local Citizen's Information Centre (contact LoCall 1890 777 121)
- Supporting employers in the operation of the PRSI contribution system

## e-Government Services

**We are committed to:**

- Using modern technology to significantly improve the service we give
- Providing an improved range of services through our website
- Continuing to support REACH (an agency set up by the Government to develop electronic ways of linking people and the public service)

## Treating You Fairly

**We are committed to:**

- Serving all our customers in an equal, fair and courteous manner
- Applying the law consistently and fairly in relation to your entitlements and obligations

## Comments and Complaints

**We are committed to:**

- Promoting and developing our existing Comment and Complaint System (in operation since May 2002)
- Answering any complaint within 15 working days
- Guaranteeing that your complaint will not affect how we treat you in the future

## Help Us to Help You

**Let us know if:**

- You are not happy with our service *or* You have any ideas on how we can improve our service

  *You can get a Comment and Complaint Leaflet from any of our local or public offices or from our website* ***www.welfare.ie***

  *You may also make a complaint directly by phoning any of our offices with the details*

## Security and Confidentiality

**We are committed to:**

- Keeping your personal information safe
- Using that information only for social welfare purposes and as permitted by law

## Service Through Irish

**We are committed to:**

- Providing quality services through Irish and English if required

## Customer Feedback

*Our aim is to give you the best service possible in your dealings with us. We welcome your views on how we can continue to improve our service into the future. Our contact details are at the back of this leaflet.*

# Useful Contact Numbers

## Social Welfare LoCall Numbers

| | |
|---|---|
| Child and Treatment Benefit | 1890 400 400 |
| Information Services: | |
| Form and Leaflet Request Line | 1890 20 2325 |
| *(24 hours, 7 days a week)* | |
| Maternity Benefit | 1890 690 690 |
| Pension Services Office | 1890 500 000 |
| **Social Welfare Appeals Office** | **1890 74 7434** |
| **Citizen's Information Phone Service** | **1890 77 7121** |

## Department Sections

| | |
|---|---|
| Carer's Allowance | (01) 7043000 |
| Disability Allowance | (01) 7043948 |
| Disability Benefit | (01) 6797777 |
| Free Schemes | (01) 7043371 |
| Invalidity Pension | (01) 7043314 |
| Occupational Injury Benefit | (01) 6732044 |

For unemployment payments – see the 'State Directory' in your telephone book for the contact details of your local Social Welfare Office or online at ***www.welfare.ie/contact/index.html#Local_Offices*** for Local Office contacts.

# Notes

For further information on the Customer Charter contact:

Quality Customer Services
Department of Social & Family Affairs
Landen House
157/164 Townsend Street
Dublin 2.

Telephone: (01) 6732148/6732217/6732281/6732038