



Corporate Policy

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| Policy Name: Municipal Complaint Policy | Policy Number: CP-2025-03 |
| Date Adopted: April 30, 2025 | Division/Department: Customer Experience Office |
| Authority: COW-2025-27 | Supersedes: N/A |
| Review by Date: Once per Council term | Last Modified: April 30, 2025 |

1. Purpose

The Municipal Complaint Policy (Policy) provides a standard procedure for the Town of Midland (Town) to efficiently manage and resolve formal complaints related to concerns with Town services, programs, administrative or operational procedures. Results of a complaint review can create opportunities to improve or refine programs, optimize and enhance service delivery and foster ongoing customer service excellence.

2. Policy Statement

The Town of Midland is committed to addressing citizen concerns through a positive and constructive customer-centred approach. Understanding that some situations may require escalation to a formal complaint, this Policy outlines the Town's commitment to providing a transparent and consistent review process and to follow up with a final resolution in a timely, confidential, fair and unbiased manner.

3. Definitions

For the purposes of this Policy:

- a) "Case" is an enquiry, complaint or request for service entered in the Town's customer service portal.
- b) "Case Number" is a unique, system-generated identification number assigned automatically to a case in the Town's customer service portal, as defined in Section 3 a) above.
- c) "Complainant" is the person dissatisfied with a service, program or procedure of the Town and is filing a complaint.
- d) "Customer service portal" is the Town's web-based system to create and track complaints using a unique case number.
- e) "Formal Complaint" is a written expression of dissatisfaction related to programs or services offered by the Town of Midland, or operational procedures where it is believed the service or outcome is not to the satisfaction of the complainant.
- f) "Informal Complaint" is feedback or a concern received through various Town channels (e.g., phone call, email, in-person, social media messages, etc.,) where

a customer's concern is resolved satisfactorily without being escalated to a formal complaint.

- g) "Ombudsman" as relates to municipalities, is the Ontario Ombudsman, an independent, nonpartisan officer of the province that oversees and investigates formal complaints about municipalities.
- h) "Resolution" The final stage of the complaint review process that the Town undertakes with a response to the complainant outlining the outcome and final decision of the Town.
- i) "Town" is the Corporation of the Town of Midland.

4. Scope

a) This Policy applies to:

- Formal complaints received from members of the public regarding services, programs, administrative or operational procedures conducted by the Town of Midland.

b) This Policy does not apply to complaints about:

- Town of Midland Council.
- Local boards and agencies including the Midland Public Library.
- Closed meeting investigations.
- Service providers contracted by the Town.

c) This Policy does not address:

- Requests for service.
- Criticisms or anonymous complaints.
- Internal employee complaints.
- Enquiries, feedback or compliments.
- Informal complaints.
- Requests for accommodation.
- Issues addressed by legislation, Town by-laws, policies or procedures.
- A decision of Council or a Committee of Council.
- Complaints about service providers contracted by the Town.
- Matters that are handled by tribunals, courts of law, boards, etc.

5. Formal Complaint Procedure

Where an informal complaint cannot be resolved, the following formal complaint process should be followed.

5.1 Submission

A formal complaint can be submitted to the Town by completing the Municipal Complaint form found on the Town's website.

5.2 Receipt and Acknowledgement

- a) The Manager of Customer Experience will log the complaint in the Town's customer service portal and contact the complainant within 2 business days of receipt of the complaint to:
 - Acknowledge the complaint.
 - Provide a tracking number, and
 - Clarify details of the complaint.
- b) If a resolution is possible at that time, or if the complaint was submitted in error (or is a duplicate):
 - The formal complaint process will end.
 - The resolution will be sent to the complainant, and
 - The case will be closed and retained according to the Town's Records Management Policy.
- c) A complaint may be withdrawn at any time.

5.3 Assignment

- a) The Manager of Customer Experience will transfer the complaint to the appropriate department manager and department director for review with a copy to the CAO.
- b) If the complaint includes the conduct of a Town employee, the following process will be followed:
 - Employee complaints are investigated by the department manager or director and Director of Human Resources.
 - Manager or director complaints are investigated by the department director, or CAO if the complaint is about a director, and Director of Human Resources.
 - CAO complaints are investigated by the Director of Human Resources and contracted to a third-party investigator as required.

5.4 Investigation

The investigating employee will conduct the complaint review process including:

- a) Review details of the complaint.

- b) Notify the complainant in writing of an expected resolution within 5 business days of receipt of the complaint.
- c) Interview staff involved in the complaint.
- d) Review, if necessary, Town by-laws, procedures, or policies.
- e) Identify a possible course of action to address the complaint.

5.5 Decision

The investigating employee will reply in writing to the complainant with a copy to the appropriate departmental staff and CAO within 10 business days of completion of the investigation with:

- a) The complaint resolution.
- b) Details of the investigation and rationale for the decision.
- c) Any actions the Town has or will take because of the complaint.

5.6 Appeal

The decision of the Town is final, and no appeal process is available at the municipal level. If the complainant is not satisfied with the Town's final decision, they may submit a complaint to the Ontario Ombudsman.

6. Responsibility

Employees and members of Town Council should understand how formal complaints are handled by the Town through this Policy.

7. Privacy

The Town of Midland is committed to protecting the privacy of personal information submitted with a complaint and adheres to requirements of the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA), the Town's Records Management Policy and other privacy laws.

8. Records Management

Once the complainant has been notified of the decision of the complaint, the matter is deemed resolved and the case will be closed. Records of the complaint process will be retained according to the Town's Records Management Policy.