

Policy Number:	ADM 22
Policy Type:	Administration Policy
Policy Name:	<b>Complaints Handling</b>
Policy Owner:	Chief Executive Officer
Authority:	Shire of Nannup

## OBJECTIVE

The Policy sets the guidelines with regard to handling customer complaints ensuring that the Shire of Nannup:-

1. Recognises, promotes and protects the customer's rights to comment on their dealings with the Shire of Nannup;
2. Provides for natural justice and procedural fairness to ensure that the Shire officer is able to respond to any complaint and is not subject to unfair, unfounded or inappropriate allegations;
3. Provides for efficient, fair and accessible framework for resolving customer complaints;
4. Sets standard for dealing with customer complaints;
5. Increases the level of satisfaction among customers through the delivery of effective and consistent services; and
6. Enhances the Shire's image and reputation, particularly its reputation for customer service.

## POLICY

### Definitions

A complaint is a grievance against a process or the quality of service that a customer receives when dealing with the Shire (ie. poor customer service, inappropriate staff behaviour etc), as distinct from a service request, which is a request for the Shire to undertake certain works or rectify a particular problem (notification of a pot hole in road, dangerous tree branches, stray dogs/livestock etc). Service requests are lodged with the relevant department for action as soon as they are received.

A complaint can be received either;

- in writing;
- in person;
- by telephone; or
- by email;
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but it must be reproduced onto the Customer Feedback Form for record keeping purposes.

Anonymous and vexatious complaints cannot be investigated as it is not possible to undertake due process to ensure procedural fairness.

## Commitment

1. All complaints will be handled quickly, fairly, effectively and courteously and in a manner which ensures natural justice and due process.
2. Responses to complaints should always be in positive terms and never retaliatory.
3. The rights of the complainant are protected as are those of staff who receive the complaint, or who may be subject of a complaint.

## Recording Customer Complaints

1. The standard Customer Feedback Form will be used throughout the Shire of Nannup to record all customer complaints.
2. Immediately a complaint is received, a copy of the complaint and/or the Customer Feedback Form must be forwarded to the relevant Manager who will monitor the process.
3. The physical record of all complaints and all supporting documentation will be recorded in the Shire's Records Management system to allow for accountability and audit.

## Responsibility

1. All staff are charged with the responsibility of dealing with customer complaints in a courteous manner and to provide customers with information on the Shire of Nannup complaint handling process.
2. Staff have a responsibility to record all customer complaints on the Customer Feedback Form in compliance with this policy.
3. Any complaints of a serious nature involving inappropriate behaviour of staff (rudeness, discrimination or harassment) should be referred to the Chief Executive Officer, who will inform the relevant Manager.
4. All other complaints should be referred to the relevant Manager who will assign investigation of the complaint to an appropriate officer. In some instances it may be appropriate to engage someone external to the organisation to conduct the investigation. This will be a decision of the Senior Management Team.
5. All complaints will be acknowledged in writing, detailing the action to be taken within 5 working days.
6. Complaints which are unresolved after 5 working days will be referred back to the relevant Manager.
7. Complaints which are unresolved after 15 working days will be referred to the Chief Executive Officer.

## Compliant Handling – Verbal Complaints

Complaints received in person or by telephone will be handled by the staff member receiving the complaint if possible, or referred to someone who can resolve the matter. Verbal complaints which are resolved immediately must be recorded on the Customer Feedback Form and forwarded to the relevant Manager.

When the complaint cannot be resolved immediately the Customer Feedback Form will be completed and the complaint handled as for a written complaint.

#### Compliant Handling – Written Complaints

Complaints received by letter, email or Feedback form will be forwarded to the relevant Manager unless the complaint relates to inappropriate behaviour of staff (rudeness, discrimination or harassment) and should therefore be referred to the Chief Executive Officer who will then inform the relevant Manager.

#### Compliant Handling – Response to the Complainant

The complainant will be advised of receipt of the complaint within three working days. After the complaint has been investigated and a resolution agreed to, the complainant will be notified.

Related Policies	
Related Procedures/Document	
Delegated Level	
Adopted	OM 25 January 2017
Reviewed	OM 25 January 2018