



Republic of Mauritius

# **CUSTOMER CHARTER**

**MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY, SMALL AND MEDIUM  
ENTERPRISES, COMMERCE AND CO-OPERATIVES**

**(CO-OPERATIVES DIVISION)**

# **Ministry of Industry, Small and Medium Enterprises, Commerce and Co-operatives**

## **(Co-operatives Division)**

**3rd Floor, LIC Centre, John Kennedy Street, Port-Louis  
Tel: 208 4812, Fax: 208 9263, e-mail:pscoop@gov.mu  
Website: <http://cooperatives.gov.mu>**

### **OUR VISION**

To promote functional and financially autonomous co-operative enterprises, enhancing economic, social and cultural needs and aspirations of their members.

### **OUR MISSION**

To facilitate and assist the development of co-operatives through the creation and provision of favourable and conducive legal and institutional environment along with adequate support and incentives.

### **OUR SERVICES**

The Co-operatives Division has the statutory duty to ensure that co-operative societies operate within the co-operative legal framework. It also assists in the consolidation, promotion and development of the co-operative movement.

The main services provided by the Co-operatives Division are:

- Provision of legal and institutional framework for co-operatives and co-operative development
- Formation and registration of co-operative societies
- Audit of financial accounts of co-operative societies
- Monitoring and supervision of activities of co-operative societies
- Provision of education and training to the co-operative movement
- Guidance and technical consultancy services to co-operative organizations for the implementation of their plans and projects
- Providing technical and financial assistance for the implementation of projects for the development of the co-operative sector
- Operating incentive schemes for the benefit of co-operative societies

The Co-operatives Division aims at imparting quality and timely services with a high standard of professionalism, integrity, independence, objectiveness, trust and confidentiality.

## **CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES SECTION**

Under the overall responsibility of the Registrar of Co-operative Societies, there is the Cooperative Societies Section which is divided into four zones as follows:

### **Zone 1**

- (a) Pamplémousses North Area
- (b) Pamplémousses South Area
- (c) Rivière du Rempart Area
- (d) Port Louis North Area
- (e) Audit, Investigations, Evaluation and Statistics Unit (Team 1)

### **Zone 2**

- (a) Moka Area
- (b) Flacq Area
- (c) Flacq East Area
- (d) Lower P. Wilhems & Black River Area
- (e) Audit, Investigations, Evaluation and Statistics Unit (Team 2)

### **Zone 3**

- (a) Grand Port Area
- (b) Savanne Area
- (c) Upper P. Wilhems Area
- (d) Audit, Investigations, Evaluation and Statistics Unit (Team 3)

### **Zone 4**

- (a) Port Louis South Area
- (b) Arbitration, Liquidation and Charges Unit
- (c) Registration, Public Relations and Hot Line
- (d) Consolidation, Education, Training and Research Unit

The Section also:-

- Ensures that co-operative societies operate in strict conformity with the Co-operatives Act 2005, the Cooperatives (Amendment) Act 2006 and the relevant subsidiary legislation
- Participates actively in the preparation of training programme for the staff of the Co-operatives Division and members and staff of co-operative societies
- Advises on legal and policy matters concerning co-operative societies
- Monitors the implementation of projects of co-operative societies
- Pursues the decentralization and regionalization programme of activities of the Ministry
- Ensures that records regarding list of societies and their categories (active, dormant and de-registered/ liquidated) are updated every year on the Ministry's website

## **REGIONALISATION AND DECENTRALIZATION**

To offer a service of proximity to our customers, the 12 Co-operative Areas under the 4 zones operate through 15 Regional Co-operative Centres (RCCs) as enumerated at pages ..... and ..... and provide the following services:

- (i) Auditing of accounts of co-operative societies within three months after submission of accounts
- (ii) Supervising the activities of societies
- (iii) Attending to complaints and problems of co-operators within **one week**
- (iv) Counselling on activities of societies
- (v) Providing information on formation of societies
- (vi) Helping in the implementation of projects set up by societies
- (vii) Guiding secretaries in bookkeeping
- (viii) Providing on-the-job training to co-operators, staff members and Board Directors of the co-operative societies.
- (ix) Acting as one stop shop for co-operative activities
- (x) Co-ordinating social functions in the context of Co-operative Week and International Co-operative Day

These services are equally provided in Rodrigues by the Co-operatives Division of the Commission for Health, Prisons & Reform Institutions, Fire Services & Cooperatives, Rodrigues Regional Assembly.

## **ARBITRATION, LIQUIDATION AND CHARGES UNIT**

This unit is responsible for:-

- (i) The settlement / determination of disputes.
- (ii) The Liquidation of co-operative societies
- (iii) The processing of documents relating to the inscription of charges and their erasures.

## **DISPUTE AND ARBITRATION**

When a case of dispute is referred to the Registrar of Co-operative Societies, the following steps have to be followed for the determination of disputes declared under Sections (85) to (88) of the Co-operatives Act 2005:

- (a) Verify that all procedures have been followed in the declaration of dispute and an agent has been appointed by the Board.
- (b) Ensure that the Registrar of Cooperative Societies approves the agent appointed to represent the society.
- (c) Ensure that under Section (86) the Registrar of Cooperative Societies appoints an Arbitrator subject to the approval of the Permanent Secretary.
- (d) The Arbitrator shall summon parties to the dispute within **one month** after appointment.
- (e) Awards shall be given by the Arbitrator, as far as possible within a period of **sixty days** or within such extended time as approved by the Registrar of Cooperative Societies.
- (f) Any party aggrieved by the Arbitrator's award may appeal to the Co-operative Tribunal within **21 days**.

- (g) Plaintiff may ask for the execution of the award after **21 days** as from the date of the award of the arbitrator.
- (h) The execution of any order, warrant, notice or summons shall be made after **21 days** of the plaintiff's request for execution.

## **LIQUIDATION**

Part XIV of the Co-operatives Act 2005 refers to the liquidation of co-operative societies and covers Sections (97) to (105).

A society may be liquidated in the following circumstances:

- (a) On receipt of an application made by not less than 75% of members holding not less than 75% of ordinary shares or in the case of a society which has preference shares, not less than 75% of the preference shares.
- (b) The number of members falls below the minimum required level – i.e., five for Primary Societies\* and two for Secondary Societies\*\*.

\* **“Primary Society” means a society consisting of at least five individuals or a society and a body corporate other than a society.**

\*\* **“Secondary Society” means a society consisting of at least two Primary Societies.**

- (c) The share capital falls below Rs 5,000 for a period of more than 3 months.
- (d) Where the share capital plus reserves is less than the accumulated losses of the society.

## **CHARGES**

Co-operative societies may be exempted *inter alia* from paying stamp duty, registration dues, transcription or inscription fees under Section 31 of the Co-operatives Act 2005. Conditions are attached for fiscal exemptions, as per Section 31 (2) of the Co-operatives Act 2005.

## **INSCRIPTION OF CHARGES**

The following procedures have to be observed for the inscription of charges on a property:

- (a) Society sends a resolution of committee, confirming approval of loans and inscription of charges along with the member's birth certificate, marriage certificate (where applicable), ID card and the Title deeds.
- (b) Three copies of fixed charges with society's seal affixed thereon and duly signed by the borrower, the President and the Secretary.
- (c) Recommendation of charges by officer in charge of the society.

- (d) Verification of the Title deeds at Mortgage section of the Registrar-General's Department within **one week**.
- (e) Two copies of typed fixed charges duly signed by the Registrar of Cooperative Societies shall be sent to the Mortgage section of the Registrar-General's Department for inscription.
- (f) After inscription at the Mortgage section of the Registrar-General's Department, the fixed charge form is collected by the Arbitration section and dispatched to the society within **one week**.
- (g) The society settles the inscription fee at the Mortgage section of the Registrar-General's Department.

## **ERASURE OF CHARGES**

The following procedures have to be observed for the erasure of charges:

- (a) The society sends a resolution confirming approval of release of charge along with a copy of the charges previously inscribed by the member.
- (b) The society submits three copies of full release forms duly signed by the President and the Secretary with society's seal affixed thereon.
- (c) Recommendation of the officer in charge of the society is required for the release of the charge.
- (d) Verification of the charge is carried out at the Mortgage section of the Registrar-General's Department by the Arbitration section within **one week**.
- (e) Two typed copies of release of charge are submitted to the Mortgage section of the Registrar-General's Department for release.
- (f) After the Mortgage section of the Registrar-General's Department has erased the charge, one copy is dispatched to the society within **one week** as proof of erasure and one copy is kept in file for record purpose.

## **THE CO-OPERATIVE TRIBUNAL**

The Co-operative Tribunal is operational in accordance with Section 89 of the Co-operatives Act 2005 to hear and determine any appeal lodged under the Act.

Appeals are to be lodged within **21 days** with the Secretary of the Co-operative Tribunal at 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, LIC Centre, John Kennedy Street, Port Louis (Telephone no. 208 4812).

Appeals are analysed and registered in the book of appeals within **one week** and cases are called for mention before the Tribunal within **one month**.

Award of the Co-operative Tribunal is sent to parties concerned and to the Registrar of Co-operative Societies.

Any party aggrieved with the decision or the Award of the Co-operative Tribunal may appeal to the Supreme Court within **21 days** of the date of the decision or Award of the Tribunal.

## **AUDIT, INVESTIGATIONS, EVALUATION AND STATISTICS UNIT**

- (a) This unit operates with three teams of officers posted in Zone 1, Zone 2 and Zone 3. The audit work performed by field officers in the Co-operative Areas are scrutinized, verified and the last finishing touch brought therein.
- (b) Any inquiry carried out under Section 81 of the Co-operatives Act 2005, into the constitution, working or financial condition of a society shall be completed within **sixty days** provided that all necessary documents are available.
- (c) Annual Reports shall be prepared every year.

## **REGISTRATION, PUBLIC RELATIONS AND HOT LINE UNIT**

This unit:

- (a) Considers and finalises the registration procedures of co-operative societies (in process of being registered) after clearance from the Divisional Co-operative Officer of the unit and Principal Co-operative Officer of the Zone/Area from which the application for registration has been received.
- (b) Provides information to public in co-operative matters.
- (c) Operates a **Hot Line (Tel. No. 211 7739)** during office hours for complaints and suggestions.
- (d) Examines applications for registration of co-operative societies and conduct formation meetings.
- (e) Ensures that names of societies do not resemble those of existing ones and that the names are not in conflict with the Co-operatives Act 2005.
- (f) Considers objects of proposed societies and their sources of funding before deciding on the class to which societies will belong.
- (g) Helps in framing the rules of societies.
- (h) Coaches secretaries of cooperative societies to make entries in *inter alia* books of accounts, register of members, share capital account books, cash books and minutes books.
- (i) Audits accounts of co-operative societies in process of registration.
- (j) Ensures that applicants comply with the Co-operatives Act 2005 and the Cooperatives (Amendment) Act 2006.
- (k) seeks the assistance of the Co-operative Development Unit, where necessary, to analyse the project write-up or to help promoters to prepare project write-up.

After submission of the following documents and compliance with statutory procedures, registration is provided within a period of **two weeks**:

- (1) Application form
- (2) Resolution of General Meeting
- (3) 3 copies of draft Rules of the proposed society
- (4) Project write-up on activities of the proposed society
- (5) Statement of paid-up shares (Minimum Rs 5 000)
- (6) Proof of payment of registration fee (Rs 500 payable on application)

**The following documents may also be required for the registration of a cooperative society:**

- (i) For Agricultural cooperative societies
  - Proof of land availability
- (ii) For Tea Marketing cooperative societies
  - Permits of *bona fide* planters from Tea Board
  - Proof of availability of land

- (iii) For Fishermen cooperative societies
  - Registration as fishermen (fishermen cards)
- (iv) For Fishmongers cooperative societies
  - Fishmongers Licenses and Morality Certificates
- (v) Bus Owners' cooperative societies
  - Public Service Vehicle (bus) licences
  - National Transport Authority clearance
  - Clearance from Bus Owners' Cooperative Federation

### **Consolidation, Education, Training and Research Unit**

- Education, training and information are among the fundamental principles of the Co-operative Movement across the globe.
- Members of co-operative organisations, their employees and their board of directors, the youth, the public and all stakeholders should be provided with timely, accurate and adequate information on the co-operative way of business, the benefits of working together, self-help, caring for others, integrity, culture and democracy that would help mobilizing their active participation, commitments and solidarity.
- Courses on Co-operative Law, Co-operative Book-keeping, Co-operative Business Management and other related subjects are provided.
- May undertake research on statistics provided by Audit, Investigations, Evaluation and Statistics unit to determine the causes of failures of co-operative societies and the strategy to consolidate the base of low performing cooperative societies.

### **Consolidation of Low Performing Societies**

- Training of the Board of Directors
- Motivation campaign of members
- Education of members
- SWOT Analysis
- Attending meetings in co-operative societies to advise the members on the co-operative principles, and the strategy to boost up sales, improve the financial situation of the society and the restructurisation that may be necessary to enable the society to subsist and progress.
- To promote the Co-operative Movement throughout the island in collaboration with the officers of the Regional Co-operative Centres by conducting sensitisation and promotion campaign on the benefits of co-operatives through talks and workshops to consolidate the movement.

## **Monitoring and Feedback**

- The degree of success is monitored.
- Re-engineering of the procedures undertaken.
- Feedback enables to attain improvement.

This unit is called upon to work in collaboration with National Institute for Cooperative Entrepreneurship (NICE), which has been set up for the training of all the stakeholders of the co-operative matters.

## **COOPERATIVE DEVELOPMENT UNIT (CDU)**

The Co-operative Development Unit plays a crucial role in promoting the overall development of the Co-operative Sector in Mauritius and Rodrigues. The CDU assists the co-operative movement in its development programme and strategies.

The main duties falling under this unit are:-

- advising on the policy measures to be taken in relation to the co-operative sector
- preparing co-operative development plans and reviews for the co-operative sector

(plans are prepared after identification of problems connected with this sector and assessment of prospects, both in the local and international contexts, for its future development)

- conception, implementation and monitoring of national co-operative development projects

(Co-operative Development projects are conceived and implemented for the consolidation and promotion of Co-operatives in Mauritius)

- operating incentive schemes for the benefit of co-operative societies
- examining project proposals of the co-operative sector and advising on their viability or otherwise
- coordinating foreign financial and technical assistance for the implementation of co-operative projects
- providing sectoral inputs to and participating at the level of bilateral and multi-lateral joint-commission meetings, and implementation of decisions of the various commissions related to the co-operative sector
- coordinating co-operative activities with other institutions

## INCENTIVE SCHEMES

Incentive schemes are devised and operated by the unit after taking into consideration the needs and demands of the Co-operative societies/organizations.

- **Grant Scheme for Computerization**

All applications for computer grants are processed within **one month**.

The applicant society should submit to its Principal Co-operative Officer duly filled application form for the grant together with copy of the Minutes of proceedings of the meeting where members' approval have been obtained for the purchase of the computer and for applying for the grant.

Upon approval from the Ministry, the society would submit original receipt payment in respect of the purchase of the computer and its bank details to enable disbursement of the grant.

- **Loan Scheme for the Co-operative Sector**

Apart from other loan facilities to Co-operative Societies, applications under the 'Loan Scheme for the Co-operative Sector' are processed in three weeks' time at the level of the Ministry and forwarded to the DBM Ltd.

Documents to be submitted by applicants for the loan scheme:

- (1) Duly completed application form with the seal of society
- (2) A project write-up for which loan is being applied
- (3) A copy of Minute of proceedings of Special /General meeting where members' approval has been obtained in respect of:
  - Project implementation
  - Contracting of loan under the " Loan Scheme for the Co-operative Sector"
  - Pledging the assets of the society (where applicable)

Application forms for these schemes are available at the Development Unit, Ministry of Industry, Small & Medium Enterprises, Commerce and Co-operatives (Co-operatives Division), the Regional Co-operative Centres, the DBM Ltd and on the website of the Ministry at <http://cooperatives.gov.mu>

The application should be addressed to the Secretary for Co-operative Development, Ministry of Industry, Small & Medium Enterprises, Commerce and Co-operatives (Co-operatives Division), 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, LIC Centre, John Kennedy Street, Port Louis.

## **EXAMINATION OF PROJECT PROPOSALS OF CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES/ ORGANIZATIONS**

Project proposals in respect of registration of new societies are examined, and advice and recommendations submitted to the Registrar of Co-operative Societies within a period of **ten days**.

Guidelines for project write-up are available at the Development Unit and Registration Unit as well as at the Regional Co-operative Centres.

# **NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR COOPERATIVE ENTREPRENEURSHIP** **(N I C E)**

Bois Marchand Street, Terre Rouge  
(Tel. No: 249 0111, 249 1904, 249 2568 Fax No: 249 1832)

## **OPENING HOURS**

**Weekdays : from 08 45 to 16 00 hours**  
**(lunch time from 12 00 to 12 30 hours)**

The National Institute for Co-operative Entrepreneurship (Ex-National Co-operative Training Centre) established under the Co-operatives Act 2005 is a body corporate under the aegis of the Ministry of Industry, Small & Medium Enterprises, Commerce & Co-operatives (Co-operatives Division).

The Institute is committed to provide co-operative Education and Training in order to ensure capacity building in co-operatives as well as to empower co-operators and to develop a pool of trained, knowledgeable and qualified leaders, followers and technicians for the co-operative movement in Mauritius and Rodrigues.

## **OBJECTS OF THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR COOPERATIVE ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

The objects of the Institute are to:

- (a) provide facilities and engage in research and training for the promotion and development of co-operative entrepreneurship, philosophy, principles and values;
- (b) act as a centre for the consolidation and development of the co-operative movement through education and training and for the exchange of information in the field of co-operatives; and
- (c) promote and develop capacity building through entrepreneurship and business leadership.

## **FUNCTIONS OF THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR COOPERATIVE ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

The functions of the Institute are to:

- (a) organize and conduct co-operative management and information technology courses;
- (b) organize and conduct examinations and award certificates on its own or in collaboration with other recognized bodies;
- (c) establish links with foreign training institutes and organizations; and
- (d) provide consultancy and advisory services in the field of co-operatives.
- (e) mount in - service training programme for the officers of the technical cadre of the Ministry with a view to improve their skills and update their knowledge; and

- (f) organize training sessions for members, employees, board members on Co-operative Principles, Co-operative Law and Practice and Co-operative Management.

**INFRASTRUCTURAL FACILITIES OF THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR COOPERATIVE ENTREPRENEURSHIP (Tel. Nos 249 0111, 249 1904, 249 2568 Fax No. 249 1832)**

The Institute is located at Bois Marchand Street, Terre Rouge and is equipped with a Lecture Hall that can accommodate around fifty participants on courses and some hundred and twenty persons on delivery of talks and other gatherings.

The hall is an air-conditioned one, with a set of modern audio-visual equipments, such as TV, Video, Lap-Top and LCD projector.

The NICE may, on request, put the Lecture Hall at the disposal of co-operative organisations for conducting training sessions, seminars and workshops.

**MAIN CURRICULUM OF COURSES DISPENSED AT NICE**

- Co-operative Entrepreneurship
- Co-operative Business Management
- Book Keeping and Accountancy
- Project Preparation and Appraisal
- Co-operative Legislation
- Co-operative Auditing
- Strategic Management
- Training for trainers
- Stock Management
- Statutory Inventory Procedures
- Arbitration and Liquidation procedures

## **PERSONNEL**

All personnel matters relating to our officers i.e. application for leave, passage benefits, car loans, release etc... are processed and approved within **one week** at the most, except for cases where other Departments/Ministries have to be consulted.

## **FINANCE**

Bills/claims for services rendered to the division are transmitted to the Accountant-General's Department for payment within **three days**, provided all relevant receipts/ invoices are submitted.

## **OUR COMMITMENT TO CUSTOMERS**

With a view to uplifting the quality of service of the Co-operatives Division, we ensure that:

- Telephone calls are answered within three rings.
- Our staff members are courteous.
- Correct information is provided at all times.
- Letters are acknowledged within five working days of receipt.
- On appointment, customers are directed to the officer concerned and the officer attends to the former within ten minutes.
- Any query/complaint is attended to on the spot, where possible. Otherwise, customers are informed of the time frame for a reply.

## QUERIES/SUGGESTIONS

For any information, the following sections/units be may contacted:

### OPENING HOURS

**Weekdays** : **from 8 45 to 16 00 hours**  
**(lunch time from 12 00 to 12 30)**

<u>SECTION</u>	<u>TEL. NO.</u>
Administration Section	2084812 - Ext.206
Personnel Section	2084812 Ext. 225, 215, 220 or 2118630
Finance Section	211-1314 or 2084812 Ext. 247 & 248
Stores	2084812 - Ext. 218
Registration, Public Relation & Hot Line Section	2084812 - Ext. 241, (Hot Line) 2117739
Arbitration, Liquidation & Charges Unit	2084812 - Ext. 229
Consolidation, Education, Training & Research Unit	2084812 - Ext. 256
National Institute for Co-operative Entrepreneurship	249-0111 & 249 1904
Audit, Investigation, Evaluation & Statistics Unit	2084812 - Ext. 234
Co-operative Development Unit	211-1312 or 2084812 - Ext. 223

Suggestions for improvement in the quality of services offered by the Co-operatives Division are always welcomed. Suggestions can be sent either in writing or through e-mail. A suggestion box is also available at 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, LIC Centre, John Kennedy Street, Port Louis.

All correspondences should be addressed to the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Industry, Small & Medium Enterprises, Commerce & Co-operatives (Co-operatives Division) at 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, LIC Centre, John Kennedy Street, Port Louis.

This Customer Charter will be reviewed regularly.

## **REGIONAL COOPERATIVE CENTRES (RCCs)**

### **OPENING HOURS**

**Weekdays** : from 09 00 to 15 30 hours  
(lunch time from 12 00 to 12 30 hours)

**Saturdays** : from 09 00 to 12 00 hours

<b>Serial Number</b>	<b>Regional Co-operative Centre</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Phone No.</b>
1	Solitude RCC	Farmers Service Centre Royal Road, Solitude	261 8512
2	Notre Dame RCC	Notre Dame Long Mountain	245 1009
3	Port Louis RCC (North) (South)	5th Floor LIC Centre	208 4812 213 5187
4	Riviere Du Rempart RCC	Farmers Service Centre Royal Road Riv Du Rempart	412 4463
5	Goodlands RCC	NPF Building Goodlands	283 6299
6	Bon Accueil RCC	Farmers Service Centre Near Football Ground Bon Accueil	418 6787
7	Unité RCC	Farmers Service Centre Camp de Masque	416 8616
8	Beau Champ RCC	Farmers Service Centre Royal Road Beau Champs	417 6895
9	Quatre Bornes RCC (Lower Plaine Wilhems)	88, St Jean Road Quatre Bornes	467 1116
10	St. Pierre RCC	Farmers Service Centre St. Pierre	433 3695
11	Tamarin RCC	‘ Maison des Pêcheurs ‘ Tamarin	483 8161

Serial Number	Regional Co-operative Centre	Address	Phone No.
12	St. Félix RCC	Farmers Service Centre St. Félix Chemin Grenier	622 5001
13	Rose Belle RCC	Nagea Road Baramia Rose Belle	627 7824
14	Henrietta RCC	'Maison des Eleveurs' Lamarie Road Glen Park Vacoas	684 9962
15	Rodrigues Co-operative Services	Pointe Meunier Port Mathurin Rodrigues	831 2672