



CITY OF PORT COLBORNE
"5C" SERVICE PROGRAM

*Quality, efficient, effective and courteous service to:
Customers, **C**lients, **C**itizens, **C**ouncillors, and **C**o-workers.*

February 2011

Accountability and Transparency

Excerpt from Schedule "A" to By-law No. 5262/17/09 "Policy Statement"

The Corporation of the City of Port Colborne is committed to the fundamental principles of accountability and transparency as a matter of good governance and will be guided by the following principles:

- i. Decision-making will be open and transparent*
- ii. Municipal operations will be conducted in an ethical and accountable manner*
- iii. Financial resources and physical infrastructure will be managed in an efficient and effective manner*
- iv. Municipal information will be accessible so that it is consistent with legislative requirements*
- v. Inquiries, concerns and complaints will be responded to in a timely manner*
- vi. Financial oversight, service standards and performance reporting and all other accountability documents will be made available and accessible, in language that the public can understand, to increase the opportunity for public scrutiny and involvement of municipal operations.*
- vii. Every new delegation of power or authority will have a corresponding accountability mechanism.*

The City of Port Colborne is committed to creating a culture wherein Council and staff are aware of and understand the principles of accountability and transparency articulated through this policy, and will support and contribute to the spirit and intent of the policy. This requires the leadership of Council and senior management to ensure these principles are practiced and adhered to throughout the corporation.

The City of Port Colborne will foster a safe environment that allows all stakeholders of this policy to participate freely, without fear of reprisal or retribution.

The City of Port Colborne will conduct its business openly, honestly, ethically and with integrity."

To assist in the implementation of the City's policy on accountability and transparency, a program labelled "5C Service" will be implemented as follows:

"5C" Service Program: An Overview

"5C" Service is quality, efficient, effective and courteous service to: 1) our Customers, 2) our Clients, 3) our Citizens, 4) our Councillors, and 5) our Co-workers. The residents, visitors, councillors and fellow employees of Port Colborne have a right to be treated with sincere respect, receive appropriate competent assistance, and know that they will be treated fairly and equitably, regardless of age, ancestry, colour, creed, disability, marital status, national origin, race, gender or sexual orientation.

The City of Port Colborne supports the concept that local governments should be focused on creating and maintaining a workforce culture that fosters a positive and dynamic "5C" Service mindset. Consequently, the City of Port Colborne is dedicated and committed to enhancing the quality of life in Port Colborne by providing "Exceptional "5C" Service" in response to the needs of everyone who lives, works and visits our City.

Our mission says it all: **"Serving you to create an even better community"**.

What is "Exceptional "5C" Service"

1. Being polite, respectful and courteous to members of our "5C" constituents,
2. Cope with irate, disrespectful, angry or otherwise difficult people in a polite and courteous manner,
3. Taking a sincere interest in the needs and desires of the people we serve and work with,
4. Being enthusiastic about the issues facing our citizens, customers, clients, councillors and co-workers,
5. Having a positive attitude and attempting to be as helpful as possible,
6. Having a caring attitude towards the internal and external people we encounter,
7. Being attentive to those people we serve
8. Being understanding and sympathetic or empathetic
9. Being a problem solver
10. Being responsive and follow up efficiently and on a timely basis
11. Take ownership

"Exceptional "5C" Service" involves a series of actions:

1. Interaction with the customer, client, citizen, councillor, co-worker,
2. Adherence to City policies and procedures,
3. Presentation and employment of a positive, caring attitude,
4. Employment and use of effective "5C" Service skills ; and,



CITY OF PORT COLBORNE "5C" SERVICE PROGRAM

5. Resolution of problems within policies and directives of the City or, alternatively, provide resourceful assistance.

Staff can provide "Exceptional "5C" Service" by:

1. Developing operations and procedures that ensure that every person is treated equitably and respectfully;
2. Being knowledgeable in their scope of work;
3. Making certain that staff has and uses exemplary communication skills;
4. Managing "5C" Services in a manner that best meets the needs and desires of those we serve and work with; and,
5. Managing "5C" Service systems and personnel employing management practices that foster good work ethic and use of resources efficiently and effectively.

"5C" Service Standards

With each employee assuming responsibility for providing exceptional service, the City can better accomplish its goals of providing the best service for residents and the broader community.

The expectation for "Exceptional "5C" Service" is for the City to deliver efficient and effective services until the needs of the constituent members have been satisfied within reason and within City policies and procedures. This type of service means giving our target constituent service group:

- Responsive and timely service;
- Courteous and helpful service;
- Consistent and dependable service;
- Action to resolve concerns, problems and complaints;
- Correct information;
- Suggestions and available resource information.

Staff Training and Development

Fundamental training should be provided in areas that provide "Exceptional "5C" Service". "5C" Service should become part of an ongoing employee training program, and include:

Communications skills (oral and written),

- Telephone skills,
- People skills,
- Management skills,

- Respect in the workplace training,
- Understanding and administering City policies,
- Roles and responsibilities of Council and staff,
- Overview of municipal service delivery,
- City of Port Colborne Corporate Strategic Plan.

Monitoring Performance

To become and remain an "Exceptional "5C" Service" organization and a great place to work, it is important to establish achievable standards and to constantly measure performance against those standards. If this does not occur all of the talk about service to our taxpayers is simply rhetoric. Commitment by the City will dispel the old adage that some employees will view it as "just another program". However, when employees, including the management, find that they are really accountable for performance and improvement in "Exceptional "5C" Service", there is increased motivation to maintain the improvement initiative. A real sense of the organization's commitment is established, not just through word but through action.

Key performance indicators are:

1. "5C" Constituent member comment or ratings:
These involve obtaining and using "5C" constituent feedback to identify where improvement is needed and to also recognize "Exceptional "5C" Service". This market research should be on-going, measuring citizen expectations and the gap between expectations and actual experience as well as the compliance with policy and procedures thereby meeting or exceeding service expectations. While some "5C" constituents may not always be satisfied, the measurement of how staff handled the situation is imperative.
2. Employee Performance Evaluation:
Empirical evidence of employee adherence to standards and results measurements either through feedback or through direct observation. The establishment of attainable goals and objectives through training or practical experience.

"5C" Service Standards

The City of Port Colborne "Exceptional "5C" Service" program identifies the need to set standards and guidelines for City Staff to provide a superior level of exceptional service. To achieve the goal of increasing productivity, improving service quality and boosting "5C" constituents' satisfaction, staff must "buy into" and assume responsibility to learn and use the standards consistently to address the concerns of our target group by being sensitive to the five basic needs as previously identified:

Key Elements of Successful "5C" Service Relationships

By learning, understanding and using the standards outlined in this program staff can develop the skills and practices that satisfy the following key elements to successful citizen relationships:

Knowledge

- It is the responsibility of Staff to be aware of and have general knowledge of the City's policies, procedures and services
- Policies and procedures must be explained clearly
- Staff must be encouraged to recommend ways to improve "5C" constituent satisfaction

Positive Attitude

- Staff must have a positive attitude
- Staff is always friendly, courteous and considerate, even with very difficult and unhappy or angry "5C" constituents which can be the case.
- Concerns, inquiries and problems are handled with tact and courtesy
- Staff must participate and be part of the solution to "5C" constituent satisfaction

Being Friendly and Respectful

- "5C" constituents are acknowledged immediately
- Interactions are handled efficiently and effectively
- Employees show appreciation to their "5C" constituents
- Employees show appreciation to each other

Being Responsive and Responsible in Following Up

- Phone calls, emails, letters are treated respectfully, and
- Phone calls, emails, letters are responded to as soon as possible

Effectively Problem Solve

- "5C" constituents are assured that the problem will be investigated

- The "5C" constituents' needs are understood
- Employees to document problems and manner of resolution for future
- Offer possible solutions to problems or circumstances

"5C" Service Standards

Service Standards for the following interaction and communications topics are created to create consistency and to provide employees with general rules and guidelines to provide "Exceptional "5C" Service". These standards will enable staff to acquire the practices, behaviours and skills that will foster "Exceptional "5C" Service" envisioned by the "5C" Service program.

1. Telephone standards
2. Voicemail standards
3. Electronic mail standards
4. Correspondence/mail standards
5. Facsimile standards
6. Counter/Walk-in standards
7. Identification (security) Badges
8. On-site property visits and inspection standards
9. General communications on the street, in parks or at municipal facilities
10. Difficult or Upset/Angry "5C" Constituents

a. Telephone:

Purpose:

To ensure a consistent standard is followed with respect to receiving telephone calls and responding to same in a professional and timely manner.

Standards:

- a. Answer all calls as quickly as possible but at least by the third ring, if you are at your desk, not on another call or not meeting with someone. i.e.: do not ignore a caller unless you have good reason to let the call go to voice mail.
- b. The do not disturb option on the telephone should be used only where it is absolutely necessary to complete City business without interruption.
- c. Generally a ringing telephone takes precedence over another staff member standing at your desk unless you are involved in important City business; use good judgment to make the determination about what is important. The rule of thumb should be to answer. The caller cannot see you; however, another person sitting with you can, and understands the necessity to answer the call, while the caller, if not answered, can become frustrated and angry that the call is not being answered.
- d. Consciously smile before answering the telephone; although it cannot be seen, a smile changes tone and can be heard by the caller,

- e. Focus on the call, stop what you are doing and be attentive to the caller not work in progress or another conversation with a staff member.
- f. Greet the caller by stating your name and department.
 - i. For example, reception will say, "good morning or afternoon, thank you for calling the City of Port Colborne Reception. My name is [*first name*]." (Giving a first name helps put a personal touch to comfort the caller.) Show your willingness to help: "What can I do for you today?" or "How may I help you this morning/afternoon?" or "who would you like to speak to and I can transfer your call".
- g. Speak clearly and not too fast so the caller can identify you and understand what you are saying. Be sure to enunciate clearly.
- h. Don't chew gum, drink or eat while on the telephone.
- i. Try to avoid allowing callers to overhear office conversations and if you are in the same room as the person answering the telephone, please be quiet or excuse yourself from within hearing distance of the telephone. Sometimes, this can be difficult in an open concept office. You may want to apologize to the caller for the background noise depending on the caller.
- j. Listen carefully to the caller and allow them to ask their questions or explain the concern without interrupting them. Understand what the caller is looking for before you decide how to handle the call.
- k. If you do not have the answer or cannot competently respond to the caller's needs and you know who may be able to respond to the caller, advise the caller and let him/her know that you will transfer the call to someone who may help them. Let the caller know who you are transferring them to. Reception will transfer calls to various departments (cold transfer) and will follow the protocol established for reception. All other staff should not "cold" transfer. Do not just transfer and hang up. Make sure the party you are transferring to is available. If they are not available ask the caller if they wish to leave a voice mail message, call back, speak to someone else or leave a message with you.
- l. Transferring from telephone to telephone when there is no answer can be very frustrating for the caller. If there is no answer with at the first transfer, ask the caller if they will leave a message or if they want to speak with someone else. If the next extension is not answered suggest to the caller, that everyone either seems to be on the phone or tied up and recommend a message or voice mail and that someone will get back to them.
- m. If you have the answer(s), give the appropriate answer or explanation in a clear, concise and professional manner.
- n. Try to resolve the caller's concerns if it is within your capacity to deal with the issue.
- o. If you are unsure of whom should field the call tell the caller that someone will respond by the next business day. Be specific about what you are going to do for them, who should contact them and when they can expect to hear back.

- p. If you have to search for the information tell the caller and let them know you will respond within a reasonable time depending on the information required by the caller. Be specific about what you are going to do for them, who will contact them and when they can expect to hear back.
- q. Internal/external phone messages will be acknowledged by the next business day (within 24 hours, next day return call) to, as a minimum, tell the caller that an answer is coming if it is not readily available and to provide an expected time frame for the answer.
- r. When taking messages ask the caller to provide the following minimum information:
 - i. caller's name and company if applicable
 - ii. phone numbers where they can be reached
 - iii. subject of call and include any helpful details such as roll number, address, best time to call, etc.
- s. Make sure that the message is given to the employee or placed in a prominent location where the employee will get the message.
- t. Lotus notes has a telephone message protocol that should be used. If someone needs training on it, please speak to IT.

2. Voice Mail:

Purpose:

To ensure that the voice mail feature of the telephone system is utilized to its advantage and that voice messaging and responses are done in a professional and timely manner.

Standards:

- a. Change your voice mail message to reflect your attendance at the office. Use primary and alternate greeting tools on the telephone system (if available; primary being that you are in today but not available at the moment and alternate to advise you are out and to either select someone else or leave a message. If an alternate greeting is not available, then change the message to reflect the status of your attendance at work. Examples of some messages:
 - Hello, you have reached the voice mail of [*name and position*]. I am not available to take your call at this moment, but regularly retrieve my telephone messages. Please leave a message and I will call you back within 24 hours, or dial 0 to transfer to reception where your call can be redirected. You may also dial "*" [*insert telephone extension*] to directly transfer to another staff member. Thank you for calling.
 - Hello, you have reached the voice mail of [*name and position*]. I am away from the office until [*insert date*]. Please leave a message and I will call you back when I return or dial 0 to transfer to reception where your call can be redirected. You may also dial "*" [*insert telephone extension*] to directly transfer to [*name of person*]. Thank you for calling.

- b. The message can be customized to suit the circumstances but the key is to let the caller know the date you are in or not in the office and how they can get assistance.
- c. Always provide "5C" constituents with the option of reaching a person if they do not wish to leave a voice mail message.
- d. Respond to messages within one business day (maximum 24 hour). If an answer is not yet available you must, at least return the call and acknowledge that you are working on the inquiry.

3. Electronic Mail (Email):

Purpose:

To ensure a consistent standard is followed with respect to e-mail and responding to same in a professional and timely manner.

Standards:

- a. Use your "out of office" protocol in Lotus Notes Tools when you are away for one or more days.
- b. Send an e-mail advising relevant staff of your plans to be away for one or more days and include your return date.
- c. As a minimum, check and respond to e-mail daily. Set your Lotus Notes Tools to notify you when new messages are received. Email can be very disruptive to work flow; however, it is the instant communication of the 21st Century. Schedule time to deal with it. Don't let it control your day, nor treat it as a bother to your workload; manage it.
- d. Provide a polite acknowledgement to an e-mail within one business day if you cannot respond immediately to the request, thanking him/her and advising you will respond within specified time (not longer than 5 days, sooner is better, depending on the depth necessary for the response).
- e. Use the subject line in all e-mails to provide an overview of the subject. This will assist others when searching for specific e-mails.
- f. Show respect for your fellow employees. Internal e-mails should have priority to foster cooperation. Internally respond to e-mails as soon as possible, and within not more than one business day. If away, your "out of office" will be sufficient notice that you will respond upon your return to work.
- g. Keep your e-mail message simple and get to the point. E-mails should not be substituted for lengthy issues which should be done in proper letter or memo form.
- h. Do not start an email frenzy or email war with back and forth comments on the same subject. Pick up the telephone and call or meet, resolve the issue and if required to formalize, then follow up with a final email.
- i. Where issues may arise between staff members, supervisors should be copied on emails.

- j. Sometimes a simple telephone call is better, especially if the issue is complex – set up a meeting.
- k. The City's e-mail system was paid for with tax dollars and is not your personal e-mail system. You have no claims on its ownership or intended use. You must not use the City's email for personal purposes (see exception following) sending jokes, pornography or other improper e-mails. Send polite replies to people who send you such correspondence asking them to refrain in future. Remember that the City owns every message sent and received and copies are kept and maintained on the City's hard drive. If it's personal or not for public eyes, then don't do it. Deleting an email from your personal Lotus Notes basket is TOO LATE. The city copies all emails for permanent keeping before it gets to you.
- l. During breaks or lunch periods, some limited personal use of email or internet is permitted; however, employees must recognize that the information and data received or sent is copied in the City's records and are publicly owned data. Please limit personal use.
- m. Use an appropriate salutation, usually the name of the recipient.
- n. Type messages in lower case. UPPER CASE LOOKS LIKE YOU ARE SHOUTING!
- o. Make sure you use the proper e-mail address and name of the intended recipient.
- p. Use proper grammar and English: "U" cannot be used for "you"; "LOL" (laughing out loud) should not be used; "tx" cannot be used for "thank you" and the list goes on. It is imperative that proper and appropriate grammar be used in every email.
- q. Use spell check and read over the message before you send it.
- r. If you are angry or upset over an incident and are preparing an email, do not send it until after a brief "cooling off period" as you need time to re-read the email to make sure that you are not writing adverse or inappropriate "tone" into the email.
- s. All City outgoing emails will use the following in the closing:
Regards, or Yours truly, or Sincerely,

[Name]

[Title]

The City of Port Colborne

Telephone: 905-835-2900, ext. ###

TTY: 905-835-0826

Fax: 905-835-####

Email: [name@portcolborne.ca]

www.portcolborne.ca

"Serving you to create an even better community"

This message, including any attachments, is privileged and intended only for the person(s) named above. This material may contain confidential or personal information which may be subject to the provisions of the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. Any other distribution, copying or disclosure is strictly prohibited. If you are not the intended recipient or have received this message in error, please notify us immediately by telephone, fax or e-mail and permanently delete the original transmission from us, including any attachments, without making a copy.

- t. City emails shall not include cute little sayings or anecdotes. The only words that should appear in an outgoing email closing are as shown above and as approved by the City.
- u. Ensure your email is going to the correct recipient. Check, check and double check. Lotus Notes automatically fills in the name (if it's in the database); however, the system does not know if you are sending to John Smith or to John Smale. It will select John Smale first (alphabetical) so if you want to send to John Smith, the email will be directed to the wrong person. Check, check and double check.
- v. Confidential information through email must be carefully guarded and appropriately labeled as confidential.
- w. Blind copying of emails is used to keep someone confidentially informed. This feature should be limited in use where possible.
- x. "blast" emails to all staff or to staff in a district or area is permitted only on the approval of the email by the supervisor. Personal emails (i.e. Avon book, sale of puppies, Tupperware party, humorous story etc. are not City business and are discouraged).

4. Correspondence/Snail Mail:

Purpose:

To ensure a consistent standard is followed with respect to correspondence/mail and responding to same in a professional and timely manner.

Standards:

- a. All external correspondence should be answered within 5 days. If a reply is not expected to be ready within 5 days the recipient of the correspondence/mail must be notified within 3 to 5 days to advise that a response cannot be available and shall be given a reasonable explanation for the delay and the time in which the response can be expected.
- b. Check internal mail and correspondence daily. In the spirit of inter-department cooperation and mutual respect for each other, internal mail shall be responded to within one (1) day if possible. Fellow staff may need the information to respond to a "5C" constituent. Every attempt should be made by staff requesting information or seeking assistance to specify expected time response and why.
- c. All outgoing mail or other correspondence shall be printed on electronic City letterhead, composed and configured in a business-like and professional style and Open Block Format.

- d. Use templates where available to ensure consistency of correspondence within the organization as well as outside the organization.
- e. All outgoing mail shall bear the name and signature of the author.
- f. Use spell check and read over your letters and correspondence before you send them. It may be advisable to have someone else review the message, particularly if legal rights are or may become an issue.
- g. Copies of all outgoing mail shall be saved electronically on City system – NOT personal computers.
- h. Electronic signatures shall be password and write protected.
- i. Electronic signatures shall not be used by anyone except the owner of the signature, unless express permission is granted by the owner for its use in each single instance (i.e. use by an administrative assistant).

5. **Facsimile:**

Purpose:

To ensure a consistent standard is followed with respect to facsimile (fax) correspondence.

Standards:

In addition to the standards below, mail and other correspondence standards shall apply to faxes.

- a. Outgoing faxes bearing with or without the City's letterhead (scanned document from some other source or agreement etc) shall contain a cover page with the City's logo and detailed information on it and indicating to who, from who, subject, date, fax numbers at both sending and receiving plus a detailed statement of the number of pages and intended use. The statement of confidentiality shall be indicated on every fax cover page as follows:
"This message, including any attachments, is privileged and intended only for the person(s) named above. This material may contain confidential or personal information which may be subject to the provisions of the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. Any other distribution, copying or disclosure is strictly prohibited. If you are not the intended recipient or have received this message in error, please notify us immediately by telephone, fax or e-mail and permanently delete and shred the original transmission from us, including any attachments, without making a copy."
- b. Sending confidential information by fax should be avoided unless it is urgent or essential and you are confident confidentiality will be honoured at the destination.
- c. Check all numbers and names very carefully before sending to avoid embarrassment to the recipient and the City, especially confidential material.
- d. As in all City services and systems, the fax machines shall only be used for City business.
- e. Outgoing faxes shall use the fax template in the templates folder.

6. Counter/Walk-in Interaction:

Purpose:

To ensure that walk-in and other visiting "5C" constituents are treated professionally and receive courteous service in a timely manner.

Standards:

Ask anyone in the public areas if they require assistance if the purpose of their visit is not obvious.

- a. Smile at all "5C" constituents that are seeking service or information and ask if they require assistance. Don't just stand there and expect the "5C" constituent to start. Be friendly, cheerful and excited to see him/her.
- b. Maintain cheerful eye contact.
- c. Listen carefully to the "5C" constituent and direct your attention to the "5C" constituent only and until you have dealt with the matter or directed them to the appropriate staff or department.
- d. Try to not interrupt your encounter with the "5C" constituent by answering a telephone. A second or third "5C" constituent should also wait until you have finished with the original "5C" constituent. Other staff members should also avoid interrupting unless the circumstance or work flow suggests an interruption is appropriate.
- e. Allow the constituent to ask the question or explain the concern without interruption. Understand what the "5C" constituent wants or needs before you deal with the request. You are less likely to send the person to the wrong staff or department if you know what they are after.
- f. Take notes; this helps us to understand the problem or concern and also helps calm down people at the counter that might be upset for some reason. It also provides clarity for the "5C" constituent in explanation of the circumstance or problem.
- g. Provide proper directions and names to ask for if you are sending the "5C" constituent to another staff member or department.
- h. If you have the answer or information, provide it in a clear, concise and professional manner.
- i. Maintain proper posture, attitude and demeanour while dealing with "5C" constituents.
- j. Never raise your voice or argue with the "5C" constituents. Be patient and don't take on a belligerent, negative or offensive attitude of a stressed "5C" constituent.
- k. If the appropriate staff person is not available for the "5C" constituent take a message in accordance with the telephone standards above and advise the "5C" constituent that staff would respond by the next business day.
- l. Take ownership of the message and make sure it is followed up.
- m. While everyone wants to be helpful and such attitude is encouraged by this policy, staff should never try to answer questions or inquiries that they have little

or no knowledge or expertise in. Always be polite and refer the matter to the appropriate staff or department to provide accurate information.

7. Identification Badge:

Purpose:

To ensure that every employee is identifiable and carries legitimate identification while working for and representing the City of Port Colborne. In future, identification badges may be used as access cards.

Standards:

- a. Badges are to be produced for all municipal staff including students, crossing guards, part time personnel. Presently, the Fire Department has the appropriate equipment and will produce badges.
- b. Badges are the property of the City of Port Colborne and must be surrendered on request.
- c. All badges shall contain the following information:
 - City Logo,
 - Employee's Name,
 - Employee's position (job title),
 - photo of the employee,
 - Department,
 - Employee number,
 - Statement on every badge as follows:

"This is to certify that the above named person is an employee of the City of Port Colborne",

 - Every name badge shall bear the signature of the Chief Administrative Officer or other signature as required by law.
 - Badges shall be worn at all times,
- d. Identification Badges are personal and shall not be loaned or provided to any person for any reason.
- e. Where photographs become out-of-date or positions change, new identification badges will be issued.

8. On-site Property Visits & Inspections:

Purpose:

To ensure that on-site visits, meetings and inspections are conducted in a courteous and professional manner.

Standards:

- a. Double check the time and location of the visit or inspection if it is preset to ensure that you have the correct information.
- b. Arrive on time if an appointment has been set. Do not leave a "5C" constituent waiting. If you have been unavoidably delayed call the party you are to meet and explain the situation. Reschedule at the convenience of the "5C" constituent if necessary.
- c. Ensure that you are wearing your identification badge and it is in plain view.
- d. Greet contacts with a smile and introduce yourself with your full name and department.
- e. Explain the purpose of your visit, especially if you are not expected. Be very clear and expand on your authority to be there if the "5C" constituent has not initiated contact.
- f. Wear protective clothing and equipment in accordance with your job requirements and the Health and Safety regulations.
- g. Respect personal property. Don't wander around the property or enter rooms without invitation or permission.
- h. Use language that befits a professional. No swearing, obscene or other inappropriate language.
- i. Maintain cheerful eye contact.
- j. Listen carefully to the "5C" constituent and direct your attention to the "5C" constituent only and until you have dealt with the matter
- k. Never interrupt your encounter with the "5C" constituent by answering a telephone or turning your attention to someone else.
- l. Allow them to ask the question or explain the concern without interruption. Understand what the "5C" constituent wants or needs before you deal with the request.
- m. Take notes; this helps us to understand the problem or concern and also helps calm down people at the counter that might be upset for some reason. It also provides clarity for the "5C" constituent in explanation of the circumstance or problem. Note taking is extremely important for on-site visits or inspections.
- n. If you have information to convey, provide it in a clear, concise and professional manner.
- o. Maintain proper posture, attitude and demeanour while dealing with "5C" constituents.
- p. Never raise your voice or argue with the "5C" constituents. Be patient and don't take on a belligerent, negative or offensive attitude of a stressed "5C" constituent.

- q. Focus on the reason for your visit and don't comment on any non-related issues.
- r. Conduct your site visit or inspection in a professional manner and conclude your business in a timely manner depending on the circumstances.
- s. Never admit to any personal or corporate liability but be sympathetic and advise that you will refer the matter to the appropriate staff or department. Take all information in writing (writing sometimes diffuses an upset individual). Take photos (if appropriate). Follow incident reporting guidelines.

9. General Communications and Interaction with "5C" Constituent Members on the Street, in Parks or at Other Municipal Facilities or Events:

Purpose:

To ensure that "5C" constituent relationships, communications, interactions, and meetings (scheduled or otherwise) and are conducted in a courteous and professional manner.

Standards:

- a. Ensure that you are wearing your identification badge and it is in plain view.
- b. Greet contacts with a smile.
- c. Use language that befits a professional. No swearing, obscene or other inappropriate language.
- d. Maintain cheerful eye contact.
- e. Listen carefully to the "5C" constituent and direct your attention to the "5C" constituent only and until you have dealt with the matter or responded to any questions or comments.
- f. Never interrupt your encounter with the "5C" constituent by answering a telephone or turning your attention to someone else.
- g. Allow them to ask the question or explain the concern without interruption. Understand what the "5C" constituent wants or needs before you deal with the request.
- h. Be friendly and courteous regardless of the circumstance
- i. If follow up is required and if the situation avails itself of the opportunity, take notes (and not on the back of a cigarette package or something similar); this helps us to understand the problem or concern and also helps calm people that might be upset for some reason. It also provides clarity for the "5C" constituent in explanation of the circumstance or problem. Note taking is extremely important for on-site visits or inspections.
- j. If follow up is required, report the matter a.s.a.p. to your supervisor if you are not the supervisor.
- k. If you have information to convey to the constituent, provide it in a clear, concise and professional manner.
- l. Maintain proper posture, attitude and demeanour while dealing with "5C" constituents.

- m. Never raise your voice or argue with the "5C" constituents.
- n. Be patient and don't take on a belligerent, negative or offensive attitude.
- o. While difficult to maintain composure with a belligerent "5C" constituent, it is absolutely imperative that the constituent be treated with respect, in a polite and courteous manner regardless of the circumstances.
- p. Ensure that every contact that requires some sort of follow up including a visit, telephone call, mail, notice or simply the supply of information is reported to the supervisor if the staff member is aware that follow up might be required.
- q. Never admit to any personal or corporate liability but be sympathetic and advise that you will refer the matter to the appropriate staff or department. Take all information in writing (writing sometimes diffuses an upset individual). Take photos (if appropriate). Follow incident reporting guidelines.

10. Difficult or Upset/Angry "5C" Constituents

Purpose:

It is difficult to be friendly to and respectful of someone who is angry, perhaps swearing, and even intimidating. This section will outline standards to support "Exception "5C" Service" despite difficult circumstances. For internal co-workers and adherents, the City's policy on harassment and respect in the work place should also be referenced.

Standards:

- a. Be as polite and respectful as possible.
- b. Remember that in almost every case, the angry/upset individual is not angry at you but the system or the rules or by-laws. Part of the job of every City employee sometimes has to deal with angry or upset people. Those people have no choice or selection of municipal office or municipal staff and can and will lash out with anger and frustration, sometimes even directed at you.
- c. Maintain composure and do not take on the attitude of the angry person. It is human nature to be defensive.
- d. Try to understand the concerns and reasons for the "5C" constituent's anger or attitude.
- e. Make notes and repeat your understanding of the problem or issue, especially if there is follow up required or the matter is outside your area of expertise. When there is a specific matter, when you write down the problem, and you are able to repeat to confirm the problem or issue to the concerned person, tempers will subside – the angry person is able to express him/herself and someone is dealing with the issue.
- f. Keep notes of the conversation if possible and practical. Note-taking will often help calm the situation.
- g. If the matter is not within your jurisdiction or your realm of work, assist the upset or angry person by contacting the correct responsible person or department.
- h. Assure the angry person that the matter will receive attention and follow up.

- i. Make sure you understand the policies and issues if you are going to provide advice or information and write down what you are saying or have said to be clear of the conversation at the time. Many times an angry or upset individual will hear only part of the conversation or selectively pick out those components of a conversation that they consider relevant to their needs at the time.
- j. Obtain the person's name, address and telephone if possible.
- k. Do not interrupt the person; let him/her continue with their thoughts.
- l. Do not argue or challenge the person. Simply present the facts in a calm and respectful manner if known to you.
- m. Try not to smirk or present emotion that could be interpreted by the upset person as being haughty or arrogant. Sometimes we defensively present an attitude of arrogance. As a personal defense mechanism, it's human nature to do these kinds of things. It is best practice to try to remain emotionless, stay calm, continue to be respectful even if the person you are dealing with is over the top and is being disrespectful.
- n. Try to present open body language; don't fold your arms, clench your fists, tap your fingers on the counter, frown or glance away or succumb to distractions. Be attentive and exhibit a welcome attitude (if possible) toward the angry or upset "5C" constituent.
- o. As a last resort, refer to your manager or supervisor. In extreme (and rare cases), stronger action might have to be taken such as asking a person to leave, or contacting the police. Maintain composure and continue to be respectful and polite, but take the appropriate action.
- p. Sometimes (rare occasions), it may be necessary to calmly advise the "5C" constituent that attitude or tone or bad language is neither acceptable nor tolerated. In severe cases, communications will need to be discontinued. If possible, the Department Manager should make that determination.
- q. Employees will follow the guide set out in policy in respect of Bill 168 regarding harassment in the workplace.

Staff Training and Development:

It will be the goal of the City to train staff in the following "Exceptional "5C" Service" attributes:

- Overview of "5C" constituent relationships
- What and who is the "5C" constituent
- Enhancing the "5C" constituent experience
- The goal of "5C" constituent satisfaction
- Needs and expectations of participants: management, staff & "5C" constituent
- Attitude
- Effective communication skills



CITY OF PORT COLBORNE
"5C" SERVICE PROGRAM

- Barriers to effective communication
- Telecommunications: telephone, fax, voice mail, e-mail
- Counter/Walk-in traffic
- The art of listening
- Questioning skills
- Giving and receiving feedback
- Challenging situations and "5C" constituents
- Why do "5C" constituents complain?
- Effectively resolving "5C" constituent complaints
- Recovering from an error
- The difficult or abusive "5C" constituent



Questionnaire for Feedback.

How did we do?

Making your contact with the City pleasant and enjoyable is our goal. Please take a moment to let us know how we are doing. Check (✓) only one of the appropriate boxes in each row of the table and provide any additional comments you may have below.

	EXCELLENT	GOOD	AVERAGE	POOR
OUR PEOPLE:				
Listened attentively to your concerns				
Gave courteous, friendly service				
Were helpful and knowledgeable				
Had a professional manner and appearance				
OUR FACILITY:				
Appeared neat and clean				
Provided safe, easy access				
THE DEPARTMENT:				
Showed an understanding of your needs				
Answered your questions satisfactorily				
Delivered the service as advised				

How can we serve you better?

Optional: Do you wish to be contacted about your experience?

Yes: No:

If you answered yes, please print your name and telephone number below.

Name: _____ Phone: _____