



our charter

What you can expect from the
Department of Social Security - Malta

mySocialSecurity



public service

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about our charter

Introduction

This Chapter is an essential part of our commitment to providing transparent and reliable services by the Department for **Social Security (DSS)** in Malta. This charter's main aim is to serve as a guiding document that outlines our principles, goals, and the responsibilities we have towards our citizens. It is designed to ensure that you, as a valued member of our society, have a clear understanding of the rights and benefits you are entitled to and the standards of service you can expect from us under the **Social Security Act (Cap.318.)**.

In this booklet, the Department of Social Security refers to both the DSS and the Income Support and Compliance Division (ISCD), which administers the non-contributory scheme of social security. Our Charter is a testament to our dedication to social welfare and the well-being of every individual in Malta. It embodies our core values of **accountability, dignity, equality, impartiality, integrity, loyalty, non-discrimination, quality, respect, and trust**. These values form the foundation of our operations and guide our interactions with you.

In this chapter, we will delve deeper into the core aspects of **Our Charter**, shedding light on its purpose, scope, and the values that underpin its implementation:

- Social security is an investment in the people of Malta.
- Social security is itself a human right and essential to the realisation of other human rights.
- The delivery of social security is a public service.
- Opportunities are to be sought to continuously improve the Maltese social security system in ways which put the needs of those who require assistance first and most.
- The Maltese social security system is to be efficient and deliver value for money.
- We believe in being **accountable** for our actions and decisions, ensuring that we act with **integrity** and maintain the highest standards of professionalism and ethical conduct.
- Respecting the **dignity** of every individual is of utmost importance to us. We are committed to treating everyone with fairness, **impartiality** and **respect**, regardless of their background, beliefs or circumstances. We promote **equality** and strive to eliminate any form of **discrimination**, ensuring that our services are accessible and inclusive to all.
- Our commitment to **quality** is reflected in our continuous efforts to improve our services and enhance the experience of our beneficiaries. We aim to provide reliable and efficient support, making sure that you receive accurate information and timely assistance whenever you need it.
- Integrity and **loyalty** are integral to the way we operate. We are dedicated to upholding the **trust** you place in us, and we prioritize maintaining confidentiality and safeguarding your personal information. Your well-being and security are paramount to us.

By familiarising yourself with **Our Charter**, you will gain valuable insights into the foundation of our operations, empowering you to navigate the social security system with confidence and clarity. We believe that understanding your rights and the services available to you is crucial in promoting an efficient and responsive relationship between the Department for Social Security and the citizens we serve.

We invite you to explore this chapter and discover the fundamental principles that shape **Our Charter**.

Together, we can build a strong partnership rooted in trust, compassion, and equality, as we work towards enhancing the quality of life for every individual in our society.

Thank you for joining us on this journey, and we look forward to upholding our commitment to providing exceptional social security services for all in **Malta**.

What is our charter?

Our Charter builds upon the above mentioned principles and provides practical insights into their implementation. It outlines what you can anticipate from the Department of Social Security and clarifies your entitlements.

Who are we?

Social security is a fundamental human right that applies to every individual in Malta. It is an investment in ourselves and in one another, as it serves as a crucial public service that anyone of us may require at any given time. Therefore, it is important to recognise that Our Charter is a collective possession that belongs to all members of our community.

Who makes sure that Our Charter is being delivered?

Each individual bears a personal responsibility in ensuring the practical implementation of Our Charter by:

- Being aware of our rights and responsibilities.
- Speaking up when these commitments are not being fulfilled.

Who can you tell if you do not think Our Charter is being met?

We value your feedback to help us improve our service. If you would like to make a suggestion about how we could improve our services or have a complaint, we are here to listen. The Department of Social Security will treat your concerns as a priority, managing your complaint with integrity and fairness, and keeping you informed while working with you towards a satisfactory resolution.

What your complaint may be about

The complaints management process looks into complaints from the public about the Department of Social Security services. These complaints may be about:

- Unreasonable delay.
- Inadequate service, explanation or reasons.
- Legal error.
- Factual error in decision making process.
- Human error.
- Procedural deficiency.
- Discriminatory action or decision.
- Flawed administrative process.
- Inadequate knowledge/training of staff.
- Unprofessional behaviour by an officer.
- Breach of duty/misconduct by an officer.

What we need from you

Please be clear, factual and tell us the outcome you would like. Providing your name and contact details will help us to get in touch with you so that we can start to help resolve the issue promptly. If you provide feedback anonymously, we won't be able to respond to you. However this can still guide us on identifying a flaw in the process.

How we'll respond

We aim to resolve complaints within ten **(10)** working days. If we cannot resolve your complaint, we'll explain why and guide you to other options.

How to make a Suggestion, Compliment or a Complaint

If you wish to propose a suggestion, make a compliment or submit a complaint, you can do so by [clicking here](#).

What can you do if you are not satisfied with the Department's response?

If you are not satisfied with the way in which your concerns have been handled, an Appeal may be lodged against a decision by the Department of Social Security before the Umpire within thirty **(30)** days from receiving the decision, by [clicking here](#).

How to report a suspected fraud or misconduct against the Department of Social Security

All reports of suspected fraudulent activity committed against the Department of Social Security, will be investigated. If you report suspected fraud or misconduct, your privacy and confidentiality will be respected. You may also decide to remain anonymous in such cases. When submitting your report, whether anonymously or not, you are not entitled to be informed of the outcome. You can submit a report by [clicking here](#).

Services available to assist you to make a complaint, compliment or provide feedback

If you wish to make a complaint, compliment or provide feedback and do not wish to do so online, you may forward it in writing to the following address:

Department of Social Security
38, Ordnance Street
Valletta VLT 1021

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a people oriented service

We are here to ensure that you get everything you're entitled to.

Social security malta will:

- Show patience, kindness and empathy, considering how you might feel in your circumstances.
- Listen to you, trust you and treat you as an individual.
- Speak to you in a way to understand exactly what is required from you.
- Treat everyone with equality, fairness and without discrimination.
- Provide support throughout your application process, keeping you informed and explaining the steps and reasons behind them.
- Ensure that our staff possesses extensive knowledge about social security to help you receive the entitlements you deserve.
- You also have the right to have someone you trust to support you.
- Make decisions consistently and accurately, striving to get them right the first time.
- Guide you on wrong decisions that you might be taking now that will effect your future.
- Be transparent and provide clear explanations for decisions, including guidance on what to do if you disagree.
- Timely and accurately process payments, ensuring you receive the correct amount.
- Provide appropriate referrals to other organisations, services or resources that can contribute to improving your well-being or financial situation.
- Inform you if we believe you might be entitled to benefits not administered by Social Security Malta.
- Recruit individuals who prioritize delivering a service based on equality, respect, dignity and human rights.
- Provide timely and user-friendly services.
- Provide you with effective work processes.

Please help us by:

- Treat our staff with dignity, fairness and respect.
- Inform us about any specific access or cultural needs you have and we will make every effort to accommodate them.
- Provide us with the necessary information to assist you.
- Notify us if any changes occur that might impact your entitlement.
- Inform us about any difficulties you encounter in obtaining this information, as we may be able to offer assistance.
- Share your feedback on the service provided. We constantly strive to improve, and your ideas can greatly contribute to our progress.

Social Security Malta will:


- Ensure that communications, processes, and systems are as simple and clear as possible, by testing them with the individuals who will utilize them.
- Recognize the value of your time and handle your application and inquiries as expeditiously and efficiently as possible.
- Adapt processes and methods of communication to meet your needs and preferences to the best of our abilities.
- Support your well-being and strive to make your interactions with us positive and stress-free.
- Ensure that disabled individuals who require assistance with the application process can access independent advocacy services.
- Deliver face-to-face services in local communities, ensuring convenience and accessibility. This may include home visits when appropriate.
- Reassess your application if you disagree with a decision. This is known as a reconsideration, where a different official will review it as if it were a completely new application.
- Clearly explain the appeals process if you still believe that the correct decision has not been made following a reconsideration.
- Maintain your benefit payments at the same level while you challenge a decision to reduce or terminate your benefits.
- Conduct face-to-face assessments for disability benefits only when it is not feasible to make a decision based on existing available information.
- Ensure that face-to-face assessments prioritize your well-being.
- Ensure that qualified staff, who possess an understanding of your condition and its impact on you, conduct face-to-face assessments.

03

feedback matters to us

We encourage feedback and empower people to deliver service excellence.

Social Security Malta will:

- Listen, learn, and improve by taking responsibility for mistakes and valuing feedback, complaints, and appeal decisions.
 - Encourage you to provide feedback, explain the complaint process, and make every effort to rectify any issues.
 - Involve individuals using the service in measuring its effectiveness, including assessing adherence to the commitments outlined in Our Charter.
 - Ensure that staff members are well-trained, supported, and equipped to perform their duties effectively.
 - Ensure that staff members understand the diverse needs of individuals and the barriers they may face, ensuring that no one experiences discrimination based on their identity.
 - Encourage staff members to speak up when they believe improvements can be made to enhance the quality of service.
 - Foster a workforce that reflects the diversity of the people of Malta.
 - Foster a culture of trust through openness and transparency.
 - Collaborate with other organizations to ensure that services and policies are coordinated to provide the best possible assistance and support.
 - Encourage other organizations working in social security to adopt the approach described in Our Charter.
 - Establish services in locations that are accessible and inclusive, ensuring a welcoming environment for everyone.
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04

better prospects for our future

We will invest in our people to make a positive difference in our quality of life.

The Social Security Malta will:

- Incorporate the social security principles and Our Charter into the policymaking process.
- Involve individuals with diverse lived experiences of social security in the development of policies.
- Formulate policies that aim to promote equality, non-discrimination and the human right to social security as defined by laws, treaties and guidance.
- Utilize social security powers to facilitate individuals' full and active participation in society.
- Promote a positive perception of social security, emphasizing that it is a public service to be proud of and a human right available to all who need it.
- Do not ask you for information that the department already has at hand.
- Publicly challenge misconceptions and stereotypes about social security to reduce stigma and negative perceptions.
- Modify the language used in relation to social security, incorporating more positive terms to describe the service and the individuals who benefit from it.
- Seek ways to make eligibility rules fairer and consider introducing new benefits to meet evolving needs.
- Review benefit payment rates annually in line with the cost-of-living adjustment (COLA).
- Enhance benefit take-up rates, ensuring that as many eligible individuals as possible receive the benefits they are entitled to, with a particular focus on reaching those who are most likely to be excluded.
- Utilise social security powers to contribute to the alleviation of poverty.
- Collaborate with other public services to support the attainment of National Outcomes, which define the Maltese Government's vision for a fairer and more prosperous Malta.
- Allocate resources in a fair and efficient manner, delivering value for money while prioritizing the well-being of individuals.
- Develop measurement mechanisms to assess progress against the commitments outlined in Our Charter.

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