

**Corporation Of The Municipality of West Elgin
Schedule "A" to By-Law #2018-42**

Complaint and Public Feedback Policy

Effective Date: June 14, 2018

Applies To: Council, All Departments

1. Purpose

This policy is intended to enable the Municipality of West Elgin 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 increase customer satisfaction by:

- Providing a fair complaint procedure which is clear and easy to use for anyone wishing to make a complaint, by-law infraction report or request for service; and
- Providing a timely and accurate response to complaints, by-law infraction reports or requests for service; and
- Provide accessible, easy to use options for the public to provide feedback.
- Using complaints and all feedback forms as an opportunity to improve program and service delivery issues.

2. Legislative Authority

Section 270(1)5 of the Municipal Act, 2001, as amended, and the Public Sector and MPP Accountability and Transparency Act, 2014 require a municipality to be accountable to the public for its actions. This policy supports the municipality's commitment to the accountability and transparency of the operations of the municipality.

3. Definition - Complaint

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction related to a municipal program, service, facility or staff member, where a citizen believes that the municipality has not provided a service experience to the customer's satisfaction at the point of service delivery and a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected. A general complaint may be received verbally, by phone, by email or in writing. Anonymous complaints will not be addressed.

A complaint is distinct from:

- A request for service made on behalf of a citizen for a specific service, or to notify the municipality that a scheduled service was not provided on time,
(Examples of Request for Service: reporting a burnt out street light, notifying the municipality of a missed garbage collection, reporting a by-law infraction);
- A general enquiry or specific request for information regarding a municipal service;
- An opinion or feedback, comment and expression of interest in a program or service process;
- A suggestion or ideas submitted by a customer with the aim of improving services, programs, or processes.

This policy is not for complaints regarding internal employee complaints or regarding a decision of Council or a decision of a committee of Council.

4. Frontline Resolution

The complainant is responsible to attempt to resolve concerns by dealing with municipal employee(s) directly involved with the issue where appropriate.

All municipal employees are responsible to resolve concerns by dealing with issues or concerns before they become complaints, and identify opportunities to improve municipal services.

5. Process For Filing A Complaint, By-Law Infraction Report or Request for Service

Complaints:

Where frontline resolution cannot be achieved, complaints shall be submitted to the Clerk or designate, on the form identified as Complaint Form attached hereto and forming a part of this policy. All information must be completed. Complaints received verbally or by phone shall be recorded on the form, Complaint Form, by the employee receiving the complaint.

The Clerk/designate shall log the complaint and forward a copy to the appropriate manager or designate. The Clerk shall acknowledge to the complainant within two (2) business days that the complaint has been received.

By-Law Infraction Report:

By-Law Infraction Reports shall be received by any Municipal Office staff member and forwarded to the Clerk or designate within one (1) business day for the appropriate action. By-Law Infraction Report forms, copy attached, must be signed or emailed from a valid email address.

The Clerk or designate shall log the report and forward a copy to the Municipal By-Law Enforcement Officer for investigation if deemed appropriate. The Clerk shall acknowledge to the complainant within two (2) business days that the report has been received.

Request For Service:

Request for Service Forms shall be received by any Municipal Office staff member and forwarded to the Clerk or designate within one (1) business day. The Requests for Service form, attached hereto, may be submitted in person, by mail, email or completed over the phone. If the Request for Service is received over the telephone the staff receiving the request shall complete the Request for Service form.

The Clerk or designate shall log the request and forward a copy to the appropriate manager or designate for the appropriate action. The Manager shall acknowledge to the requester within two (2) business days that the request has been received and the expected timeline for a resolution.

6. Designated Complaint Investigator and Investigation

The Department Manager and the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) shall investigate a complaint against a municipal employee.

The CAO shall investigate a complaint made against a Manager.

Council may designate the municipal solicitor or other qualified individual at arms-length from the municipality, to investigate a complaint made against the CAO.

7. Decision Regarding Complaint

The designated investigator shall provide a response to the complainant within ten (10) business days of the investigator receiving the complaint to advise of the outcome, or provide an estimated timeline for the resolution of the complaint.

The response shall include:

- Whether the complaint was substantiated;
- Reasons for the decision if the complaint was not substantiated;
- Actions the municipality has taken or will take as a result of the complaint;
- If the designated investigator is unable to provide a response within ten (10) business days, they shall notify the complainant of the delay and provide an estimate of when a response will be provided.

8. Recording and Reporting of Complaints

The designated complaint investigator shall file a copy of the complaint and resolution with the Clerk. The Clerk shall maintain a file of the complaint in accordance with the municipality's record retention by-law. A copy of any complaint that leads to any disciplinary action shall be retained in the personnel file of an employee that was the subject of a complaint.

The Clerk shall provide an annual report to Council summarizing the complaints received and the resolutions.

9. Appeal Process

There is no appeal process at the municipal level once the municipality has communicated the decision to the complainant.

10. Policy Review

This Policy shall be reviewed by the Municipal Clerk a minimum of once per term of Council.

11. Council Complaints

Complaints related to the Council Code of Conduct or Council meeting procedures shall be addressed by the appointed Integrity Commissioner, Municipal Ombudsman or Closed Meeting Investigator. Information regarding this process shall be made available to the public at the Municipal Office and on the municipal website.

12. Enquiries

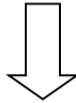
CAO/Clerk
Municipality of West Elgin
westelgin@westelgin.net
22413 Hoskins Line,
Rodney, ON N0L 2C0

Telephone: 519-785-0560
Email:

Process

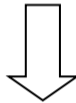
Municipal Staff:

- Receives written complaint
- Logs complaint
- Forwards to appropriate manager/investigator
- Acknowledges receipt to complainant within 2 business days



Designated Complaint Investigator:

- Investigate complaint
- Make a decision
- Notify complainant of outcome, or estimated timeline for resolution, within 10 business days
- File a decision with Clerk



Clerk's Department:

- File decision
- Annual report