



Customer Charter

What is this Charter?

This Customer Charter is a statement of the standards of service our customers can expect from the Residential Tenancies Board (RTB).

Our Customers

The RTB has a wide range of customers including:

- members of the public,
- local authorities, government departments and offices, and
- voluntary and representative groups whose business interacts with the RTB.

Our commitment to you

Meeting your needs is important to us. We aim to achieve this by:

- giving you the best possible service,
- treating you fairly, impartially and with courtesy,
- aiming to ensure that your rights are upheld in the delivery of our services, and
- aiming to meet any special needs you may have.

In order to assist us in providing the best possible customer service it would be helpful if our customers would:

- quote reference numbers (e.g. tenancy registration or dispute reference number), where available, in all correspondence and communications with the RTB.
- refer your query to the relevant section/email address.
- keep the RTB informed of any change in your address.
- provide a telephone number and email address, if available, in all correspondence.
- ensure, where applicable, that correspondence is submitted in sufficient time to meet specified deadlines.
- respond promptly to any queries raised, including supplying any additional information requested in support of applications.
- treat our staff and other customers with courtesy and respect.

Contacting us by phone

Our telephone lines are open between 8.30am – 6.30pm, Monday to Friday.

If you telephone us, our staff will:

- deal with your enquiry promptly and politely;
- give you their name and the name of the section you have called;
- aim to answer your questions straight away. If they cannot do so, they will take your details and tell you when you can expect to hear from us.

We understand that members of the public can be experiencing some difficulties or stress but if callers become abusive, offensive or aggressive to staff members during a telephone call, staff may advise the caller that the call will be terminated if the unacceptable behaviour continues.

Contacting us by letter, fax or email

If you write to us:

- emails will be automatically acknowledged, we aim to respond to your **email query**, in clear plain language, no later than 15 working days;
- we aim to respond to your **written query**, in clear plain language, no later than 15 working days of receipt;
- we will ensure that all correspondence we send to you contains a contact name and telephone number.

If we cannot deal with your query within this timeframe, we will write to explain why and tell you when you can expect a full reply.

Acknowledging Registration Applications

Electronic applications:

- You will immediately receive an automated notification acknowledging receipt of the payment for an electronic application.
- Within 24 hours, you will receive an email confirming that the tenancy is registered

Manual/Paper applications:

- Where the application is complete, a confirmation letter will issue to you within 7 working days of receipt.
- Where the application is incomplete we will attempt to contact you within 48 hours of receipt.

Visiting our Office

If you have an appointment to call to see us we will:

- try not to keep you waiting unnecessarily,
- provide private meeting rooms for meetings and hearings,
- ensure that our offices comply with occupational health and safety standards, and
- aim to ensure that our meeting rooms are accessible for people with disabilities.

Please note: RTB dispute hearing rooms are provided for parties attending hearings by prior appointment only.

Service in other languages

In view of the multicultural/diverse range of clients we serve the RTB will provide translation services at hearings on 10 working days notice.

Service in Irish

We aim to ensure that:

- customers who wish to conduct their written business through Irish can do so.
- documents such as the Annual Report, Corporate Plan and Customer Service Charter are available in both Irish and English.
- information leaflets are available in Irish and English.

Services for people with disabilities

We will ensure that

- the needs of people with disabilities are identified and fully catered for
- our offices are accessible for people with disabilities, and
- any queries customers may have in relation to disability issues or physical access can be dealt with by the Access Officer.

The Access Officer can be contacted by telephone, email or in writing at the following contact details:

Accessibility Officer
Residential Tenancies Board
PO Box 12323
Dublin 2

0818 303037 / 01 7028100
accessofficer@rtb.ie

Feedback

We welcome your comments, suggestions and views on the services we provide. We will endeavour to use this feedback to assist us in providing the best possible customer service.

The RTB is committed to providing services to its customers in accordance with the twelve principles of Quality Customer Service for Customers and Clients of the Public Service.

If you were happy with the service provided please let us know. You can contact us at customer.service@rtb.ie or Quality Customer Service Officer, Residential Tenancies Board, PO Box 47, Clonakilty, County Cork.

How to Complain

Complaints directly relating to the quality of the service provided by the RTB should be made by phone (0818 303037 / 01 7028100) or in writing (email, fax or letter) to the Quality Customer Service Officer (contact details above).

The procedure does not cover complaints about RTB Adjudication or Tribunal Determinations or activities where there are statutory mechanisms in place to deal with complaints/appeals e.g.

- Complaints regarding service in Irish can be referred to the Language Commissioner
- Complaints regarding Data Protection can be referred to the Data Protection Commissioner
- Please see below regarding the Disputes Resolution Service

Complaints should be made as soon as possible following the incident under complaint. The following information should be provided by the customer in order to help us address or investigate the matter efficiently:

- name and address
- details of the complaint
- the name of the section and if available, the staff member(s) with whom they were dealing
- a day-time contact number, if they are happy for us to contact them by phone.

Customers are asked to provide as much information as possible to help speed up the investigation of their complaint. The complaint will be directed to an appropriate member of staff for careful examination. This person will not have been directly involved in the original action which gave rise to the complaint. In general, we will investigate and address complaints and reply within a reasonable timeframe. We aim to acknowledge your complaint within 7 working days of receipt and to deal with your complaint within 14 working days of receipt. If your complaint requires further investigation we will let you know and keep you informed of progress.

Having exhausted our complaints procedure, set out above, if you are not satisfied you may refer the complaint to the Office of the Ombudsman once the complaint is in relation to Part 7 of the Residential Tenancies Act (Registration of Tenancies). You may contact the Office of the Ombudsman by writing to the Office at 18 Lower Leeson Street, Dublin 2; by phone to LoCall 1890 20 30 30 or 01 6395600; by email to: ombudsman@ombudsman.gov.ie. There is an online complaint form on its website: www.ombudsman.ie.

Dispute Resolution Service

The RTB's Dispute Resolution Service is a quasi judicial process and case outcomes are decided by independent adjudicators and mediators. If a case party is unhappy with the outcome of their dispute resolution hearing, they may appeal the case to a 3 member RTB Tribunal for a fee. Due to the quasi-judicial nature of this process, RTB management and staff cannot respond to complaints in relation to the conduct or outcome of dispute resolution hearings.

If you believe that your hearing with the RTB was not conducted fairly or that there has been a jurisdictional error you may seek relief from the High Court by way of Judicial review. Judicial review is not an appeal of the decision of the RTB but is a review of the manner in which the decision was made and/or a review of statutory interpretation. Granting of this remedy is at the discretion of the High Court.

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