

Quality Service Charter

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Consular Services Office
18 Zachary Street
Valletta

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1. PURPOSE

The services we provide are governed by a Quality Service Charter that serves to inform our customers of the level of service that they should expect to receive. This reflects our commitment, and that of the Malta Public Service, to the delivery of a Service of Excellence by embracing the 4 Pillars of the Quality Model upon which the Public Service is based:

Voice: We listen to the customers' voice and are open to their criticism regarding the service we offer and to their ideas as to how we can improve our service to them. We consider the ideas received from our customers, and strengthen the scheme of ideas forwarded by our employees;

Design: We develop policies and processes which reach the levels expected by our customers;

Delivery: We deliver a service which is timely, of a high standard, easily accessible, and which can reach the customer with ease; and

Accountability: This is intrinsic to a service which guarantees honesty towards the customer. Accountability also means loyalty towards the customer making use of our services, which translates into, and is manifested in these same basic principles we want to uphold.

2. WHO WE ARE & WHAT WE DO

Our Mission

The Consular Services Office (CSO) aims to bring the various consular services closer to the public, with the objective of supporting citizens and individuals living in Malta and abroad in foreign-related administrative issues, particularly legalisation of public documents, and visa advice. While always aiming for excellence, the CSO pledges to do its utmost to improve its services through the introduction of innovative and transparent practices, that curb on bureaucracy, while enhancing a user-friendly environment.

3. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

All our actions are guided and bound by **5 Criteria** of Service Quality as follows:

Reliability: We are committed to ensure that the services we provide are in line to what is promised. We will provide accurate information which the customer may request to be in writing. Our services are consistent and committed to the customers' needs.

Empathy: We are committed to provide services which are tailored to our customers' needs and offered with care and individualised attention. We will strive to communicate in a language which is free from technical jargon, and will ensure that our services are accessible to everyone.

Assurance: Our staff is knowledgeable and courteous. We are committed to provide a professional service which the customers can trust.

Responsiveness: We provide our services in a timely manner and without any unnecessary delays. We are committed to respond to customers' requests, problems, or complaints.

Tangibles: Our offices offer a clean and safe environment where our services can be sought conveniently and safely.

4. CONSULAR SERVICES CUSTOMERS

Our main customers are entities and individuals – both residing in Malta and abroad – needing assistance related with legalisation of documents, advice on visa if planning to travel abroad, and other generic consular matters

5. SERVICE COMMITMENT

We will ensure that all timeframes that are in our control will be strictly adhered to. When the service requested is dependent on other departments or entities, we are committed to follow up on it ourselves so that you will receive the final reply in time.

Communication	Specific, straightforward, and free of jargon or technical terms. All information will be provided in both Maltese and English. Correspondence sent to us in Maltese will be answered in Maltese whilst all other correspondence will be answered in English.
Premises	Complete access for all abilities and regular safety certification of the premises by competent bodies.
Request for information through website, email, telephone, social media, and traditional mail	A final reply within 3 working days.
Request for service	Kindly refer to Appendix 1 for list of services.
Phone Calls	Shall be answered within 3 rings on working days.
Acknowledgements	1 working day from receipt of request for information or application for service. This may be omitted if service or follow-up query is provided/made with the same timeframe.
Appointments	Replies to requests for appointments will be provided within 1 working day, with the appointment date being set within 3 working days from date of request. When attending your appointment, you should not expect waiting time. We will respect the time allotted to you. If you arrive late, we reserve the right to reschedule your appointment.
Queueing time (if applicable)	We will greet you on arrival and guide you to your requested service. You will be directed to the officer who will serve you. Waiting time will be of approximately 10 to 15 minutes under normal circumstances.

Online Information

The information on our communication channels will be kept up-to-date. If you have access to the internet, you can find relevant information on our:

Website: <https://consularplus.gov.mt/home?lang=en>

Payment Methods

Our preferred method of payment is by EPOS. We also accept payments by cheque. For clients abroad, we have the facility of online transfers.

As from 1st of January 2022, in terms of Directive 19 issued by the Central Bank of Malta, cheques cannot be issued for amounts of €20.00 or below. In these instances, payment should be made either by debit/credit card or by postal order.

In addition, the service-specific turnaround time (this is the time taken to process an application), eligibility criteria, and application requirements as described in Section 10 of this document shall apply.

6. HOW TO REACH US

Once an application or enquiry is lodged with us, we will be responsible to assess, follow it up and keep you updated so as to make sure that you receive a definite reply.

Our assistance may be sought through any of the following channels at the specified time:

A. Our Offices

- **Malta**
18, Zachary Street, Valletta

B. Opening Hours

- **Malta**
Winter 1 October – 15 June
08:00 – 12:00 and 14:00 – 15:00
Summer 16 June – 30 September
08:00 – 12:00

C. By Telephone

2124 2191 or 2204 0000

During the following hours:

Winter 1 October – 15 June – 08:00 – 15:00

Summer 16 June – 30 September – 07:30 – 13:30

For emergency matters after office hours, **2124 2191** will be diverted to the Duty Officer mobile

D. Email

consular.foreign@gov.mt

E. On our website

<https://consularplus.gov.mt/home?lang=en>

F. Mobile Apps:

ConsularPLus

7. WE ARE AT YOUR SERVICE

Our commitment is to assist you in providing all the necessary information and documents to be given the related service.

We will ensure you:

- Give us information on time, that is both complete and accurate. When an incomplete application is received, we will inform you of what is further required and assist you to obtain all the required documents and complete it correctly;
- Take the time to read applications carefully so that you can help us give you the service on time;
- Provide feedback to us to improve our service. Our service is provided by a dedicated team of professionals. This does not mean that we do not accept your feedback so that we can better our service. You can do this by using the channels indicated in Section 8 below.
- Communicate with us clearly and concisely in either Maltese or English;
- Treat our staff with the courtesy and respect as they are obliged to treat you.

Our website features all required applications and lists the documents needed with each application.

8. FEEDBACK & COMPLAINTS

We are committed to a Service of Excellence and strive to bring about a continuous improvement of our Service to you. We guarantee your anonymity, and your feedback will help us to improve our Services.

If you believe that we have made an error and/ or that our staff have acted improperly, or without the due level of care and attention, please contact us.

Feedback and complaints may be submitted through the following channels:

Consular Service Office

Personally:	Consular Service Office, 18, Zachary Street Valletta
By Phone:	21242 191 or 2204 0000
By Post:	consular.foreign@gov.mt
By Email:	Consular Services Office, 18 Zachary Street, Valletta

Rate the Public Service, downloadable through maltapps directory or web-based on <https://qualityofservice.gov.mt/en/pages/rtps>

Servizz.gov

- Online: by accessing the Servizz.gov site and clicking on the 'Information Request' here:- <https://www.servizz.gov.mt/en/InformationRequest>
- By Phone: **153**

When making a complaint you should:

- Quote any reference number that you may have been given in relation to the transaction that you are complaining about;
- Specify what the problem/case is; and

- Provide any additional information that may help us resolve your complaint.

When addressing complaints, we will:

- Guarantee your confidentiality;
- Refer your case to the **Customer Care** and send you an acknowledgement within 1 working day;
- Provide you with a unique reference number so that you can check the status of your complaints at any time.

As a normal procedure, all acknowledgements will be given to the beneficiaries on the same day of the request for information or application of Service.

- Carry out an investigation on the problem/case and conclude this as speedily as possible but by not later than:
 - 5 working days (in cases where we can conclude the case ourselves) or
 - 10 working days (in cases where we would need to obtain feedback from other departments or entities) from receipt of the complaints and all requested relevant information.
- Inform you in writing about the outcome of our investigation into our complaints by not later than 2 working days from the conclusion of the investigation.

Following closure of your complaint, we commit ourselves to take any remedial action where applicable and planned corrective action to avoid repetition where necessary so that you will not encounter the same or similar experience.

QUALITY OF SERVICE DIRECTORATE WITHIN P&SD

In the circumstance where the expected level of support was not given through the above channels, you may report to the Quality of Service Directorate within the People & Standards Division by sending an email on qualityofservice-opm@gov.mt

9. COMMITMENT TO CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

With the aim of a Service of Excellence and continuous improvement in mind, this Quality Service Charter will be reviewed as necessary, but in any case, at least once every 12 months to measure our performance in terms of the standards set out in this Charter as well as how we meet your expectations.

The review process will be based on:

- Government policy
- Operational data (e.g. services offered, service delivery, etc.)
- Benchmarking
- Feedback
- Complaints
- Surveys
- Quality Service Assessments
- Mystery Shopper Exercises

Quality of Service standards relative to the Services provided will be monitored and measured. The results of the internal review and the monitoring process will be used as a basis for improving our Service.



APPENDIX 1

10. APPENDIX 1

We will ensure that all timeframes that are in our control will be strictly adhered to. When the service requested is dependent on other departments or entities, we are committed to follow up on it ourselves so that you will receive the final reply on time.

Service	Eligibility	Compliance requirements	Application Options	Service Delivery Timeline
Legalisation of documents	Individuals residing in Malta and international clients.	Documents to be legalised should be in order. The country in which the said documents will be used is to be clearly stated. Authentication of non-commercial documents are charged €12.00, whilst documents of a commercial nature are charged a fee of €20.00 as per LN 221/16.	Documents to be legalised can be physically brought to the Office; sent by courier; or placed in the drop-box situated outside the Office's reception. The client is to inform the Office by phone or by email that documents have been sent by courier. For the legalisation of more than 10 documents, the client is requested to leave the documents in the drop-box and will be contacted within 3 working days to collect them back.	Approximately 15 minutes if documents are less than 10 and are brought physically to the Office. Within 3 working days from the date of receipt of documents if they are placed in the drop-box.
Advice on Visa	Maltese nationals or citizens in Malta who intend travelling abroad for business or personal reasons.	The client needs to state the country they wish to travel to.	Advice can be requested either by visiting the Office during the stipulated visiting hours; phoning on 21 242 191 or 2204 0000, or email on consular.foreign@gov.mt	If visa advice is requested physically at the Office or by phone, a reply is provided immediately. If the request cannot be addressed immediately a reply is given within 3 working days. Requests for visa advice received by email are replied within 3 working days.

General Consular Services	Maltese nationals or citizens who require consular assistance (for example, lost/stolen passports, finances, sickness, accidents, death abroad, and so on).	None.	Request for assistance can be submitted by email on consular.foreign@gov.mt; or by phone on 21 242 191 or 22040000. One can also set an appointment to visit the Office in person. For urgent matters after office hours call on 2124 2191.	The timeline for service delivery varies depending on the case. Minor issues are addressed immediately or within 3 working days if advice is required. Queries of a complex nature may take longer than 3 working days. In this case the client is informed accordingly and kept informed about the status of the query every 5 working days.
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