

Indian Standard

**QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS – REQUIREMENTS FOR
SERVICE QUALITY BY PUBLIC SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS**

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BUREAU OF INDIAN STANDARDS

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FOREWORD

This Standard was adopted by the Bureau of Indian Standards, after the draft finalized by the Quality Management Sectional Committee had been approved by the Management and Systems Division Council.

All organizations, large or small, have an established way or system of doing business. A quality management system is about how an organization manages its business activities which are associated with quality of service. Quality management system helps an organization to build systems which enable it to provide quality service consistently. It may be clarified that characteristics of the service(s) and their standards (norms) are defined in the respective service standards, and not in the quality management standards. Therefore, quality management system standards are not alternate to service standards. In fact, they are complementary to each other. The use of service standards together with quality management system standards help in not only maintaining but also continually improving quality of services, which may result in enhancing customers' satisfaction and competitiveness.

Quality management systems standards take into consideration eight quality management principles, namely, customer focus, leadership, involvement of people, process approach, system approach to management, continual improvement, factual approach to decision making, and mutually beneficial supplier relationships, which are relevant and applicable to all organizations providing service.

Quality management standards promote the adoption of a process approach when developing, implementing and improving the effectiveness of a quality management system, to enhance customer satisfaction by meeting customer requirements.

For an organization to function effectively, it has to identify and manage numerous linked activities. Set of inter-related or interacting activities which transforms inputs into outputs is termed as process. Often the output from one process is the input to the next process.

The application of a system of processes within an organization, together with the identification and interactions of these processes, and their management, can be referred to as the 'process approach'.

An advantage of the process approach is the ongoing control that it provides over the linkage between the individual processes within the system of processes, as well as over their combination and interaction. In addition, it highlights the value addition at every stage.

When used within a quality management system, such an approach emphasizes the importance of

- a) understanding and meeting requirements,
- b) the need to consider processes in terms of added value,
- c) obtaining results of process performance and effectiveness, and

- d) continual improvement of processes based on objective measurement.

This standard has been specifically designed for the public service organizations, and in its formulation, considerable assistance has been drawn from IS/ISO 9001 : 2000 'Quality management systems – Requirements', IS/ISO 10002 : 2004 'Quality management – Customer satisfaction – Guidelines for complaints handling in organizations' and Government of India guidelines on 'Citizens' charter' and 'Public grievance handling'.

This standard can be used by internal and external parties, including certification bodies, to assess the organization's ability to meet customer, regulatory and the organization's own requirements.

*Indian Standard***QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS – REQUIREMENTS FOR SERVICE QUALITY
BY PUBLIC SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS****1 SCOPE**

1.1 This standard specifies requirements for a quality management system where a public service organization

- a) needs to demonstrate its ability to consistently provide effective and efficient service that meets customer and applicable legal, statutory and regulatory requirements,
- b) aims to enhance customer satisfaction, and
- c) aims to continually improve its service and service delivery process.

1.2 The requirements for complaints handling process covered in this standard do not apply for employment related disputes and/or disputes referred for resolution outside an organization.

2 REFERENCE

The following standard contains provision, which through reference in this text constitutes provision of this standard. At the time of publication, the edition indicated was valid. All standards are subject to revision and parties to agreements based on this standard are encouraged to investigate the possibility of applying the most recent edition of the standard indicated below:

<i>IS No.</i>	<i>Title</i>
IS/ISO 9000 : 2005	Quality management systems – Fundamentals and vocabulary (<i>Third revision</i>)

3 TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this standard, the following terms and definitions, in addition to that given in IS/ISO 9000 shall apply.

3.1 Citizens' Charter - Citizens' charter is a document declaring the intentions and the commitment of an organization for providing effective and efficient service, taking into account customer's expectations and minimum acceptable levels of service, thereby providing assurance that the organization complies with the service quality standards.

3.2 Complaint (Grievance) - Expression of dissatisfaction made to an organization related to its products, services and/or process(es), where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected.

3.3 Complainant - Person, organization, or its representative, making a complaint.

3.4 Complaints Handling Objective - Something sought, or aimed for, related to complaints

handling.

3.5 Customer - Organization or person that receives a product and/or service.

Example : Consumer, client, citizen, end-user, beneficiary and purchaser.

3.6 Customer Satisfaction - Customer's perception of the degree to which the customer's requirements have been fulfilled.

NOTES

1. Customer complaints are a common indicator of low customer satisfaction but their absence does not necessarily imply high customer satisfaction.
2. Even when customer requirements have been agreed with the customer and fulfilled, this does not necessarily ensure high customer satisfaction.

3.7 Feedback - Opinions, comments, suggestions and expressions of satisfaction/ dissatisfaction.

3.8 Non-conformity - Non fulfillment of a requirement.

3.9 Public Service Organization - An organization which provides service(s) to public at large and/or whose activities influence public interest.

Example : Government ministries and departments, Regulatory bodies, Public utility service providers, etc.

NOTE - Wherever the term 'organization' has been used in this standard, it means 'public service organization'.

3.10 Quality - Degree to which a set of inherent characteristics fulfils requirements.

NOTES

1. The 'requirements' include product and/or service requirements.
2. "Inherent", as opposed to "assigned", means existing in something, especially as a permanent characteristic.

3.11 Service - The results generated, by activities at the interface between the organization and the customer and by organization's internal activities, to meet customer requirements.

3.12 Service Delivery - The organization's activities, including those at the customer interface, necessary to provide the service.

3.13 Service Quality Objectives - Something sought, or aimed for, related to service quality.

3.14 Service Quality Policy - The overall intentions and direction of an organization as regards service quality, as formally expressed by top management.

3.15 Stakeholder (Interested Party) - Person or group having an interest in the performance or success of an organization.

Example: Customers, owners, people in an organization, suppliers, bankers, unions, partners or society.

NOTE - A group can comprise an organization, a part thereof, or more than one organization.

3.16 Top Management - Person or group of people, who directs and controls an organization at the highest level.

4 DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS

4.1 General

The organization shall document the following:

- a) Service quality manual;
- b) Citizens' charter;
- c) Any other document needed by the organization for effective planning, operation and control of its service and service delivery processes; and
- d) Records required by this standard (*see 4.4*).

4.2 Service Quality Manual

The organization shall establish and maintain a service quality manual which includes

- a) Scope of service quality management system;
- b) Service quality policy;
- c) Service quality objectives;
- d) Complaints handling objectives;
- e) Responsibility and authority of personnel at relevant levels within the scope of this standard;
- f) Documented procedures required by this standard;
- g) Other documents, needed by the organization for effective planning, operation and control of its service and service delivery processes, or reference to them; and
- h) Description of service processes including service delivery processes at the customer interface and those needed to directly support them (*see 7.2*).

4.3 Control of Documents

4.3.1 All the documents required by this standard shall be

- a) approved for adequacy prior to issue;

- b) reviewed periodically, updated as necessary and re-approved. The changes made shall be identified; and
- c) legible and identifiable indicating their current revision status.

4.3.2 The organization shall

- a) maintain a master list of all documents related to the scope of this standard which also identifies their current revision status;
- b) maintain distribution list of all such documents;
- c) ensure that the current versions of applicable documents are available at points of use;
- d) ensure that obsolete documents, if retained for any purpose, are suitably identified to prevent their unintended use; and
- e) ensure that the documents of external origin are identified and their distribution controlled.

4.3.3 A documented procedure shall be established to define the controls needed for the above.

4.4 Control of Records

Records (including files) shall be established and maintained to provide evidence of conformity to requirements and for the effective operation of the management system for service quality. The records shall remain legible, readily identifiable and easily retrievable. The method of identification, storage, protection, disposition of each record, their retention time and responsibility for each of these activities shall be established in a documented procedure.

5 MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITY

5.1 Management Commitment

Top management shall

- a) establish the service quality policy and citizens' charter,
- b) ensure that service quality objectives and complaints handling objectives are established,
- c) conduct management reviews, and
- d) ensure the availability of resources.

5.2 Customer Focus

Top management shall ensure that the customer requirements are determined and are met with the aim of enhancing customer satisfaction.

5.3 Service Quality Policy and Citizens' Charter

5.3.1 Top management shall ensure that service quality policy and citizens' charter

- a) are documented,
- b) are appropriate to the purpose of the organization,
- c) are made available to all personnel including customers and other stakeholders,
- d) are communicated and understood within the organization,
- e) include a commitment to comply with requirements and continually improve the effectiveness of the quality management system, and
- f) are reviewed for continuing suitability.

5.3.2 The service quality policy shall provide a framework for establishing and reviewing service quality objectives and complaints handling objectives.

5.4 Objectives

Service quality objectives and complaints handling objective shall be consistent with the service quality policy and shall be established at relevant functions and levels within the organization. All the objectives shall be measurable and documented.

5.5 When establishing the above policy and objectives, the following factors shall be taken into account:

- a) Input of customers and other stakeholders;
- b) Any relevant legal, statutory and regulatory requirements; and
- c) Financial, operational and organizational requirements.

5.6 Responsibility, Authority and Communication

5.6.1 Top management shall ensure that the responsibilities and authorities are established at relevant functions and levels, related to the scope of this standard, and communicated within the organization.

5.6.2 *Working Group for Citizens' Charter*

Top management shall constitute a working group for formulation of the citizens' charter. The nodal officer at the apex level (*see 5.6.3*) shall act as a member secretary of the working group. The working group shall include representatives from top management, middle management, staff association/unions, customers and other stakeholders. The selection of team members shall be done in a transparent manner, the details of which are accessible to public.

5.6.2.1 The responsibilities of the working group shall include

- a) identifying all stakeholders of the organization,
- b) identifying all key services provided by the organization,
- c) preparing a draft citizens' charter in consultation with stakeholders,
- d) formally issuing/releasing the citizens' charter after its approval by appropriate authority, and
- e) reviewing and updating, as necessary, based on the feedback and continuing suitability.

5.6.3 *Nodal Officer*

5.6.3.1 *Nodal officer at apex level*

Top management shall appoint a member of its management as a nodal officer at apex level who, irrespective of other responsibilities, shall have responsibilities and authority, which include

- a) Ensuring that processes needed for the service, service delivery, citizens' charter and complaints handling are established, implemented and maintained;
- b) Acting as member-secretary of the working group (*see 5.6.2*) for formulation of the citizens' charter;
- c) Acting as public grievance officer and reporting to top management of any complaints which have a significant impact on the organization;
- d) Regularly reporting to the top management on the performance of the service quality, citizens' charter and complaints handling with recommendations for improvement; and
- e) Devising mechanism for obtaining feedback and internal quality audit (*see 8.3*).

NOTES

1. The responsibility of the nodal officer at apex level may also include liaison with the certifying body.
2. While nodal officer at apex level shall be responsible for the above, he may take the help of other officer in the organization, if required, on account of administrative exigencies or in public interest.

5.6.3.2 *Nodal officer at unit level*

Where an organization is providing services through its different units, the top management shall ensure the appointment of a nodal officer at unit level, who, irrespective of other responsibilities, shall

- a) ensure that processes needed for the service, service delivery, citizens' charter and complaints handling are implemented and maintained;
- b) act as public grievance officer; and
- c) report regularly to the nodal officer at the apex level, on the performance of the service quality, citizens' charter and complaints handling with recommendations for improvement.

5.6.4 *Internal Communication*

Top management shall ensure that appropriate communication processes are established within the organization so that effective communication takes place for the various processes related to service, citizens' charter and complaints handling.

5.7 Management Review

5.7.1 Top management shall review the organization's management systems for service quality, citizens' charter and complaints handling at planned intervals to ensure their continuing suitability, adequacy, efficiency and effectiveness. This review shall include assessing opportunities for improvement and the need for changes, including the service quality policy and objectives. Records of management reviews shall be maintained (*see 4.4*).

5.7.2 The input to management review shall include information on

- a) follow-up actions from previous reviews,
- b) results of audit,
- c) customer feedback including results of customer satisfaction surveys,
- d) changing customer requirements,
- e) feedback from other stakeholders,
- f) extent to which objectives are achieved,
- g) status of preventive/corrective actions,
- h) review of processes performance, and
- j) recommendations for improvement.

5.7.3 Review output shall include any decisions and actions related to

- a) improvement in service quality standards;
- b) improvement in customer satisfaction;
- c) improvement in the management systems for service quality, citizens' charter, and complaints handling; and
- d) Resource needs.

6 RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

6.1 The organization shall determine and provide resources for effective implementation of management systems for service quality, citizens' charter and complaints handling. The resources shall include human resources, infrastructure and work environment.

6.2 The organization shall ensure that the personnel are

- a) selected on the basis of capability to satisfy defined job specifications,
- b) trained to ensure that they understand the tasks to be performed and the objectives to be achieved including how they contribute to the achievement of objectives,
- c) aware of their responsibilities including promptly reporting on complaints/feedback which have a significant impact on the organization, and
- d) aware of procedures to be followed and information to be given to the customers.

6.2.1 The training records shall be maintained (*see 4.4*).

6.2.2 The organization shall ensure that the personnel, who are in direct contact with the customers

- a) are available and accessible, as specified;
- b) are sensitized to treat customers in a courteous manner;
- c) respond promptly to customer's enquiry/complaint;
- d) provide accurate, updated and complete information; and
- e) possess good interpersonal and good communication skills.

6.3 Infrastructure and Work Environment

The organization shall determine, provide and maintain the infrastructure and work environment necessary for achieving service quality and complaints handling.

7 CITIZENS' CHARTER, SERVICE PROVISION AND COMPLAINTS HANDLING

7.1 Citizens' Charter

7.1.1 The citizens' charter shall contain

- a) vision and mission statement of the organization,
- b) list of key service(s) being offered by the organization, and
- c) measurable service standards for the service(s) provided and remedies available to the customer for non-compliance to the standards.

7.1.2 The citizens' charter shall

- a) represent a systematic effort of the organization to focus on its commitment towards its customers;
- b) be simple and easily understandable and also printed in local languages, as required;
- c) be non discriminatory;

- d) describe or refer to complaints handling process;
- e) include the name, address, telephone number and other contact details of the public grievance officer;
- f) be periodically reviewed for updation and continual improvement;
- g) highlight expectations of the organization from its customers, wherever required; and
- h) provide information on the date of issue of the citizens' charter and persons who were consulted during its preparation.

7.2 Service Provision

The organization shall

- a) ensure that services being provided by the organization take into account expectations of the customer and regulatory requirements;
- b) ensure that the service delivery processes are in line with the objectives defined by the organization;
- c) assure the quality of the products and/or services purchased and/or outsourced, which affects its service quality;
- d) ensure availability of procedures/work instructions, information, wherever necessary, and their implementation so that service delivery processes are carried out as specified;
- e) ensure availability and use of suitable equipment, monitoring and measuring devices;
- f) ensure calibration or verification of measuring equipment at specified intervals, or prior to use, wherever necessary;
- g) identify the verification status of the service or service delivery process at relevant stages;
- h) identify, verify, protect and safeguard the customer property, whenever provided by the customer for its use in service; and
- j) ensure implementation of monitoring and measurement including time norms as specified in the citizens' charter.

7.3 Complaints Handling

The organization shall establish a documented procedure for complaint handling process. Various steps in the complaints handling process shall include the following:

- a) Identification of complaint prone areas in a systematic manner and determine the time norms for their redress;
- b) Providing information concerning complaints handling process in clear language and formats accessible to all. Such information shall include:
 - i) where and how the complaints can be made,
 - ii) minimum information to be provided by complainant, and
 - iii) time limits within which the complaint will be closed.

- c) Widely publicizing the information about complaints handling process through print, web and other media. The name, address, telephone number and other contact details of the public grievance officer of the organization shall also be displayed prominently at the reception and other convenient places in the organization;
- d) Unique identification of the complaint and recording necessary information including relevant details of complaint, remedy requested, due date of redress, relevant data related to the complaint and immediate action to be taken (if any);
- e) Scrutiny of the complaint and its categorization as critical, major or minor depending upon its seriousness and severity;
- f) Acknowledgement of each complaint promptly giving the complaint number along with an indication of the redress time and the name, designation and telephone number of the employee to be contacted for all future correspondence;
- g) Investigation of relevant circumstances and information relating to the complaint. The level of investigation shall be commensurate with the seriousness and severity of the complaint. If the complaint cannot be immediately resolved, it shall be dealt in a manner which would lead to its effective redress as soon as possible and the complainant shall be intimated;
- h) Communication of the decision to the complainant regarding his complaint immediately after the decision is taken and getting his feedback. In case the decision is not in line with the remedy requested by the complainant, the justification for the decision taken along with alternative internal and external recourse available for appeal shall also be intimated, after which the complaint shall be closed; and
- j) Nominating 'Ombudsman' who could be approached if normal service delivery mechanism does not respond

8 IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING, MEASUREMENT AND IMPROVEMENT

8.1 Implementation

The organization shall

- a) establish single-window system at points of public contact to facilitate disposal of applications;
- b) set up information and facilitation centres and help-lines for information on procedures, application status, etc. ;
- c) widely publicize the citizens' charter through organization's website, media and sending copies to all stakeholders;
- d) prominently display the citizens' charter in the organization; and
- e) publish annually the data relating to performance viz-a-viz commitment relating to citizens' charter in the annual report or by some other suitable means.

8.2 Monitoring and Measurement

8.2.1 The organization shall monitor and measure

- a) the characteristics of the service and service delivery processes to verify that the service quality objectives and service standards have been met. This shall also be carried out at all stages and locations where the organization has an interface with the customer;
- b) the performance viz-a-viz commitment made in the citizens' charter and complaints handling procedure on a regular basis and report to top management with recommendations for improvement; and
- c) the working of the complaints handling machinery through random checks.

8.2.1.1 In addition, the editor's/grievance column of the local newspapers shall be regularly examined by the organization for picking up cases, as appropriate.

8.2.1.2 Records of the evidence of conformity shall be maintained (*see 4.4*).

8.2.2 Customer Satisfaction

The organization shall establish and implement a system for measuring customer satisfaction through suitably designed methodology. This information shall be used for continual improvement.

8.3 Internal Quality Audit

The organization shall conduct internal audits at planned intervals to determine whether the management system for service quality conforms to the requirements of this standard and to the documents established by the organization. An audit plan shall be documented indicating the scope, frequency of audit, auditor(s), auditee and audit date(s)/time. Selection of auditors and conduct of audits shall ensure objectivity and impartiality of the audit process. Auditors shall not audit their own work. The auditee shall ensure that actions are taken without undue delay to eliminate detected non-conformities and their causes. Follow-up activities shall include the verification of the actions taken and reporting of verification results. Records of the audits shall be maintained (*see 4.4*)

8.4 Analysis of Data

The organization shall analyze the data collected during monitoring and measurement (*see 8.2.1*) and customer satisfaction (*see 8.2.2*) to determine current level of performance and opportunities for continual improvement, particularly where nonconformities are recurring.

8.5 Improvement

8.5.1 Corrective and Preventive Actions

The organization shall take action to eliminate the cause(s) of non-conformities and potential cause(s) in order to prevent recurrence and occurrence respectively. These shall be appropriate to the effects of the nonconformities encountered and potential problems. Records of action taken and improvements effected shall be maintained (*see 4.4*).