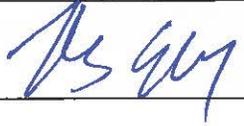
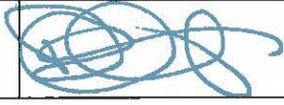




Administrative Policy

Title: Customer Care Policy				
Administered By: Department of Water & Power				
New Policy No.	Issue Date (Last Revised)	Renumber Date	Department Head Approved	City Manager Approved
03600.001	UNKNOWN (N/A)	01-03-17		

This Policy had been issued without a known Policy Number. Effective on the Renumber Date noted above, this Policy is hereby renumbered as the Policy Number noted above.

The latest version of the Policy is attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference.

Attachment: Policy (UNKNOWN #)
Issued: UNKNOWN
Revised: N/A

CITY OF CORONA DEPARTMENT OF WATER AND POWER

CUSTOMER CARE POLICY

Welcome to the Customer Care Division. Our name represents our philosophy. Customer Care means “watchful attention, to keep something safe and healthy”. Our approach is proactive and we always put our customers first.

In addition to good working skills, competence in public relations is essential. Since the Customer Care Division is primarily a service department, our public contact can be both internal as well as external. The key to building good relationships begins with a good attitude. However, simply having a good attitude will not solve problems or make difficult decisions for us. A positive attitude does, however, put us in a better frame of mind to face problems. A positive outlook provides us with the courage to address a problem and take action to resolve it before it gets out of hand. Keeping this in mind, these are just a few areas to concentrate on when dealing with the public:

- A. The public is our number one priority. Without them, there would be no need for us. We should always be courteous and polite - no matter what the circumstance!
- B. Our office is one that is continually open to public scrutiny. Sometimes the only dealings people have with the City is on the telephone with our office.
 - 1. Although all incoming calls are not necessarily water related, it is our responsibility to correctly and courteously connect the caller with the proper department.
 - 2. By taking a few extra minutes with the caller, their questions can be answered more thoroughly and their call can be properly directed to the right department.
- C. Irate customers should be handled with extra care. We should try to help them resolve their difficulties with the City.
 - 1. Do not take their complaint personally.
 - 2. Try to remain positive.
 - 3. Refuse to become angry or distraught. This can motivate you to assemble the facts, determine your options and then come up with the best solution.
 - 4. If, after listening to the customer's complaints, you find that you cannot help him/her, please refer them to a Supervisor at that time.

The following are additional guidelines that must be used when dealing with the public:

GUIDELINES FOR TELEPHONE CONTACT

1. **Answer calls promptly.**

Delays are discourteous. They say, "We don't care."

2. **Identify yourself clearly.**

Let your manner and tone - cheerful and assured – say, "You're talking to someone who wants to help you." "Good Morning (or Afternoon) Thank you for calling the City of Corona, Department of Water & Power, this is (First & Last Name), how may I help you?"

3. **Listen carefully.**

Remember your telephone has two ends - both equally important.

4. **Make accurate notes.**

Never answer a business telephone without pencil and paper - and use them. Verify pertinent facts as you go along; this avoids mistakes and shows you take your caller's problem seriously. Always get a telephone number, even if you think you may never call them back.

5. **Convey sincere interest and concern.**

Questions are necessary but should not be abrupt; here again manner and tone tell the story.

6. **Agree as often as possible.**

This helps put the caller at ease and makes him feel you are on his side. You can agree more often than you think during a complaint.

7. **Remain calm and courteous.**

8. **Avoid interrupting.**

Unless it is obvious your caller should be talking to another department, hear him out. Insert your questions and comments at natural pauses.

9. **Avoid placing blame.**

Sure, somebody goofed, but the important thing is correcting the mistake.

10. **Avoid personalities and personal comment.**

It takes two to make an argument and one upset person is enough.

11. **Follow through.**

Make sure promises and agreements are kept.

12. **Remember that You represent the City.**

When discussing billing information or maintenance activities, use "we" instead of "they."

Example:

1. "We turned your water off for nonpayment of your bill."

Better "Your water has been turned off for lack of payment on your account."

Never "They turned your water off because you didn't pay your bill."

2. "We received your payment on Monday, July 3."

Better "A payment was received on Monday, July 3."

Never "They received your payment on Monday, July 3."

GUIDELINES FOR THE IN-PERSON CONTACT

1. **Get ready.**

Be prepared to focus on the problem.

2. **Let the other person do most of the talking.**

3. **Listen carefully.**

Listen between the lines. Assess the real need in order to address it as fully as possible.

4. **Be aware of your body language.**

The other person should be able to see your interest and concern.

5. **Find a way to agree.**

If you cannot agree to the facts as presented, you may be able to agree in principle, e.g.,

"Two hours is a long time to wait for your water to go back on, . . . "

You can always agree with the person's right to his or her feelings or opinion, e.g., "I don't blame you for being upset," or "If I thought someone was rude to my mother, I'd want to talk to someone about it, too!"

Words to avoid: "You'll have to . . . "

"You're wrong . . . "

". . . City policy, I can't do anything about . . . "

6. **See additional items listed in Guidelines for Telephone Contact**

GUIDELINES FOR WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

1. **Plan.**

Before you write, clarify the purpose of the letter or e-mail. What do you want to achieve? List the points you wish to cover.

2. **Express thanks.**

Every complaint is an opportunity.

3. **Restate the problem.**

4. **Briefly explain the situation from the City's viewpoint.**

5. **Request more information if necessary.**

6. **Use plain words and short sentences.**

Avoid bureaucratic jargon and lengthy explanations.

7. **State policies in positive terms.**

Explain the purpose of the policy.

8. **Show the letter or e-mail to a Supervisor prior to mailing.**

Remember that words can be misinterpreted.