



CLIENT SERVICE CHARTER

**Multicultural Council of the
Northern Territory (MCNT)**

Updated July 2008

OUR ORGANISATION

The Multicultural Council of the Northern Territory (MCNT) is the peak body dedicated to advocacy and representing the interests, concerns and aspirations of people of Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) backgrounds in the Northern Territory.

The MCNT was established in 1977 as the Ethnic Communities Council of the Northern Territory. In 2000 the MCNT changed its name to Multicultural Council of the Northern Territory (MCNT) in order to better reflect the inclusive nature of the MCNT (inclusive of all cultures) and to forge greater linkages with the wider community.

OUR VISION

'Working to Connect Communities'

OUR MISSION

- To promote multiculturalism as a policy for all Australians.
- To enhance the quality of life of Australians from CALD backgrounds through providing culturally appropriate programs.
- To advocate for services that empower people of immigrant and refugee backgrounds to fully participate in the social, cultural, economic, political and civic life of our nation.
- To oppose racism and discrimination.

OUR CLIENTS

The clients of the MCNT include:

Ethnic, multicultural groups, immigrants and refugees, whose members need:

- Assistance and advice to access essential information and service support.
- Access to venues and meeting places.
- Support and advice on how to establish, form and operate ethnic or multicultural groups and associations.
- Access to informed advice for individuals and communities on their rights and entitlements.
- Support to involve themselves in advocacy on policy issues.
- Access to service networks and acceptance in the wider Northern Territory community.

Community organisations, businesses and government agencies who require:

- Information and advice in relation to people and communities from CALD backgrounds and meeting their particular needs.
- Advice and expertise on the provision of culturally relevant service needs and on specific policies.

WE VALUE:

- Engagement and Cultural Competence
- Integrity and Credibility
- Creativity and Innovation
- Building Partnerships with Communities
- Informed Decision Making
- Organisational Responsiveness to Community Diversity and Cultural Heritage
- A Value-based Civic Culture that Promotes Fairness and Quality of Life

OUR PRINCIPLES OF SERVICE DELIVERY TO CLIENTS

ACCESS

Our services are available and inclusive to all clients who are entitled to them and are delivered without any type of discrimination irrespective of a person's country of birth, language, culture, ethnicity, religion or gender.

EQUITY

Our services are delivered on the basis of fair treatment of all clients who are entitled to them and meet their needs so that they can participate fully in economic, social and cultural life. We comply with equal opportunity and anti-discrimination legislation.

COMMUNICATION

We inform all clients about our services in plain English and with consistency and clarity, using interpreters and translators if and when required. We invite feedback about the adequacy, design and standard of our services.

RESPONSIVENESS

We are sensitive to the needs and requirements of clients from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds, and are responsive in service delivery as far as practicable to the particular circumstances of individuals.

EFFECTIVENESS

We are client-focussed and result-orientated. The MCNT management committee and staff undertake to maintain all professional standards in both the delivery of our services and in the practices and protocols of organisational management.

EFFICIENCY

We optimise the use of available resources in our funded projects to meet the needs of clients and maintain the efficient administration of the MCNT's programs through robust performance measures and risk awareness strategies.

ACCOUNTABILITY

We are committed to accountability to our funding bodies and transparency to clients who are recipients of the MCNT's funded projects. Implementation of services complies with best practice accounting, financial recording and reporting systems.

WHAT OUR CLIENTS CAN EXPECT:

- To be treated courteously, sensitively, openly and honestly.
- To be provided with accurate, consistent, timely and clear information.
- To have suggestions and complaints taken seriously and learnt from.
- To be attended to by trained professional staff.
- That the information provided to us will be kept absolutely confidential.
- That an interpreter or translator will be arranged, should one be needed, to use our services.
- That all Australian laws will be respected and adhered to in our dealings.

HELP US TO HELP YOU:

So that we can provide a high quality service, it is essential that you:

- Provide us accurate and complete information about your circumstances.
- Let us know as soon as possible if you cannot keep an appointment.
- Let us know if you need an interpreter or translator.
- Be courteous to our staff.

OUR CLIENT FEEDBACK AND COMPLAINT PROCESS

The Multicultural Council of the Northern Territory (MCNT) is an accountable and responsive community-based organisation and welcomes feedback (complaints, compliments and suggestions) from its clients.

The MCNT management committee and staff are committed to abiding by the principles set out in this Charter, to ensure that our services are of a consistently high standard and founded on client satisfaction. In all our dealings with our clients we will strive to be informative, helpful and efficient, while at all times acting with due care and diligence. We are constantly developing systems to improve our operations.

If you believe that our service failed to meet the service standards set out in our Client Service Charter, you should consider making a complaint. Complaints from clients are useful feedback and offer the MCNT the opportunity for us to identify problem areas in our service delivery and implement appropriate change.

Clients will be free to make complaints at any time without fear of retribution and will not be treated less favourably in the future. The MCNT records data on complaints, compliments and suggestions in a confidential and sensitive manner and this information is used to help improve our client service.

If an individual is uncomfortable with lodging a complaint, their complaint can be lodged by another person or by a representative body, such as an ethnic community organisation, or a religious organisation.

If you are dissatisfied with our service or would like to suggest an improvement:

- Please first discuss the issue of concern first with the person who provided the service or the Policy and Project Director.
- Please indicate if you need the assistance of an interpreter or translator to lodge your feedback or complaint.
- If you would prefer not to discuss the matter with the person concerned or the Policy and Project Director, or you feel he or she has not resolved the issue, please write to the President of the MCNT at PO Box 299, Sanderson NT 0813.
- Clients who have a complaint or other feedback are encouraged to complete the form (in the next page) and submit this form to the MCNT President by mail or fax. The MCNT President will contact you within 7 working days to discuss your feedback or complaint.
- Anonymous complaints will be treated equally, but identifying yourself to us will enable us to respond more effectively to your concerns.

Staff at the MCNT will:

- Use their training in receiving feedback, including assisting clients to articulate their concerns as well as processing and actioning that feedback.
- Listen carefully to and clarify the complaint being made and apologise to you if it is clear that you have received is not to an acceptable standard.
- Take the complaint seriously and ensure that it is investigated fully.
- Seek assistance from another staff member if unable to resolve the situation.
- Inform the Policy and Project Director of the problem and refer to the MCNT management committee if the complaint is not resolved at the office.

MCNT management committee members are willing to act as mediators and will meet with the client at the MCNT out of hours to discuss the issue, when staff are not present.



MCNT CLIENT FEEDBACK AND COMPLAINTS LODGEMENT FORM

Please indicate if you need the assistance of an interpreter or translator or if you want to meet with the MCNT management committee about the matter.

Name:

Phone No:

Address:

Date:

Do you require the assistance of : Interpreter YES/NO Translator YES/NO

Do you want to meet with the MCNT management committee? YES/NO

Details of Comment or Complaint:

Action Taken at the MCNT Office:

Attach addition page/s if insufficient space.

Please submit your comments to:
The President
Multicultural Council of the Northern
Territory
PO Box 299, Sanderson NT 0813

To Contact the MCNT:
Telephone: (08) 8945 9122
Fax: (08) 8945 9155