

AGENCY FOR SOCIAL PROTECTION



CUSTOMER SERVICE CHARTER

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PREFACE BY CEO



The Agency Social Protection at some point plays a vital role in almost every household in Seychelles, be it in the form of direct cash transfers or indirect grants.

The aim of the Agency is to provide all of you with the information, financial support and other services you will require within our mandate in a timely, efficient and most importantly in a customer-friendly way.

The Agency is committed to ensuring that a customer service ethos is embedded in everything it does and that the same is embraced by everyone in the organisation. This Customer charter therefore forms part of our constant efforts to improve our services to you; the people we have been entrusted with to serve.

The Agency is determined to deliver a service that meets best international standards and maintains the public service values of openness, responsiveness, professionalism and good governance. The Customer Charter will therefore be a focal point in helping us to help meet this challenge.

The Customer Charter will inform you of the services you can expect when dealing with our Agency and also of your responsibility towards the Agency.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you in advance for working together with us to meet the requirements set out in this charter and also to thank all staff of the Agency for their ongoing commitment to deliver a high level of service, allowing you in the process to receive the supports that you need, when you need it.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Marcus Simeon', written in a cursive style.

Marcus Simeon
Chief Executive Officer
Agency Social Protection

INTRODUCTION

Delivering an efficient and effective customer service is a primary objective and one of our core responsibilities on behalf of the Government and the taxpayer.



The Agency of Social Protection (ASP) delivers activities to promote active participation in society through the provision of income supports, and other services for a range of audiences. It serves a diverse group of customers including families, people in employment, unemployed people, people with disabilities, carers, and the elderly upon reaching the retirement age.

PURPOSE OF CUSTOMER SERVICE CHARTER

Our Customer Service Charter outlines our commitment to providing our clients with quality service and provides details of what, our clients can expect from their dealings with us. We strive to provide high levels of customer service and are committed to being a high performing, professional organisation.

This charter also explains our clients' rights and responsibilities. If, for any reason, our clients are not satisfied with the service they receive, details are outlined on how they can make a complaint.

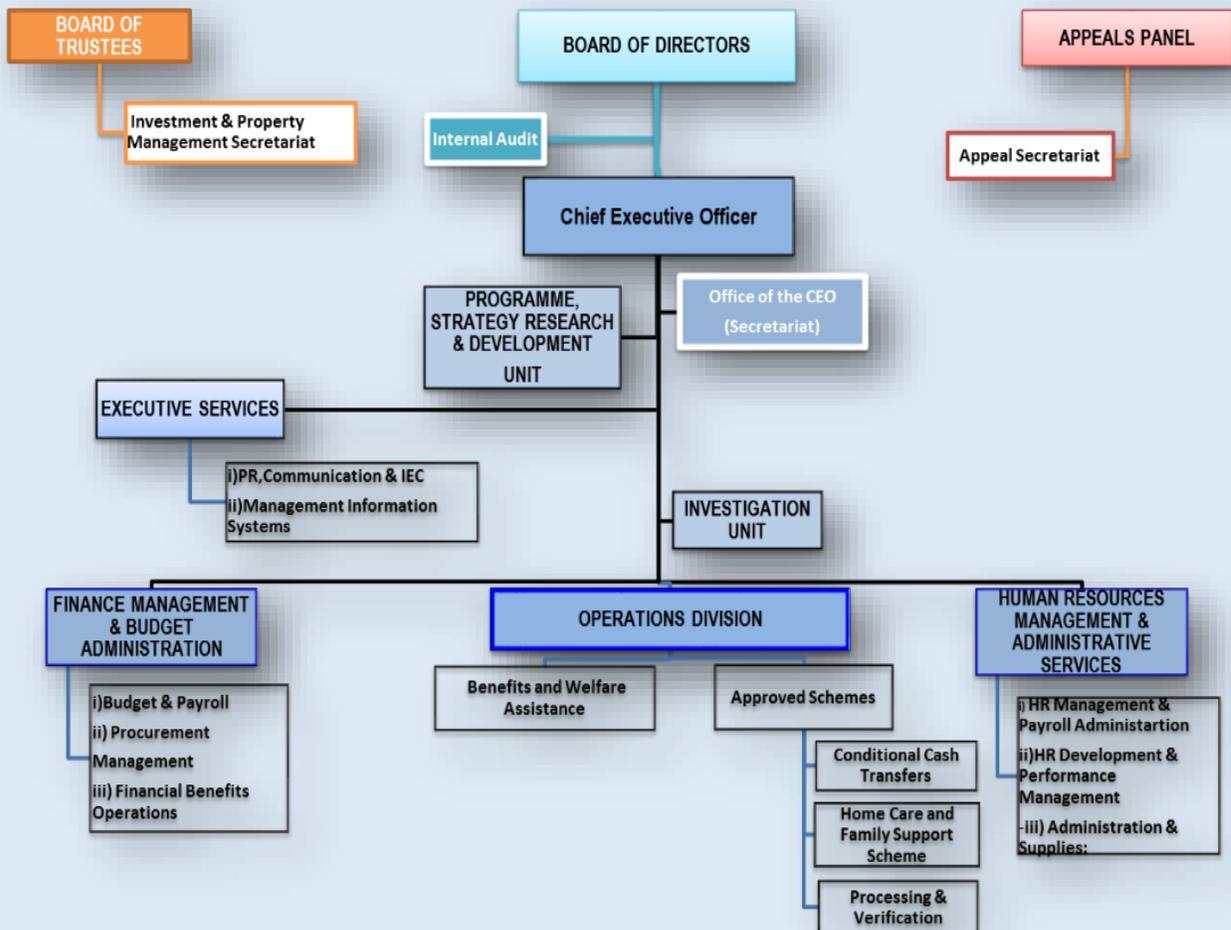
STRUCTURE OF THE ASP

The Agency is divided into four main divisions namely:

1. CEO's secretariat; A number of specific specialised functions are held within the CEO's secretariat. These include:
 - i. Programme, Strategy, Research, & Development Unit;
 - ii. Investigations Unit; and

- iii. Executive Services holding, PR, Communication & IEC and Management Information System
- 2. Finance Management & Budget Administration, holding Budget and Payroll, Procurement Management and Financial Benefits Operations;
- 3. HR Management & Administrative Services, holding HR Management and Payroll Administration, HR Development and Performance Management, Administration and Supplies;
- 4. Operations Division holding, Benefits and Welfare Assistance and Approved Schemes

Below is an organisational chart of the Agency.



MANDATE

The mandate of the Agency for Social Protection is to ensure the provision of comprehensive social security services and social relief against vulnerability within the constitutional and legislative framework of Seychelles.

VISION & MISSION

VISION

An empowered Agency seeking excellence in service delivery with aim of reaching the most vulnerable groups.

MISSION

- i. **Beneficiaries** - Provide social security services to identified groups as laid out in the constitutional and legislative framework.
- ii. **Employees** - empower and build an innovative, cohesive and professional team through the development of individual potential, rewarding results accordingly.
- iii. **Stakeholders** - promote synergy with all partners, leading to efficient and effective service delivery.

VALUES

PROFESSIONALISM

The Team is committed to provide a professional service that is proficient, reliable, and excellent in all aspects of conduct and performance.

INTEGRITY & CREDIBILITY

The Team will adhere to all its commitments with the aim to achieve the Agency's goals with sincerity and openness.

In setting ethical standards, the Team will treat each other and the people it serves with dignity, respect, empathy and honesty using transparent and accountable means.

CUSTOMER SERVICE EXCELLENCE

Satisfied customers are our aim; hence the Team will always be compassionate to client's needs and provide timely services with due consideration, fairness and confidentiality.

TEAMWORK

Learning and striving for excellence together, the Team will be supportive of each member's efforts, be loyal to one another, and care for each other in both a personal and professional capacity.



COLLABORATIVE APPROACH

The Team will strive to maintain a collaborative approach through consultation with all partners.

SERVICES PROVIDED BY ASP

The ASP seeks to administer payment of benefits and provide social welfare assistance to persons of insufficient means.

DESCRIPTION OF BENEFITS

a. Employment related benefits

Assistance paid out to employees or self-employed:

1. **Sickness benefit:** whilst on sick leave upon exhaustion of 60 days paid sick leave.
2. **Maternity benefit:** whilst on maternity leave.

3. **Injury benefit:** following injury at work.
4. **Invalidity benefit:** partially or incapable of work due to illness/disability stemming from sickness benefit.
5. **Disablement benefit:** following a period of entitlement to injury benefit.
6. **Survivor benefit:** assistance to survived dependent in the event of a death of an employed person.
7. **Dependent benefit:** provide additional assistance to all dependent of a sickness/injury/invalidity beneficiary.
8. **Paternity benefit:** payment made to all fathers who are on paternity leave from work.
9. **Disability benefit:** payment to a person who cannot work because of long-term illness/has a disability.

b. Non-employment related benefits

1. **Funeral benefit:** assistance towards the cost of funeral for all Seychellois citizen.
2. **Retirement benefit:** assistance given to all resident Seychellois citizen upon reaching the legal retirement age. Provided they meet a basic Residency Test.
3. **Orphan/abandoned child benefit:** in the event of death/abandonment of both parent.
4. **Semi-orphan benefit:** assistance given upon the death of one parent.

c. Social Welfare Assistance

Allowance given to a household whose means are insufficient to meet his/her basic household needs. The allowance can be due to:

- Unemployment
- Insufficient income
- Lack of maintenance for children
- Medical

Assistance is based on a means-tested assistance comparing all household income against set measures;

1. Housing
2. Supplementation
3. Utilities
4. Transportation

Assistance can then be given monthly if the above is met, i.e. income is lower than the measures, or as a one-off payment in cases where this is not the case but vulnerability can be justified.

d. Approved Schemes

1. Post-secondary bursary

This universal assistance is given to all students attending post-secondary institutions in Seychelles.

2. SPTC Travel concession

Subsidized bus fare for primary and secondary student, free bus pass for post-secondary student, elderly and the disabled.

3. Specialized child treatment

Funding for Ministry of Health for approved overseas specialised treatment cost for children. Adults ones are catered directly by the Ministry.

4. Dedicated Fund for School

The provision of school snacks, school lunch, uniforms and other miscellaneous items such as stationary to crèche, primary and secondary state school children with the aim of preventing truancy.

5. Home Care Programme

Payment of a caregiver in household or institution to help the recipient with his/her daily living activities following a health assessment of the recipient and means-testing assessment of his/her immediate household members.

6. Skills acquisition programme

Cash allowance for youth who participate in skills training/acquisition programs offered by the Ministry of Labour.

7. Foster care

Allowance for foster caregivers/foster parent.

8. Day care

To assist with day care cost for child up to 4 years of age who is not in crèche, whereby the parent(s)/guardian is in employment.

9. Travel Subsidy

Free travel for medical patients from Praslin or La Digue, by air or ferry, to continue treatment on Mahe.

Post-secondary students on Mahe coming from Praslin or La Digue qualify for two ferry tickets per month.

Subsidized travel of 25% to pensioners to travel in between the island be it by air or ferry.

10. Overseas treatment companion scheme

Patient funded by MoH for overseas treatment will be assisted with one return ticket, which is non means-tested.

11. Child minder

Registered child-minders with IECD who are looking after children aged between 6 to 10 years old, to be assisted with Sr5, 050 on a monthly basis.

12. PMC Rental Tenant Scheme

To assist families on minimum wage who are renting PMC houses with half rental payment and pensioners with full rental payment.

DELIVERING QUALITY SERVICE



The ASP commits itself to delivering the best possible service to its clients. The ASP benchmarks its service standards with the International Social Security Association (ISSA) guidelines for Social Security Administration. This ensures that services that we provide are at a level that brings maximum benefits to our clients and that

ensures continuous improvement for our Agency.

The ISSA guidelines assist us to:

- ✓ Measure service performance;
- ✓ Use stakeholder feedback to improve our services;
- ✓ Measure the impact of quality initiatives in terms of effectiveness and efficiency;
- ✓ Publish performance results;
- ✓ Use data and information to adjust practice accordingly;
- ✓ Ensure continuous improvement.

APPEALS – HOW TO APPEAL AGAINST AN ASP’S DECISION

In the event that you are not satisfied with our response about your application, you have the opportunity to appeal. Your case can be decided by the appeal panel, who will make the final decision on appeal cases. You can appeal for decision made for any financial assistance that the Agency provide. Appeals can be made through Benefit and Welfare Officers based in your residential district or at the Appeal Unit at our head office.

YOUR RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

YOUR RIGHTS	
✓	To expect us to live up to our commitments to you.
✓	To have your application assessed on its own merits and in accordance with the requirements of the legislation.
✓	To have our professional advisors deal with you with courtesy, dignity, and respect at all times.
✓	To request a review or lodge an appeal if you are unhappy with the decisions we have made.
✓	To complain to us if you are not satisfied with the service we have delivered.
✓	To have complaints thoroughly and objectively investigated, in confidence.
✓	Where appropriate, to receive an apology.

COMPLAINTS

If,
for
any

YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES

✓	To provide us with as much information as you can when lodging your application.
✓	To let us know of any change to your personal details or circumstances.
✓	To give us any additional information we ask for as quickly as possible.
✓	To treat our staff with courtesy and respect at all times.
✓	To remember that smoking, alcohol or drugs are not permitted on our premises, or to come under the influence of.

reason, you are not satisfied with any aspect of our service and wish to make a complaint, we promise to deal with your complaint in a fair, thorough and timely manner. The following options are available to you:

INFORMAL COMPLAINTS

If you have an informal complaint, please phone us on 4293500 or contact any member of staff as you wish in your residential district or at our headquarters and they will deal with it directly. Alternatively you can email on asp@gov.sc.

Informal complaints, by definition, tend to be less serious in nature and are not formally investigated by us. The person to whom you make the informal complaint will do everything he/she can to resolve the issue or, if the issue cannot be resolved to your satisfaction, explain the reasoning that led to the situation about which you are

dissatisfied. If your informal complaint is in relation to a system or procedure, we will take your views into consideration in reviewing the process.

You will not normally receive any feedback in relation to the outcome of an informal complaint but please be assured that any concerns raised will be forwarded to the appropriate manager.

FORMAL COMPLAINTS

Formal complaints tend to be of a more serious nature and generally require thorough investigation. The ideal channel for formal complaints is in writing (either by post or email) but if you prefer to make a formal complaint verbally, that will be facilitated.

BY POST

Mr Davis Mathiot

Senior Liaison Officer

Agency for Social Protection

Oceangate House

BY EMAIL

dmathiot@gov.sc

BY PHONE

4293507

A complaint about a named staff member will be treated as a formal complaint unless the complainant specifically requests it to be treated informally. The following table outlines the key differences between informal and formal complaints:

INFORMAL

- Generally verbal (but can be in writing)
- Dealt with at point of contact
- Immediate process
- Less serious in nature
- No subsequent follow-up with complainant

FORMAL

- Generally written (but can be verbal)
- Dealt with by a senior manager
- Medium/Longer term process
- More serious in nature
- Proactive follow-up with complainant

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS)

1. WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OR ASSISTANCE THAT I CAN APPLY FOR?

From sickness to funeral and retirement benefit, the ASP offers a range of different benefits to those who are eligible to receive. The Agency also assists with home carers for those who need support at home. A list of benefits is available with this Charter. You can also talk to your Benefit and Welfare Officer based in districts on the three main islands or at the ASP's head office at Oceangate House.

2. WHAT ARE THE COMPONENTS THAT CAN BE USED TO DETERMINE IF I QUALIFY FOR WELFARE (MONETARY ASSISTANCE)?

- ✓ Unemployment
- ✓ Medical grounds
- ✓ Insufficient income from employment

3. WHAT IS THE DURATION FOR WELFARE PAYMENTS?

Financial assistance usually have a duration of three months with some up to a year. Clients can re-apply for assistance if they still need it after the stipulated duration. The ASP will consider such applications and decide on a case by case basis.

ASSISTANCE	DURATION OF ASSISTANCE
Unemployment	<p>Up to 3 months.</p> <p><i>Further assistance after 3 months can be considered if clients can show proof that they have actively sought employment, but have been unable to secure a job.</i></p>
Medical	<p>3 months to 1 year – base on medical report from the occupational health unit.</p>
Income supplementation (top-up income from employment)	<p>3 months to 1 year – normally at one year interval.</p>

4. WHAT ARE THE DOCUMENTS THAT I NEED TO PROVIDE WHEN MAKING AN APPLICATION TO RECEIVE WELFARE ASSISTANCE?

To make application for assistance, you need to go to your residential district and speak to your Benefit and Welfare Officer.

Documents applicant need along with the application form are as follows:

- ✓ Your **valid** national identification card and all those who are part of your immediate family group;
- ✓ Your most recent pay slips and those of all adults who are employed in the household;
- ✓ Most recent utilities bills (from PUC), housing agreements or rent receipt of rent agreement, home loan documents as applicable, and receipts from essential expenses such as day care

N.B in some instances quotations for essential household and personal items may be attached and be considered as part of the assessment by the ASP

It takes up to five working days for the Agency to provide a response for your application. You will know the outcome through the officer in your district. In the case that your application is unsuccessful, you will be provided with the explanation by the ASP officer with which you made your application. You can lodge an appeal through the same officer or you can report to the Appeals Unit at Oceangate House.

5. CAN MY BENEFITS BE STOPPED AT ANY TIME BEFORE ITS ALLOTTED DURATION EXPIRES?

If the Agency finds that a person has given false information, rendering him/her ineligible to receive assistance, e.g. someone claiming to be disabled, but then is seen to be working, even informally. There may also be a change of circumstances such someone earning a higher income. However, before the benefits is stopped, the client will be informed accordingly.

6. HOW DO I APPLY FOR A HOME CARER?

To make application for assistance, you need to firstly complete an assessment form (Bartel Index) in your residential clinic or hospital. You then have to go to your residential district and fill in an application form from the Benefit and Welfare Officer.

Documents applicant need along with the application form are as follows:

- ✓ Your **valid** national identification card and all those who are part of your immediate family group;
- ✓ Bartel Index assessment form
- ✓ Most recent pay slips of all adults who are employed in the household;
- ✓ Most recent utilities bills (from PUC), housing agreements or rent receipt of rent agreement, home loan documents as applicable, and receipts from essential expenses

N.B in some instances quotations for essential household and personal items may be attached and be considered as part of the assessment by the ASP

7. WHEN SHOULD I APPLY FOR RETIREMENT BENEFIT AND WHAT ARE THE PROCESSES?

One month prior reaching 63 years old you should come to Oceangate House, Room 10

Documents applicants need along with the application form are as follows:

- ✓ **Valid** national identification card
- ✓ Birth certificate
- ✓ Confirmation from Seychelles Pension Fund that you are not receiving pension from the Fund
- ✓ Passport – to confirm that you have been residing in the country for 5 years prior reaching retirement age
- ✓ Bank account
- ✓ Certificate of citizenship

8. WHAT DO I NEED TO APPLY FOR SEMI-ORPHAN BENEFIT? AND HOW LONG DOES THE ASSISTANCE LAST?

The parent/guardian should bring along the following documents:

- ✓ **Valid** national identification card of the child
- ✓ Birth certificate of the child
- ✓ Death certificate of the parent

Note that in the case where the father's name does not appear on the birth certificate, the Department for Social Services have to undertake investigation to show proof of paternity.

The assistance stopped when the child leave school.

9. WHO CAN COLLECT PAYMENT, AND HOW TO COLLECT PAYMENT?

If the assistance/benefit is for you – 15 years and above. You bring along your **valid national identification card**.

If collecting on behalf of a recipient –18 years and above. You bring along your **valid national identification card and that of the recipient also**.

NOTE: You will not be able to lodge an application or collect payment with an **invalid national identification card**.

REVIEW OF THE CHARTER

The charter will be subjected to regular reviews and amendments to ensure that it remains relevant and effective. The reviews shall be done every two years and comprehensive reviews shall be conducted every 3 years or when deemed necessary. The reviews and amendments will be done in consultation with our customers and stakeholders.

BENEFIT RATES

MONTHLY RATES OF BENEFITS (AS AT APRIL 2016)

Benefits	Rupees (per month)
Sickness	2,480
Maternity	2,480
Injury	2,480
Level of subsistence (supplementary)	2,610
Invalidity benefit	
Standard rate	5, 050
Reduced rate	As effected by income of beneficiary
Disablement benefit	
Standard rate	2,480
Partial disability	% standard rate set out in part II
Survivor's benefit rate	
Widow's benefit	2,480
Widow's or widower's pension	2,480
Widowed mother's pension	2,480
Industrial death pension	2,480
Funeral benefit	Up to 1,700 in respect of each death
Retirement pension	5, 050

Dependant's benefit	
In respect of an adult	1,380
In respect of a child	1,230
Orphan's abandoned child's benefit	1,540
Foster parent	1,500 per child
Foster	1,300
Semi orphan	1,300
Carer Allowance	
Half Day Carer	3,607
Full Day Carer	5,772
Disability benefit	5,050
Paternity benefit	2,480
Child-minding	5,050



CUSTOMER FEEDBACK FORM

If you have feedback/comments you would like us to consider, please let us know by completing this form.

Your details

Name

Address

E-mail Address

Your Feedback

Subject

Queries or Comments

Please return to: *The Agency for Social Protection, Oceangate House* or email: asp@gov.sc

***“Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress.
Working together is success”***

Henry Ford

May 2016