

Customer Conduct Policy

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1. Introduction

Severn Trent aims to provide excellent service to all of our customers, and we know it can be frustrating when you feel let down or that your concerns aren't being listened to, and we completely believe and respect that our customers have the right to express their views and ask questions if they feel our service falls below this, we welcome customers to contact us through their channel of choice where necessary so we can address these concerns.

We expect customers to act with respect when interacting with our staff. In certain circumstances the conduct or behaviour towards our staff may be considered unacceptable or unreasonable, this includes violence, abuse, and discriminatory behaviour.

This policy sets out Severn Trent's approach to recognising unacceptable or unreasonable customer behaviour, and what actions we may take to manage this behaviour and protect our staff.

2. Unacceptable or unreasonable behaviour

Unacceptable behaviour

We understand our customers may feel frustrated or upset with something we have done, and we are fully committed to investigate and respond to these issues. We won't tolerate aggressive or abusive behaviour directed towards our staff during any form of communication i.e. over the phone, face to face, or through any of our digital contact channels. This includes:

- Any form of physical, abusive, or hostile behaviour.
- Any use of inappropriate language, verbal or written, which may cause a member of staff to feel scared, abused, intimidated, threatened, or offended, this includes:
 - Discrimination against any protected characteristics defined in the Equality Act 2010.
 - Bullying or intimidating tone or language.
 - Hostility, degrading or offensive interactions.
 - Racial, religious, or cultural comments or insults, this includes racial stereotypes based on accents, including asking to speak to someone who is from this country.
 - Homophobic, bi-phobic, or transphobic comments
 - Remarks of a sexual or derogatory nature
 - Stalking or other forms of harassment

Unreasonable behaviour

On occasions customers may make unacceptable demands on services we provide. The nature and scale of service they expect and make in relation to the concern or complaint they may have. This includes:

- Sending requests to several members of staff and demanding responses within an unreasonable timescale – (our timescales are outlined clearly in our GSS leaflet which can be located [here](#).)
- Demands to speak to someone who is either not available, or not the appropriate person to help resolve your concern. i.e The CEO

- Refusal to accept a decision that has been made in relation to a complaint and not following the correct process explained to them in order to pursue the complaint or concern further.
- Excessive number of telephone calls, visits to our offices or number of emails or letters during a short period of time.

3. How this policy works

When we consider a customer's behaviour or contact to fall into any of the above categories, our staff will politely and respectfully ask customers to stop using particular kind of language or behaving in this way. If the behaviour, then continues our staff are empowered to stop the conversation or remove themselves from the situation.

Any physical attack or violence will not be tolerated and will always be reported to authorities.

4. Who does this policy apply to?

This policy applies to all Severn Trent customers and any members of the public that engage with our staff in any form of communication. This includes contractors and third parties working on our behalf.