

## External Complaints Policy

Reference Number: P18  
Organisational Unit: HR  
Responsible Position: Director Corporate Services  
Relevant Delegations: Chief Executive Officer  
Date Adopted: 25 January 2017  
Review Date: Every three years

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### Objectives

- To resolve external complaints lodged with the Council.
- To ensure all complaints are dealt with effectively, fairly and confidentially.
- To inform and encourage all residents to address complaints through the External Complaints Policy.
- To treat complaints as an opportunity to improve service delivery.

### Legislation and Reference

- NT Local Government Act

### Scope

This policy applies only to legitimate complaints from residents and other external parties.

It does not apply to:

- Complaints from employees (see *Dispute and Grievance Resolution Policy*)
- Normal requests for service.
- Reporting of incidents.
- Requests for information.
- Petitions to Council.
- Criminal matters dealt with by the Northern Territory and/or Australian Federal Police.
- Complaints without sufficient reason, made only to annoy Council (“vexatious complaints”).

### Policy

When dealing with complaints from residents and other external parties, the Council will only accept complaints made in writing and signed by the complainant or the complainants. Anonymous complaints will be declined.

Residents who require assistance to submit a complaint will be given help.

Council will log all complaints.



Complaints against Councillors should be made in accordance with the *Complaints Against Elected Members Policy*.

Complaints against the Chief Executive Officer should be addressed to the President. *two ways :: one outcome*

Complaints about staff, should be addressed to the Chief Executive Officer. Complaints against a staff member will be investigated by the Chief Executive Officer (or delegate) with advice from the Human Resources Manager or another appropriately qualified professional.

The person making a complaint will receive a written response within 10 working days acknowledging their complaint.

All complaints will be dealt with in a confidential manner, and it is expected the complainant will also treat the matter as confidential. Complaints made against a staff member must be lodged within 28 days of the alleged incident taking place.

When investigating the complaint it will be undertaken in a fair manner to the person making the complaint as well as the person or people complained about.

The President or Chief Executive Officer will communicate the outcome of the investigation to the complainant in writing after the matter has been resolved. Unless there are exceptional circumstances Council will resolve the complaint within 20 working days.

If the complainant is not happy with how Council resolved their complaint may refer the matter to either the appropriate NT Government department or to the Ombudsman NT.

## Approval and Review History

Date	Comment
April 2010	Adopted by Council
11 October 2013	Reviewed by Council (CRN: 642/2013)
25 January 2017	Revised policy adopted by Council (CRN: OC011/2017)

## Related Documents

(1) External Complaint Form