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## Customer Care Policy

## Centlec (Soc) Ltd - Customer Care Policy

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| CENTLEC (SOC) LTD                          |                                    |
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### **DEFINITIONS:**

**Customer Care:** treating people with courtesy, dignity and respect; treating people how they would like to be treated; providing a good quality service in a friendly, efficient and helpful manner; giving people the information they need and providing an explanation if the service is not available; keeping the customer informed of progress in addressing their complaints/requests or enquiries.

**Service Standards:** means a basic commitment made by the entity on the level of service delivery its customers can expect

**Customer:** means a person who purchases electricity or a service relating to the supply of electricity;

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## **SECTION 1: OBJECTIVES**

- a) To create a positive and reciprocal relationship between users of the services and the entity;
- b) To establish mechanisms for users of the services to give feedback to the entity regarding the quality of the service and performance of the service provider;
- c) To ensure that residents and consumers understand the cost involved in service provision, the reasons for payment of service tariffs, and the manner in which monies raised from consumers are utilized;
- d) To ensure that the consumption of services by individual households is measured through accurate and verifiable metering systems.
- e) To provide the Regulator ( NERSA) a common basis for evaluating of CENTLEC services when :
  - Granting the distribution licenses
  - Monitoring the performance of licensee on an ongoing basis and,
  - Dealing with customer complaints
- f) To ensure that the interests and needs of present and future electricity customers and end users are safeguarded and met, having regard to the governance, efficiency, effectiveness and long-term sustainability of the electricity supply industry within the broader context of economic energy regulation in the Republic.

## **SECTION 2: LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT**

Section 95 of Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000 requires amongst others, that the municipality or service provider must:

- a) establish a sound customer management system that aims to create positive and reciprocal relationship between persons liable for these payments and the a service provider;
- b) establish mechanisms for users of services to give feedback to regarding the quality of the services and the performance of the service provider;
- c) take reasonable steps to ensure that users of services are informed of the costs involved in service provision; the reasons for the payment of service fees, and the manner in which monies raised from the service are utilised:

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- d) where the consumption of services has to be measured, take reasonable steps to ensure that the consumption by individual users of services is measured through accurate and verifiable metering systems;
- e) ensure that persons liable for payments, receive regular and accurate accounts that indicate the basis for calculating the amounts due;
- f) provide accessible mechanisms for those persons to query or verify accounts and metered consumption, and appeal procedures which allow such persons to receive prompt redress for inaccurate accounts;
- g) provide accessible mechanisms for dealing with complaints from such persons, together with prompt replies and corrective action by the municipality;
- h) provide mechanisms to monitor the response time and efficiency in dealing with complaints; and
- i) provide accessible pay points and other mechanisms for settling accounts or for making pre-payments for services.

### **SECTION 3: POLICY PRINCIPLES**

- a) The implementation of this policy shall be done in line with the eight principles of the Batho Pele.
- b) The entity shall regularly measure the extent to which its customers are satisfied with the service or products they receive.
- c) Customer care should also play a critical role in the development of the entity's Multi-Year Business Plan to ensure provision of services in a sustainable and consistent manner to the communities.
- d) The entity shall develop service standards a means to generate customer satisfaction
- e) Customer Care standards should be precise and measurable so that users can judge for themselves whether or not they are receiving what was promised. Some standards will cover processes, such as the length of time taken to perform a particular function / activity such as for example, to respond to letters.

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## SECTION 4: CUSTOMERS OF CENTLEC (SOC) LTD

Centlec (SOC) Ltd has mainly the following categories of customers:

**External Customers:** These are people / organizations that are mainly users and consumers of services provided by the entity and invariably interact with the entity at various levels in relation to services provided by the entity.

**Internal Customers:** These are essentially employees of Centlec (SOC) Ltd and other internal stakeholders such as appointed service providers / contractors who at any time may be dependent on the serviced rendered by the entity.

## SECTION 5: DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES RENDERED BY CENTLEC (SOC) LTD

The core services rendered by the company include the following:

- New Electrification Networks;
- Refurbishment and Maintenance of existing networks;
- Electricity Metering and Billing Services.
- Prepayment Electricity Vending;
- Training and Development.
- Bulk electricity procurement

## SECTION 6: CENTLEC'S SERVICE COMMITMENT

The service commitment as detailed below serves to emphasize the service delivery principles that the entity is committed to achieve in the course of service delivery:

The entity will strive to:

- give effect to Chapter 7 of the Constitution of the Republic of South as far as possible;
- give effect to the provisions of the Municipal Finance Management Act, Municipal Systems Act, Municipal Structures Act and any other applicable legislation;
- promote consistency in respect of the provision and levying of services;
- ensure that any treasury guidelines on matter relating to the business of the entity are properly taken into account and adhered to;

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## **SECTION 7: RESOURCES ALLOCATION FOR CUSTOMER CARE SERVICE**

Sufficient budget shall be allocated during annual budgeting process so as to implement the established customer service standards as well as to monitor and evaluate performance against them.

## **SECTION 8: MONITORING OF THE CUSTOMER CARE POLICY**

Each line manager is responsible for monitoring his/her section's implementation and adherence to this policy and any other performance monitoring guidelines.

Periodic reports of implementation of this policy may be requested by the Chief Financial Officer, the Board of Directors or any of its committees.

The consolidated report on the implementation of this policy shall be publicised annually as part of the entity's annual report.

## **SECTION 9: CENTLEC'S GENERIC SERVICE STANDARDS**

Service standards below indicate the level of standard that the entity' customers can expect in the course of service delivery:

### **9.1 External Customers:**

- We will greet our customers in a courteous and professional manner.
- We will listen effectively to our customers' requests and promptly take the necessary actions to assist them.
- We will keep our customers informed of unexpected delays in service.
- We will inform our customers of normal process time, when they can expect completion and any delays that may arise in the process.
- We will contact our customers to update them as to where we are in the process.
- We will respond to questions/requests within 24 hours during normal business hours and let our customers know when they can expect completion and any delays that may arise in the process.
- We will conclude our disagreements with our customers in a courteous and professional manner.

### **9.2 Internal Customers:**

- We will interact with each other in a courteous and professional manner.



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- We will inform our internal customers of normal process time, when they can expect completion and any delays that may arise in the process.
- We will touch base with our internal customers daily, either by e-mail or phone, to update them as to where we are in the process.
- We will work to resolve issues with coworkers and other departments by discussing problems directly and working toward agreed upon solutions.
- We will be considerate, cooperative and helpful to every staff member to assure quality services.
- We will hold ourselves and each other accountable for addressing inappropriate comments and behavior.

### 9.3 Telephone Etiquette:

- When at our desks, we will answer the phone within two rings.
- We will identify ourselves when we answer.
- We will listen to the caller's request and assist the caller accordingly.
- If we cannot assist the caller, we will direct the call to the appropriate person. Before transferring the call, we will obtain the caller's permission and provide the caller with the name and extension number of the person who will be helping the caller.
- We will obtain the caller's permission before placing the call "on hold" by asking and waiting for a response before initiating the hold function.
- We will end the conversation in a courteous and professional way by thanking the caller.
- We will wait for the caller to hang up first.
- We will notify our customers that someone is unavailable by saying, *"He/She is unavailable. Is this an urgent issue or may I take a message?"*

### 9.4 Voice Mail:

- We will respond to voice mails within 24 hours during normal business hours.
- We will update our voice mail greeting, advising callers when we will be out of the office for an extended period of time (1/2 day or longer), informing callers of when we will return and who they may contact with questions (if applicable).

### 9.4 E-mails and Letters:

- We will respond to e-mails and letters within 24 hours during normal business hours.
- We will update our e-mail notification message when we will be out of the office for an extended period of time (full day or more).

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- We will indicate our expected return date and indicate a contact person (if applicable).

### **9.5 Face to face meetings:**

- Where we meet face to face with customers, including at reception desks, we will greet customers immediately as they present themselves
- We will deal with the customer's enquiry/transaction quickly and in a professional, courteous and helpful manner.
- Receptions will be manned at all times during the normal working period for the area.

### **9.6 Confidentiality:**

- We will treat all information gathered or held about customers in a confidential matter, except where ordered otherwise by a court of law or dictated otherwise by applicable legislations,

### **9.7 General:**

- We will make our goal to exceed the expectations of all of our customers.
- We will work to anticipate the needs of those we serve by proactively working to meet their needs.
- We will hold ourselves and each other accountable for our service commitment.
- We will be conscious of our communication style (ie; audible voice, eye contact when speaking to someone, tone of voice) and communicate in a professional manner.
- We will make a conscious effort to compliment coworkers when their actions comply with these standards.

## **SECTION 10: PROCESSING OF REQUESTS FOR SERVICES FROM CUSTOMERS**

For response and processing of request made by customer for new connection or alteration of services, reference should be made to NERSA requirement NRS047- part 1 section 4

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## SECTION 11: MEASURING CENTLEC'S SERVICE STANDARDS

In order to ensure a culture of continuous improvement, the entity's performance against service standards shall be measured against the following criteria:

- (i) **Quantity:** Are services supplied in sufficient volume?
- (ii) **Quality:** Are services of acceptable standard?
- (iii) **Time/Timeliness:** Are services delivered on time and within reasonable time?
- (iv) **Value for money:** Is the cost service balanced against the value for the customer?
- (v) **Access:** Are services being delivered enabling customers to make best use of services, without having to spend unnecessary funds to get to the place of delivery?
- (vi) **Equity:** Are services provided without discrimination?
- (vii) **Flexibility:** Is the customer offered any alternatives as to time, cost, place of delivery etc?

## SECTION 12: REVIEW PROCESS

This policy and underlying strategies will be reviewed at least annually, or as necessary, to ensure its continued application and relevance.