



An Rialálaí
Carthanas
Charities
Regulator

Charities Regulator: Public Service Charter

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Charities Regulator Public Service Charter

1.0 Background – Who We Are

The Charities Regulator was established as an **independent** Authority in 2014 in accordance with the Charities Act 2009. The Charities Regulator is responsible for the registration and regulation of all charities that carry out activities in the Republic of Ireland.

2.0 Main Functions

All of the Charities Regulator's main functions involve working with our stakeholders (defined below), who include you, the public. Our main functions include the following:

- registering and gathering annual reporting information from charitable organisations;
- providing you, the public, with information regarding registered charities or how to register with the Charities Regulator;
- gathering information regarding potential concerns related to charities; and other such functions.

Therefore, the Charities Regulator depends on a good relationship with all stakeholders, one based on mutual courtesy and trust.

The Charities Regulator is a civil service organisation so our standards and behaviour are governed by the [Civil Service Code of Standards and Behaviour](#). The Code specifies that civil servants must maintain high standards of service in all of their dealings with the public. The purpose of this Charter is to set out the standards required by all civil servants in the discharge of their duties and sets out a clear framework within which we must work, as well as standards that you, as a stakeholder, can expect from the Charities Regulator.

3.0 Our Stakeholders

Stakeholders of the Charities Regulator include, but are not limited to:

- Members of the General Public;
- The Minister for Rural and Community Development;
- Charitable Organisations – Nominated service users and Charity Trustees in particular;
- Beneficiaries of Charitable Organisations.

The Charities Regulator works to understand the needs and expectations of stakeholders, and works to ensure that feedback on performance is obtained and disseminated from engagement with stakeholders.

4.0 Our Commitment to Stakeholders

We aim to provide you, the public, with a professional, efficient and courteous service at all times and achieve this by:

- Listening to you. We will respond to you and treat you fairly and with respect;
- Processing complaints efficiently. We will do all we can to ensure that you have confidence in our decisions;

- Being professional and courteous. We will abide by the [Department of Public Expenditure and Reform's 12 Principles of Quality Stakeholder Service \(QCS\)](#);
- Undertaking to do what we promise to do and to always endeavour to give you the right information in a timely manner;
- Being open and honest at all times. We will answer your questions as fully as we can and will make sure our answers are as simple and easy-to-understand as possible;
- Protecting your privacy. We will keep accurate records of your dealings with us and keep those records safe;
- Treating everyone equally. We will strive to make sure that our service takes account of any special needs or requirements that you may have;
- Being accessible. We will be available to answer your questions by telephone, by letter, electronically or in person.

We are fully committed to treating all our stakeholders equally and to delivering the highest quality of service.

Disclaimer

This Charter does not apply to the Charities Regulator's 'Raise a Concern' process. The 'Raise a Concern' process is governed by the [Concerns Policy](#). The Concerns Policy sets out how the Charities Regulator deals with concerns raised about charities. The 'Raise a Concern' process is a confidential process, subject to any legal duty of disclosure and is therefore outside of the scope of this Charter. Further, this Charter may not apply in circumstances where statutory investigations or legal proceedings are contemplated or ongoing.

5.0 Communications

5.1 Telephone

Depending on the nature of your query, you may contact us at one of the telephone numbers given on our ['Contact Us' page](#) at the advertised telephone opening hours.

- We will answer your phone call as soon as possible;
- We will identify ourselves when we answer;
- We will be polite and helpful, and do our best to provide callers with clear and correct information.

While we understand that stakeholders who call may be experiencing difficulties or be in a stressful situation, 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 such unacceptable behaviour continues.

5.2 Written and Email Communication

Depending on the nature of your query, you may contact us at one of the email addresses on our [‘Contact Us’ page](#).

- Where applicable, we will issue all correspondence with a reference number;
- We will provide our name;
- We will issue all correspondence in clear language, that is understandable and concise;
- We encourage our stakeholders to correspond with us via email. However, if this is not possible, then post may be sent to the address provided on our [‘Contact Us’ page](#);
- Postal FOI Requests must be addressed to the Freedom of Information Officer at the address provided.
- Postal Data Protection Requests must be addressed to the Data Protection Officer at the address provided.

5.3 Callers to Charities Regulator Offices

Our office is not a public office. Meetings with staff are by appointment. Due to staff’s prior work commitments any unscheduled caller may be asked to make an appointment.

- We shall greet visitors politely, be fair and helpful and deal with their enquiries as efficiently as possible;
- We will ensure that all visitors are afforded privacy and discretion in their dealings with the Charities Regulator;
- We will ensure that our offices are suitable and easily-accessible for meetings and conform to all Health and Safety standards.

5.4 We want you to find us quick to facilitate your access to our services and to respond to your needs

- We will facilitate easy access to our services by using clear, straight-forward language, offering a range of different ways to contact us, and supplying our stakeholders with up-to-date, comprehensive and accurate information on our policies, schemes and services. This includes:
 - A quarterly newsletter;
 - Informative guidance documents, covering subjects including:
 - What is a Charity?;
 - Charitable organisations engaging in political activity;
- We will proactively provide stakeholders with information and clear guidelines and guidance that they might need in order to make quick, informed decisions;
- If you need to contact us with a query, we will respond to you in line with the following timelines:
 - We will try to answer all telephone calls promptly and try to have an answer to any telephone query within the same day;
 - We will acknowledge written and email correspondence within five working days where it is feasible to do so;

- We will endeavour to issue final replies within 15 working days where it is feasible to do so, and where this is not possible we will provide information as to the status of your request before the 15-day period is up.

5.5 When we make a decision, we will:

- Advise you of our reasoning and the process behind it;
- Provide you with complete information on our appeals or complaints process;
- Process information consistently, effectively and efficiently;
- Communicate clearly and in a timely fashion;
- Be transparent, open and honest;
- Direct you to another public body if appropriate.

6.0 Information

- We will produce comprehensive explanatory material and guidelines on the Charities Regulator's services, as appropriate;
- Our website: <http://charitiesregulator.ie>, will be up-to-date, relevant, user friendly and accessible to all stakeholders, including those with visual disabilities;
- The Charities Regulator is committed to engaging with its stakeholders, and will ask for your views and listen to them.

7.0 Seirbhís trí Gaeilge

Déanfaidh an Rialtóir Carthanas gach iarracht chun freastal ar dhaoine ar mian leo a ngnó a dhéanamh trí mheánna Gaeilge:

- We will endeavour to respond in Irish to any written correspondence in Irish;
- We will extend facilities for the registration and reporting processes to be carried out through Irish;
- We will publish our Annual Report and other major publications in Irish and all applications may be conducted through Irish.

8.0 Equality and Confidentiality

- The Charities Regulator accommodates diversity and deal with all stakeholders in a fair and open manner in the spirit of the [Equal Status Act 2000](#);
- We will endeavour to address the needs of particular stakeholder groups when formulating policy;
- We will ensure that our offices are accessible for all stakeholders with disabilities. Where possible, we are grateful if stakeholders can provide us with advance notice of any access or other requirements so that we can make any necessary arrangements;

- No person with whom the Charities Regulator has contact will be discriminated against on grounds of gender, marital status, family status, age, disability, sexual orientation, religious belief, race, ethnicity, political convictions, place of birth or residence, occupational status or any other status;
- The Charities Regulator will take appropriate precautions to protect the confidentiality of personal information in accordance with Data Protection legislation. Personal information that is provided will only be used in line with the purpose for which it was provided and will not be shared with third parties unless allowed or required by law. The Charities Regulator may use your anonymised personal data for statistical purposes. We have a formal [Statement of Information Practices](#).

9.0 Coordination

Where necessary and appropriate, we will work with other government agencies and departments to coordinate services to our stakeholders.

10.0 Statutory Obligations

The Charities Regulator is fully committed to fulfilling all relevant statutory obligations and requirements in relation to: Data Protection; Freedom of Information; Health & Welfare at Work; Equality; and Prompt Payment of Accounts.

11.0 Complaints

If you are unhappy with any aspect of a service provided by the Charities Regulator, please inform us and we will try to rectify the problem. We have a formal [Complaints Policy](#).

12.0 Monitoring and Evaluation

We monitor our performance through the use of internal management information systems, consultation with stakeholders and feedback received through the Complaints procedure. We intend to formally register for the ISO 9001 Quality Management System in 2018, which will have the following benefits:

- Consistency in our provision of services;
- Facilities to enhance customer satisfaction;
- Identifying risks and opportunities;
- Demonstrating conformity to specified quality management standards.

13.0 Help Us to Help You

You can help us to provide you with a high quality stakeholder service if you:

- Fill in all forms fully and accurately;
- Quote any relevant reference numbers in all communications with us;
- Treat our staff courteously, as you would wish to be treated yourself.

To assist the Charities Regulator in meeting its aims, it would be helpful if our stakeholders would do the following when dealing with us:

- Have any reference numbers / all accurate and relevant details to hand when making enquiries in relation to ongoing cases with the Charities Regulator;
- Treat our staff with courtesy and respect and listen and adhere to their guidance as they work to provide you with the most comprehensive and efficient response to your query.

This fosters an environment of mutual respect between staff in the Charities Regulator and those we serve, and assists us in providing the best possible stakeholder care.

If your enquiry relates to a matter that comes within the remit of another public body, we will direct your enquiry to that body and inform you accordingly.

Please let us know what you think of the service we provide by submitting comments, views and suggestions to info@charitiesregulator.ie. We will always endeavour to use this feedback to assist us in providing the best possible stakeholder service.

If you were happy with the service provided, please let us know. It is always welcome to hear some positive feedback.

14.0 Revision History:

Revision Number	Review Date	Reason for update
000	February 2018	Approved by EMT Subject to formatting
001	August 2018	Updated hyperlinks