



GOVERNMENT OFFICE
FOR THE WEST MIDLANDS

The Service that We give to You.



Letting us know if anything goes wrong.....

.....helping us to put things right.

**The Standard of Service that you can expect from
the Government Office for the West Midlands (GOWM)**



GOVERNMENT OFFICE
FOR THE WEST MIDLANDS

OUR COMMITMENT

The Government Office for the West Midlands (GOWM) is committed to providing a high standard of service at all times.

This leaflet sets out the standards of service that you can expect from us. If we do not meet these standards, then you can expect a full explanation from us. We would like to know if you are not satisfied. Your feedback is valuable in helping us to put things right if they have gone wrong and in improving the standard of our services.

We realise that sometimes people only contact us when they want to complain, but we would also like to hear from you if you consider we have done something particularly well.

In summary we aim to:

- **see** that you are met from reception and taken to your meeting within 10 minutes of the time of your appointment
- **answer** your letters, faxes and emails quickly and clearly within 15 working days (for general correspondence), 20 working days (for Freedom of Information Act and Environmental Information Regulations requests) and 40 calendar days (for Data Protection Act requests) whenever possible
- **answer** telephone calls promptly within 6 rings and ensure that enquiries are dealt with courteously and professionally
- **provide** clear and straightforward information about our services
- **do** all that we can to make our services available to everyone, including people with special needs
- **listen** to comments about our services and ensure that if problems occur, steps are taken to ensure that they do not happen again.

VISITING THE GOVERNMENT OFFICE

If you have an appointment - and are unfamiliar with our location, we will ensure that we give you an appropriate location map and directions. We will also ensure that all visitors to our offices are given a contact name and telephone number. If you require special access, we will make the necessary arrangements.

On arrival at GOWM, we will ensure that you are met from reception and taken to your meeting within 10 minutes of the time of your appointment.

In the event of an emergency, the person you are meeting will be responsible for ensuring your safe evacuation from the building.

If you do not have an appointment - our reception staff will identify the nature of your enquiry and contact the appropriate team to help you.

If you require privacy - we will arrange suitable 'quiet' accommodation.

If we have to cancel a meeting - we will do our very best to give you at least 24 hours notice unless there are exceptional circumstances which prevent this.

ANSWERING YOUR LETTER

We aim to:

- answer your letter, fax or email in full within 15 working days of receiving it here at GOWM. If we cannot do so, we will acknowledge receipt of your letter and explain when we expect to be able to send you a full reply.
- ensure that the name, e-mail address, direct line telephone and fax number of the person replying to your letter, and our office's full address are shown on our reply.
- reply to your letter clearly, concisely and courteously and in plain English, avoiding the use of jargon, abbreviations and acronyms unless we are certain that they will be understood.

ANSWERING YOUR TELEPHONE CALLS

Our switchboard is open between 09.00 and 16.30, Monday to Friday (except during public holidays). If you have a direct line telephone number for the person that you wish to speak to, you can reasonably expect this to be answered between 09.00 and 17.00. If your call is not answered for any reason, you can usually leave a voice message. When making a voice message, please state clearly who you are, who you wish to speak to, your contact telephone number and briefly the nature of your call. Your message will then be replied to as quickly as possible.

If your enquiry is not with GOWM we will do our best to provide you with a contact number for the organisation we consider the most appropriate to deal with your enquiry.

We will always aim to:

- answer our telephones promptly and within 6 rings. On answering the telephone we will let you know who you are dealing with by giving a name or the name of the team.
- transfer your call to another GOWM number if we consider someone else is better able to help you. We will always give you the name and extension number of the person to whom we are transferring you - in case you are cut off and need to call back.
- tell you when the appropriate member of GOWM staff can be contacted if the person you need to speak to is not available. Alternatively, we will leave them a message to contact you by a given time.

PAYING OUR BILLS

ALL ACCEPTABLE INVOICES WILL BE PAID WITHIN 30 DAYS OF RECEIPT.

COMPLAINTS ABOUT THE SERVICE WE PROVIDE

GOWM takes all complaints about the quality of its services seriously. We will provide a speedy response and a full and fair investigation of your complaint, respecting your right to confidentiality.

A complaint about the service we provide might include the following:

- **attitude** and conduct of GOWM staff
- **quality** of service
- **maladministration** e.g.: failing to follow the right procedures
- **delays** in receiving information or a response from us

GOWM has the following 3 stage complaint process to ensure that, if you are not happy with the initial response we give you (in stage 1), you can ask more senior staff to consider the issue again (stages 2 and 3):

Stage 1: You should first take up your complaint directly and informally with the person with whom you have been in contact. You can express your dissatisfaction by letter, fax, email or telephone. You can expect a reply from us within 5 working days.

Stage 2: If you are not satisfied with the response you should then write to your first contact's immediate line manager setting out your complaint clearly and in detail. Our target for replying to such formal complaints is 20 working days from the date of receipt.

Stage 3: If you are still not satisfied with our explanation, you can write to one of our Customer Service Managers (details on the back of this leaflet) or to our Regional Director (at either address). You will receive a full response within a further 10 working days.

These procedures do not affect your right to ask your MP to refer your complaint to the Parliamentary Ombudsman (officially known as the Parliamentary Commissioner for Administration). **We will respect your confidentiality at all times.**

Please note that this procedure relates to complaints about the services we provide not about Government policy, the content of legislation or contractual issues. However, when your complaint does not involve GOWM or is a matter outside our control, we will do our best to advise you how to pursue it.

HELPING US TO IMPROVE OUR SERVICE

We aim to improve our service by:

- **listening** to your views and ideas
- **taking** full account of your complaints
- **monitoring** our performance against our published standards
- **reviewing** and evaluating our performance annually and publishing the results
- **undertaking** customer surveys

Any comments and suggestions you may have which might help us to improve our service can be sent either direct to the person with whom you have been dealing or to our/one of our (Customer Service Manager(s) or appropriate title), whose contact details are below.

OUR SWITCHBOARD TELEPHONE NUMBER & ENQUIRIES EMAIL ADDRESS:

tel: 0121 352 5050

email: enquiries.gowm@go-regions.gov.uk

Our switchboards are open between 9.00am and 4.30pm, Monday to Friday (except during public holidays)

OUR CUSTOMER SERVICE MANAGER CONTACT DETAILS:

The Customer Services Manager

Government Office for the West Midlands
5 St Philips Place,
Colmore Row,
Birmingham,
B3 2PW.

Tel: 0121 352 5050

Email: enquiries.gowm@go-regions.gov.uk

The Corporate Strategy Director

Government Office for the West Midlands
5 St Philips Place,
Colmore Row,
Birmingham,
B3 2PW.

Tel: 0121 352 5050

Email: enquiries.gowm@go-regions.gov.uk

The Government Office for the West Midlands Web Site :

<http://www.go-wm.gov.uk/>



ACCESS TO INFORMATION

In the spirit of the Rights of Access legislation (Data Protection Act, Environmental Information Regulations & Freedom of Information Act) GOWM affirms its commitment to fostering a culture of open access to information throughout the organisation.

The Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA) enables you to access information of which you are the subject e.g. your own education/ medical records/credit reference files/personnel file etc. DPA requests have a £10 charge. A valid request is answered within 40 calendar days of its receipt.

More information can be found at: www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk

The Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIRs) enables you access to environmental information relating to:

- Air, water, land, natural sites, flora and fauna, built environment and health
- It also covers all information relating to decision or activities affecting, or likely to affect, any of these, including environmental protection and cost benefit analysis

Enquiries can be made on the telephone or in writing and you should receive a response within 20 working days. However, the 20 working day limit can be extended up to 40 working days if the request is for complex or high volumes of information.

More information can be found at www.sustainable-development.gov.uk

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOI) gives you a general right of access to all types of 'recorded' information held by public authorities, including GOWM. The Act has created two rights for you:

- To know if information exists
- To have it supplied on written request

WHAT WE MUST DO

- Maintain a 'Publication Scheme', which sets out the information that we will routinely make available. The Government Office Publication Scheme, part of the Publication Scheme of the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG), can be found at:
<http://www.communities.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1141789>
- Tell you whether we hold the information requested and provide it or explain why it has not been provided, quoting the relevant exemption under the Act.
- Reply to you within 20 working days.
- Advise and assist you to make your request. We may contact you to clarify your request.
- Although there will be no charge for information that costs GOWM less than £600 to produce, we may request a fee if this limit is exceeded. If you do not wish to pay the fee, we can refuse to supply the information

More information about the Freedom of Information Act can be found at www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk or www.dca.gov.uk/foi/index.htm

WHAT YOU NEED TO DO:

For any of the 3 types of query, FOI, EIR or DPA please put your request in writing (this includes by fax or email) to the appropriate individual or team, or you can write to:

The Information Manager
Government Office for the West Midlands
5 St Philips Place,
Colmore Row,
Birmingham,
B3 2PW.

GO-WM Enquiry Line: 0121 352 5050

Email: INFORMATIONMANAGEMENT.GOWM@gowm.gsi.gov.uk

- State clearly what information is required
- State your name and an address for correspondence
- You may request the information in any format. However, we may take into account the cost of supplying the information before complying with your request.
- If you wish to appeal against an FOI/EIR decision made by GOWM you will be advised of your right of appeal in a leaflet accompanying the response.