

POLICY NO.
COMPLAINTS HANDLING POLICY

1.0 PURPOSE

1.1 The purpose of this policy is to enable the Municipality of the District of Barrington to promptly and effectively address program and service delivery concerns raised by members of the public. The policy will assist the Municipality in providing excellent service to the public and contribute to continuous improvement of operations. The Municipality strives to reduce customer dissatisfaction by:

- (1) providing a timely and accurate response to complaints; and
- (2) using complaints as an opportunity to improve program and service delivery issues.

1.2 This policy is not meant to address:

- (1) Complaints about non-municipal services;
- (2) Issues already addressed by legislation or an existing Municipal by-law or policy or procedure;
- (3) A decision of Council or a decision of a committee of Council;
- (4) An internal Employee Complaint.

2.0 INTERPRETATION

2.1. In this policy:

- (1) “Complainant” means the individual filing the complaint with the Municipality of the District of Barrington.
- (2) “Complaint” means an issue or concern raised with a municipal program, service, or operation which is not resolved at the time of the incident and for which the complainant submits their concerns to the Municipality in accordance with this policy.

- (3) "CAO" means Chief Administrative Officer of the Municipality.
- (4) "Council" means Council of the Municipality.
- (5) "Designated Officer" means the CAO or designate.
- (6) "Employee" means an employee of the Municipality.
- (7) "Warden" means the Warden of the Municipality of the District of Barrington.

3.0 EARLY AND INFORMAL RESOLUTION

- 3.1 Early and informal resolution is encouraged. Staff must have clear delegation and authority to resolve complaints in an informal manner at first contact, without the necessity of engaging a formal process.

4.0 FILING A COMPLAINT

- 4.1 Anonymous complaints **will not be acted upon.**
- 4.2 All complaints, concerns and requests should be directed to the Municipal Office. They are accepted in person, via telephone, regular mail and email and are logged in to the Municipality's complaint / request tracking system and include:
 - (1) The name, phone number, e-mail address and mailing address of the individual submitting the complaint.
 - (2) The nature of the complaint including the:
 - (a) background leading to the issue(s);
 - (b) date(s), time(s) and location(s) of the incident(s); and
 - (c) name(s) of any employee(s) previously contacted regarding the issue(s); and
 - (3) Any action(s) being requested of the Municipality.
- 4.3 Complaints may be submitted on the form provided in **Appendix A.**

5.0 RECEIPT AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

- 5.1 The Designated Officer shall issue a Tracking Number and acknowledge in writing that the complaint has been received within 5 business days of receipt of the complaint.

6.0 INVESTIGATION

6.1 The Designated Officer shall review the issues identified by the complainant and in doing so may:

- (1) Review relevant municipal and provincial legislation;
- (2) Review the Municipality's relevant policies and procedures;
- (3) Review any existing file documents;
- (4) Interview employees or members of the public involved in the issue;
- (5) Identify actions that may be taken to address the complaint or improve municipal operations; or
- (6) Take other actions the Designated Officer deems expedient to resolving the matter.

6.2 Within 30 calendar days of receipt of a complaint the Designated Officer shall provide a response in writing to the complainant. The response shall include:

- (1) Whether the complaint was substantiated;
- (2) If the complaint is not substantiated, the Designated Officer shall provide reason(s) for their decision.
- (3) Any actions the Municipality has or will take as a result of the complaint.

6.3 If the Designated Officer is unable to provide a response within 30 calendar days, s/he shall notify the complainant of the delay and provide an estimate of when a response will be provided.

7.0 MONITORING AND REPORTING

7.1 The complaint needs to be tracked from its initial receipt to its resolution. All complaint records will be kept securely and in accordance with policy requirements and legislative responsibilities.

7.2 The complaint records will be needed for regular future review and analysis so as to capture recurring issues and improve processes and procedures. Annually the number of complaints, type of complaints, number of resolved complaints, etc. will be compiled by a designated staff person and reported to the CAO.

APPENDIX "A"
COMPLAINT FORM

Your Name: _____

Phone number:

(h): _____
(w): _____
(c): _____

E-mail Address: _____

Mailing Address: _____

*** Complaints shall be considered confidential but are subject to Part XX of the *Municipal Government Act & Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.***

What is your complaint? Please include relevant date(s), times(s), location, and background information, including municipal employees you have contacted regarding this matter. Additional space is available on the back of this form. Additional information such as relevant photographs can be attached to this form.

How could the situation be improved?
