

Public Complaint Procedure

Approved By: CAO
Approval Date: October 4, 2022
Effective Date:
Revision Date:

Purpose: The purpose of this procedure is to identify specific responsibilities of Staff for the receipt, coordination, and departmental review and response to any Formal Complaints that are submitted to the Township by members of the public.

Application:

This procedure applies only to Formal Complaints that are submitted to the Township Clerk on a form prescribed by the Clerk.

Definitions:

Complainant means the person who is dissatisfied and filing the complaint. Anyone who uses or is affected by municipal services can make a complaint including residents, people who work in or visit the municipality, local businesses or community groups.

Complaint means an expression of dissatisfaction about the action or lack of action taken regarding operations, facilities or services provided by the Municipality or by a person or body acting on behalf of the Township.

Formal Complaint means a written Complaint submitted on a form prescribed by the Township Clerk.

Ombudsman means the individual designated and appointed by the Council of the Township of Douro-Dummer as an Ombudsman in accordance with the Municipal Act, or an Ombudsman having jurisdiction in accordance with the Ombudsman Act.

Procedures

Responsibilities

Chief Administrative Officer to:

- Mandate compliance with this Procedure to ensure that Formal Complaints are handled in a timely and fair manner.

Department Manager to:

- Ensure Staff follow this procedure when reviewing and responding to Formal Complaints;
- Provide the Clerk's Department the collection of records regarding the Formal Complaint related to their department; and,
- Consult with the CAO and Clerk as required to determining the final response to a complaint.

Township Clerk to:

- Receive and track all Complaints submitted by members of the public;
- Forward all Complaints received to the department responsible for review and response.
- Work with Department Management and CAO in the preparation of the resolution and/or response to a Formal Complaint.

Complaint Submission and Processing

- The identity of the Complainant will be made known only to those who need to know in order to consider the Complaint. All participants in the complaint process shall keep the details of the Complainant confidential except as may be required by law. If the matter goes to arbitration or through the court process, the Complainant's information will be managed in accordance with the applicable legislated process.
- All Formal Complaints shall be submitted to the Clerk on a form prescribed by Clerk for that purpose.
- Once a Complaint has been assigned a tracking number, the Complaint shall be forwarded directly to the appropriate department manager responsible and a copy to the CAO.
- Complainants must receive an acknowledgement of receipt of their Complaint, which includes the tracking number, within five (5) business days of receiving the complaint.
- This acknowledgement must identify who will be following up on the Complaint as well as their contact information.

Review and Response

- Having reviewed the complaint and proposed a response and/or resolution, the Department Manager shall review the proposed response and/or resolution created by the Clerk to note their concurrence. When necessary, the Clerk and Department Manager shall consult with the CAO.
- Within 20 business days, a response is to be provided to Complainants, barring exceptional circumstances.
- Should there be a need for additional response time the Complainant will be advised within the 20-day time frame that additional time is required including the anticipated time frame for a response.
- Having reviewed the complaint and proposed a response and/or resolution, the Department Manager shall review the proposed response and/or resolution to note their concurrence. When necessary, the Department Head shall consult with the CAO.
- Staff shall respond to the Complainant. The response shall indicate that if the complainant is dissatisfied with the response or resolution, they may pursue further review by the Township Ombudsman.