

Strive for a Five

CONTRACT TEMPLATE P

Eight Replies for Awkward Client Moments

Australian edition

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Free to use — please read first

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Template P: Eight Replies for Awkward Client Moments

Template notice. These are templates only. They are not legal advice and may not suit your circumstances. Get independent legal advice if a client dispute is serious or money is involved.

When to use this: Eight letters or emails for moments when a client has the relationship, or the contract, wrong. Each one is calm and keeps the door open. Edit them so they sound like you.

Letter 1: When a client "accepts your resignation"

When to use this: The client replies to your notice of termination with "we accept your resignation" or "your last day is ...".

Send a friendly correction that restates the contract and the date.

Subject: Re: Notice under our cleaning services contract

Hi _____,

Thanks for getting back to me so quickly.

I just want to gently clear up one word. I haven't resigned. My email of ____ / ____ / _____ was notice under clause _____ of our Cleaning Services Agreement, which is a contract between our two businesses. I run my own cleaning business and I'm a contractor, not an employee, so there's no resignation involved.

Here's where things stand:

1. **Notice given:** ____ / ____ / _____, under clause _____ (_____ days' notice).
2. **Final service date:** ____ / ____ / _____. I'll keep providing the services as normal until then, and the usual fees apply.
3. **Handover:** keys and codes returned on or before that date, and a final invoice afterwards.

If you'd like the contract to end earlier than that date, I'm open to a chat. We can sign a short mutual termination agreement that sets out the new end date, the final services, the final invoice and the keys. The date in my notice stays as it is unless we both sign something saying otherwise (clause _____).

Happy to talk any time.

Kind regards,

Business: _____ ABN: _____

Letter 2: When a client tries to end the contract just after it has rolled over

When to use this: The client wants to stop days or weeks after the agreement has renewed for another 12 months.

Be kind, point to the clauses, and invite a talk.

Subject: Re: Ending our cleaning services contract

Hi _____,

Thanks for letting me know. I'm sorry to hear you'd like to finish up, and I'd like to help work out the best way to do it.

Here are the details from our Cleaning Services Agreement dated ____ / ____ / ____:

1. **Renewal:** Clause ____ says the Agreement renews automatically for 12 months unless either of us gives notice at least ____ days before the Anniversary. I sent a renewal reminder on ____ / ____ / ____ (copy attached), which stated the renewal date, the new term and the new price. The Agreement renewed on ____ / ____ / ____ and the current term runs until ____ / ____ / ____.
2. **Notice period:** Clause ____ lets either of us end the Agreement during a term by giving ____ days' written notice. If you'd like to use that clause, your notice period would end on ____ / ____ / ____ if you give notice today.
3. **Early termination:** Clause ____ ☐ sets an early termination fee of ____ ☐ says no fee applies. I'm happy to talk through how it works in your case.

I'd much prefer to find a fair way through this together. If it suits you, we can agree on an earlier end date by signing a mutual termination agreement, which would set out the final services, a final invoice and the handover. Would you be free for a short call on _____?

Until we agree otherwise, I'll keep providing the services as normal.

Kind regards,

Business: _____ ABN: _____

Letter 3: When a client treats you like staff

When to use this: The client starts setting your roster, asking for timesheets, calling you in for a "performance review" or directing how you do the job.

A warm reset back to the contract.

Subject: Quick note about how we work together

Hi _____,

Thanks for the feedback on the cleaning. I really want you to be happy with the results.

I wanted to check in about how we're working together. Our Cleaning Services Agreement (clause ____) sets up my business as an independent contractor to yours. In practice that means:

1. **The result is yours, the method is mine.** The Services Schedule says what's cleaned and how often. I decide how and in what order it's done, within the visit windows we agreed.
2. **No rosters or timesheets.** I invoice for the visits set out in the Schedule, so I don't fill in timesheets or take a roster. If you need a different visit day or time, send it as a request and we'll agree on it in writing (a variation).
3. **Feedback on the work is welcome.** If something isn't up to standard, tell me which area and what you noticed, with a photo if you can. I'll fix it or talk it through. A quick catch-up each ____ is a good way to do that.
4. **Helpers.** Where I use someone to help, they work under my business and I stay responsible for the work.

None of this is meant to be sharp. I just want us both to stay clear on how the contract works, so it keeps running smoothly. Thanks for understanding, and please call me if you'd like to talk it through.

Kind regards,

Business: _____ ABN: _____

Letter 4: Reply when a client sends a new Scope of Works

When to use this: The client sends their own Scope of Works and asks you to "follow it from now on", or presents it as replacing what you agreed.

A warm reply that keeps the existing contract and offers a proper variation.

Subject: Re: Scope of Works for _____

Hi _____,

Thanks for sending the Scope of Works through. I'm glad to help with whatever head office or your team needs on file.

Our Cleaning Services Agreement dated ____ / ____ / _____ already sets out the services in Schedule _____ (clause _____), so I've attached it for your records. Until we both sign something different, I'll keep providing the services under that Schedule, and the usual fees apply.

Here's how I'd like to handle your document:

1. **Treat it as a proposal.** A new scope can't change our contract by itself. Changes take effect when we both agree in writing (clause _____).
2. **Tell me what's different.** If your document adds tasks, frequencies or standards that aren't in Schedule _____, point me to them and I'll look them over.
3. **Variation, in writing.** I'm happy to put any agreed changes into a short written variation, with the new scope, the price (if the work changes: _____) and a start date. We both sign it before it starts.
4. **Read before signing.** I'll read your document closely, including any new reporting, indemnity or termination wording, before I sign anything.

The method and order of work stay with me, and you get the agreed result. Would you be free for a quick chat on _____?

Kind regards,

Business: _____ ABN: _____

Letter 5: Reply when a client wants a fixed day for an "as needed" weekly service

When to use this: The contract says weekly or as needed, and the client now wants one set day (or says you "missed" a day that was never agreed).

Be kind, ask why, and offer a window or a variation.

Subject: Re: Cleaning day for _____

Hi _____,

Thanks for letting me know what works for you. I'd like to find a day that suits us both.

Our Cleaning Services Agreement (clause _____ / Schedule _____) has the service as weekly, as needed, so the clean happens once each week and I choose the day within it. A fixed day would be a new term, so it needs us both to agree in writing (clause _____).

I'm very happy to work around anything on your side, such as opening hours, deliveries or guests on site. Could you tell me what's driving the request? Then here are two options:

1. **An agreed window.** The clean is completed between _____ and _____ each week. That gives you certainty, and it lets me keep my routes running smoothly.
2. **A fixed day, by variation.** If you need _____ every week, I can put it into a short written variation for us both to sign, with a start date. ☐ No change to the fee ☐ The fee for the changed schedule would be _____, because it affects my routes and other clients.

Until we agree on one of these, I'll keep providing the weekly service under the existing contract, and I'll let you know in advance if something comes up.

Kind regards,

Business: _____ ABN: _____

Letter 6: Reply when you offered an exit and the client chose a different date

When to use this: You offered to end the contract early, and the client replied with their own date.

A thank-you that treats their date as a counter-offer and keeps things moving.

Subject: Re: Ending our cleaning services contract

Hi _____,

Thanks for getting back to me about the end date.

You've suggested ____ / ____ / _____. Because that's different from the date I offered, I'm treating it as a counter-offer, and I haven't accepted it. Nothing is agreed until we both sign a written agreement with the same date and terms.

For now, here's where things stand:

1. **My offer:** to end the Cleaning Services Agreement on ____ / ____ / _____, on the terms in my email of ____ / ____ / _____, subject to a signed written agreement.
2. **If we don't agree:** the Agreement carries on to its current end date of ____ / ____ / _____ (clause _____).
3. **Meanwhile:** I'll keep providing the services as normal, and the usual fees apply.

I'd be glad to talk about a date that works for us both. Would you be free for a short call on _____?

Kind regards,

Business: _____ ABN: _____

Letter 7: Reply when a client tells you your last day and you haven't agreed

When to use this: The client writes "your last day is ..." or "as agreed, we finish on ...", and you haven't agreed to that date.

Calm, clear, and it keeps you ready to work.

Subject: Re: Final service date

Hi _____,

Thanks for your message. I want to be clear that I haven't agreed to ____ / ____ / _____ as the end of our Cleaning Services Agreement, so I'm not able to treat it as agreed.

Here's where things stand:

1. **End date:** the Agreement ends on ____ / ____ / ____ (clause ____). I'm ready and willing to keep providing the services until then.
2. **Keys and access:** under clause ____ the keys and codes stay with me until that date, and I'll return them on or before it.
3. **Invoices:** I'll keep invoicing as the Agreement says, and the usual fees apply.
4. **An earlier date:** if you'd like to finish sooner, I'm open to a written mutual termination on fair terms, signed by us both. It would set out the date, the final services, the final invoice and the keys.

If we can't sort this out together, the Australian Small Business and Family Enterprise Ombudsman (ASBFEO) offers disputes assistance, and I'm happy to start there.

Kind regards,

Business: _____ ABN: _____

Letter 8: Withdrawing an early-exit offer

When to use this: You offered to end early, the client hasn't accepted on your terms, and you'd rather stay with the contract as it is.

Short and friendly.

Subject: Re: Ending our cleaning services contract

Hi _____,

Thanks for talking this through with me.

My offer of ____ / ____ / ____ to end our Cleaning Services Agreement early wasn't accepted on its terms, so I'm withdrawing it. That means:

1. **The Agreement continues** to its end date of ____ / ____ / ____ (clause ____).
2. **My notice of** ____ / ____ / ____ **stands** (if I gave one), with the final service date of ____ / ____ / ____.
3. **Services and fees** carry on as normal in the meantime.

If you'd like to talk about a fresh arrangement later, I'm happy to, and we'd put any new date in a signed agreement.

Kind regards,

Business: _____ ABN: _____