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# **CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARDS MANUAL FOR THE BROAD-BASED BLACK ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT COMMISSION**

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## Abbreviations and Acronyms

<b>Description</b>	<b>Acronyms</b>
Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment	B-BBEE
Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment Commission	B-BBEE Commission
Johannesburg Stock Exchange	JSE
National Development Plan	NDP
Public Finance Management Act	PFMA
Sectoral Education Training Authority	Seta
The Department of Trade, Industry and Competition	<b>the dtic</b>
The Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment Act	B-BBEE Act

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 How customers or clients are treated is often the difference between organisations that succeed and those that may fail due to poor customer care. This also contributes to how the general public views the organisation and may even derail potential customers/clients from engaging with the institution in light of poor customer care.
- 1.2 It has been three years since the B-BBEE Commission was established since June 2016, and customer expectations are rising and it is important that the B-BBEE Commission guard against inconsistent or poor service as part of promoting our brand promise, which is '***an inclusive economy for all, together***', which in essence refers to equal participation in the economy, equal access to wealth opportunities by all people, inclusion of black industrialists in the economy and availability of non-financial and financial support, including incentive schemes to achieve equality. Therefore, this brand promise can only be achieved through effective and measured implementation of all the elements of B-BBEE, working together as a team towards a common goal of a transformed, empowering and an inclusive economy for all the South Africa citizens.
- 1.3 The impact assessment study that the B-BBEE Commission conducted in 2019, has indicated that the general public is not aware of the standards of service delivery that the B-BBEE Commission offers. Service standards are important to a regulatory institution as it guides the ways in which customers are to be treated and the best practices to be observed when interacting with customers.
- 1.4 Having such standards in place and educating employees on acceptable levels and quality of service encourage repeat business and improve the overall service level, and also boost the confidence customers have in the institution.
- 1.5 Thus, service standards are of paramount importance as they are the key foundational points by which the institution delivers to its customer care.

## 2. Purpose

- 2.1 The Customer Service Standards Manual for the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment Commission (“B-BBEE Commission”) is provided as a tool to assist the institution in ensuring the delivery of consistent, high quality services to our stakeholders by employees of the B-BBEE Commission
- 2.2 The Manual consolidates in a single framework processes and standards that apply to services offered by the B-BBEE Commission as guided by the B-BBEE Act.
- 2.3 It is the expectation of the management of the B-BBEE Commission all employees will apply and ensure compliance with the Service Standards contained in the Manual.
- 2.4 The Manual serves as a guide to safeguard the performance standards set out in the B-BBEE Act, and does not seek to replace the B-BBEE Act and its authority.
- 2.5 This Manual may be updated anytime by the B-BBEE Commission if there are any material changes arising from developments in the application of the B-BBEE Act. In such an instance, an amended version will be published to replace this one.

## 3. Who are we

- 3.1 The Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment Commission (“B-BBEE Commission”) is established as an entity within the administration of the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition (“**the dtic**”) in terms of section 13B of the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment Act No. 53 of 2003 as amended by Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment Act No. 46 of 2013 (“the B-BBEE Act”). Its role includes overseeing the implementation of the B-BBEE Act and to act against fronting practices.

## 3.2 Our Vision

### ***An inclusive industrialised economy that is globally competitive***

***Inclusive*** – refers to equal participation, equitable opportunities for of all, and benefits experienced by every section of the society across South Africa. This generally implies a link of macroeconomic and microeconomic factors of the economy for inclusivity to materialise. As the B-BBEE Commission, we are vested with a regulatory responsibility to ensure that the South Africa's economy is broad-based and inclusive in order to attain the vision 2030 in the NDP. For the economy to thrive, function and grow all South Africans must be involved and contribute meaningfully in the value chain and critical sectors of the economy. Therefore, inclusivity must be facilitated through skills development, ownership, management control, enterprise and supplier development, as well as removing economic barriers for black people, so joint efforts by private and public sector is required as no one individual can do this on their own.

***Industrialised*** – refers to the creation of a sustained productive economy that is driven by a wide range of locally sourced and produced products and services. This is an economy that has a high rate of literacy, stimulates economic and employment growth through targeted programmes, allows trade and investment more in education to produce highly competent and skilled labour force that could contribute to job creation, creates start-ups and broaden the production base. Involves well developed and productive commercial markets such as advanced manufacturing and value added services. In essence more beneficiation and exporting of value added products instead on raw material.

***Economy*** - entails the state of the country in terms of production, distribution and consumption of goods and services in a particular geographic region. The IMF in its press briefing of April 2015 painted a picture of declining economic growth in emerging and developing economies. It is imperative for the country to grow its economy through internal production and distribution of goods locally and internationally, and there is a need for a strong trade investment arm within government that will not only identify markets for locals, but will also ensure sustainability.

**Globally Competitive** - implies viable and integrated international markets with export capability in order to stimulate economic growth. South Africa does not operate in a confined space but has to compete with other nations for resources, skill and markets, which means that we have to support our local products and services and leverage these against other markets. We need to focus on areas where we have uniquely South African products that can be targeted for export markets – we need to have niche and unique offerings. In this regard, benchmarks, peer reviews and adherence to world standards provide the necessary pointers on the areas that the country must improve or capitalize on to remain globally competitive, without compromising national economic interests.

### 3.3 Our Mission

#### ***To facilitate the accelerated productive implementation of the Act***

**Facilitate** – to make it easy and possible for B-BBEE stakeholders to comply with and implement the B-BBEE Act by interacting and engaging with them; and by providing guidance and support through advisory opinions, explanatory notices and clarifications, amongst other things, on the application and interpretation of the Act, and implementing education and awareness programmes and corrective measures for non-compliance.

**Accelerated** – ensuring that transformation moves at a faster pace with a target in mind from the existing baseline, which can be regularly measured to ensure that the country is meeting its economic objectives on equity and empowerment for all intended beneficiaries of B-BBEE. This includes reaching out to those pockets of people, sectors and industries that have not felt transformation and empowerment to date, and enhance the impact of B-BBEE on all sectors of our society.

**Productive** - moving to a more applied industry where raw products are transformed into finished products within our country; a state where we do not rely on imported goods for our finished products. We plan to interact with learning and technology institutions, engage with students and youth to encourage entrepreneurship and innovation at a young age, facilitate access to financial and non-financial support and

guidance for budding and established companies, not working longer hours but working smarter and creatively, come up with new and innovative ideas and technologies to take the country forward, and provide a conducive working environment where citizens are serviced properly.

**Implementation** – it is often said that South Africa has the best policies but always suffers when it comes to implementation due to many factors including red tape, lack of coordination, not understanding the vision, implementers not understanding mandate, lack of resources and finances and other related constraints. Thus, it is important that the B-BBEE Commission is properly and sufficiently resourced with the funds, assets and people with the requisite skill and expertise to deliver on the mandate.

### 3.4 Our Brand Promise

***‘An inclusive economy for all, together’***

**Inclusive** – refers to equal participation, equitable opportunities for of all, and benefits experienced by every section of the society across South Africa. This generally implies a link of macroeconomic and microeconomic factors of the economy for inclusivity to materialize.

**Economy** - entails the state of the country in terms of production, distribution and consumption of goods and services in a particular geographic region. It is imperative for the country to grow its economy through internal production and distribution of goods locally and internationally, and there is a need for a strong trade investment arm within government that will not only identify markets for locals, but will also ensure sustainability.

**Together** – forging and forming relations, working as teams and partnering with others to achieve end goal – private sector, government, labour and civil society - no one should be left behind as we strive for an inclusive economy for all. This economy must effectively benefit all of us, thus we should work towards the same vision as outlined in the NDP, and in line with goals and targets set by Cabinet from time to time.



### 3.5 Our Values

Our operational environment presents various challenges for us, and these include lack of proper corporate governance, fronting tendencies, falsification of empowering credentials, misrepresentation of facts to secure contracts and quick fix solutions to empowerment, all of which present a fertile ground for unethical conduct in and outside the public sector. Having considered this environment and our goal of operating a credible and effective regulatory entity, we have agreed and committed ourselves to live by the following equally important values:

***Value 1: An inclusive economy is our first consideration***

- Our first priority and commitment is our national economic interests
- Our stakeholders are key to us achieving our economic goals

***Value 2: Open access and availability to all economic citizens***

- We offer swift turnaround times guided by our service standards
- We offer fair and consistent redress within the legislative parameters
- We offer quick responses as we do not own any red tape

***Value 3: Impartiality***

- We act without favour, fear, bias or prejudice
- We handle all matters objectively in living our purpose
- We respect confidentiality within the law

***Value 4: Consistency***

- We provide clear directions and reliable guidance
- We provide decisions and advice that is consistent

***Value 5: Accountability for all decisions and actions taken by us***

- We uphold and respect all decisions and actions taken by our entity
- We trust all staff to serve stakeholders diligently and professionally
- We take responsibility for our actions

***Value 6: Zero Tolerance for corruption***

- We are committed to proper governance
- We are transparent in all dealings
- We do not tolerate any corruption

## 3.6 Description of Business Units

3.6.1 The B-BBEE Commission comprises of the following sub programmes:

3.6.1.1 **Programme 1 - Compliance:** The strategic goal of programme 1 is to safeguard the outcomes of an inclusive economy.

3.6.1.2 **Programme 2 – Investigation and enforcement:** The strategic goal of programme 2 is to implement corrective enforcement to achieve compliance.

3.6.1.3 **Programme 3 – Research, analysis and reporting:** The strategic goal of programme 3 is researching, analyzing and reporting on the state of transformation.

3.6.1.4 **Programme 4 – Relationship Building/ Stakeholder Relations:** The strategic goal of programme 4 is collaborating with relevant stakeholders to advance transformation.

3.6.1.5 **Programme 5 – Administration:** The strategic objective of programme 5 is developing capability and capacity of the B-BBEE Commission to deliver on its mandate.

## 4. Legislative and Other Mandates

4.1 We are established by Section 13B of B-BBEE Act and we have jurisdiction throughout South Africa. We must be impartial and perform our functions without fear, favour or prejudice, in the most cost-effective manner and in accordance with the values and principles mentioned in section 195 of the Constitution. In terms of Section 13E of the B-BBEE Act, we are financed from money that is appropriated by Parliament for the B-BBEE Commission, and money lawfully received from any other source. The Auditor-General is mandated to audit our financial records every year. Given that we are not a listed public entity yet, we operate within the budget and reporting framework of **the dtic**.

4.2 Section 13F of the B-BBEE Act articulates our functions as follows:

- To oversee, supervise and promote adherence to the B-BBEE Act in the interest of the public;
- To strengthen and foster collaboration between the public and private sector in order to promote and safeguard the objectives of broad-based black economic empowerment;
- To receive complaints relating to broad-based black economic empowerment in accordance with the Act;
- To investigate, either on its own initiative or in response to complaints received, any matter concerning broad-based black economic empowerment;
- To promote advocacy; access to opportunities and educational programmes and initiatives of broad-based black economic empowerment;
- To maintain a register of major broad-based black economic empowerment transactions, above a threshold determined by the Minister in the Gazette;
- To receive and analyse such reports as may be prescribed concerning broad-based economic empowerment compliance from organs of state, public entities and private sector enterprises;
- To promote good governance and accountability by creating an effective environment for the promotion and implementation of broad-based black economic empowerment;
- To exercise such other powers which are not in conflict with the Act as may be conferred on the B-BBEE Commission in writing by the Minister; and
- Increase knowledge of the nature and dynamics and promote public awareness of matters relating to broad-based black economic empowerment by implementing education and awareness measures, providing guidance to the public and conducting research on matters relating to its mandate and activities.

4.3 Our strategic focus areas are derived from the mandate in Section 13F of the B-BBEE Act, with the resources made available in accordance with Section 13E and takes into account all responsibilities under the Constitution and the PFMA governing organs of state and public entities.

4.4 The B-BBEE Act and the Codes of Good Practice clearly outline the imperatives that the performance of our mandate must make an impact on, and in terms of which transformation progress should be measured, namely:

- Ownership
- Management Control
- Enterprise and Supplier Development
- Skills Development
- Socio-Economic Development

## 5. Customer Service Standards

5.1 These service standards are measures of the quantity and quality of the services that are provided by the B-BBEE Commission to its customers. The standards cover the actual delivery of the service, the standards of employee behaviour, and the availability of customer feedback and complaints processes.

5.2 These are the services and service standards that the B-BBEE Commission promises to its customers over and above the standards set in the B-BBEE regulations for specific processes:

<b>Key Service</b>	<b>Service Beneficiary</b>	<b>Service Standard</b>
Provide clarification on the interpretation of the B-BBEE Act	B-BBEE Stakeholders	100% enquiries responded to and feedback provided upon receipt of enquiry within 5 days
Provide feedback to clients for enquiries or tip-off received on violation of the B-BBEE Act	B-BBEE Stakeholders	100% enquiries responded to and feedback provided upon receipt of enquiry within 5 days
Conduct awareness workshops and education campaigns	B-BBEE Stakeholders	Session organised within one (1) month from the date of request.

Attend to telephone enquiries	B-BBEE Stakeholders	90% of calls attended to daily and where message was left by the B-BBEE stakeholder a call to be returned within a day of receiving the message
Receive and acknowledge submitted major B-BBEE transactions	Transaction parties and B-BBEE Stakeholders	100% of submitted transactions acknowledged and letter provided within 5 days of submission
Register major B-BBEE transactions	Transaction parties and B-BBEE Stakeholders	100% of submitted transactions registered within 10 days subject to completeness of the required information
Assess registered major B-BBEE transactions	Transaction parties and B-BBEE Stakeholders	Feedback provided within 90 days from the date of registration of the transaction
Receive and acknowledge compliance reports submitted	JSE listed companies, SETA's, organs of states and public entities	100% of submitted transactions acknowledged and letter provided within 5 days of submission
Analyse submitted compliance reports	JSE listed companies, SETA's, organs of states and public entities	Feedback provided to within 90 days from receipt date
Acknowledge all new complaints received	Complainants	100% of complaints received acknowledged within 5 days
Pre-screening of complaints	Complainants	100% of complaints processed and finalised within one (1) months of submission
Merit assessment of complaints	Complainants	100% of complaints assessed for merit within three (3) months

		of submission
Conduct an investigation	Complainants and Respondents	Investigation finalised within 12 months of commencing an investigation.  Complex matters may go over the period of 12 months and complainants will be notified of additional time required and reasons thereof.
Provide feedback to complainants	Complainants	Feedback provided to complainants once every two (2) months.
Provide recordings of meetings	Respondents and complainants	Meetings are recorded for internal processes of the B-BBEE Commission and any party is welcome to bring their own recording device, subject to confidentiality and without prejudice to be agreed upon in each meeting.

5.3 In delivering these services and maintain the prescribed service standards, the B-BBEE Commission is committed to:

- upholding the *batho-pele* principle;
- provide services fairly with a focus on customer needs;
- be flexible, innovative and reliable in service delivery;
- engage with the not-for-profit and business sectors to develop and implement services solutions;
- focus on quality while maximising service delivery; and
- employee behaviour standards.

## **6. Customer Feedback**

6.1.1 In the event that we have failed to meet these standards in respect of your matter without proper notification of reasons, customer complaints can be addressed in writing to the office of the Commissioner at [FNotoane@beecommission.gov.za](mailto:FNotoane@beecommission.gov.za) or telephone 012 394 1446. General customer feedback to us can also be transmitted to the same address.

6.1.2 The B-BBEE Commission will also on a continuous basis roll-out customer surveys as part of service delivery improvement plan.

## **7. Effective Date**

7.1 The B-BBEE Commission is committed in working together with the B-BBEE stakeholders on building an inclusive economy that is globally competitive. These service standards come into effect from **1 April 2021**.