



Policy #8 – Complaint Procedure

Approval Date: August 25, 2010

Policy Statement

This policy is a commitment to hold ourselves accountable by responding to and resolving complaints and to ensure consistent messages are delivered to the individuals making complaints.

We aim to create an environment where the customer knows that we will listen to all issues and provide an acceptable solution for all parties concerned.

We are committed to providing a quality service in an open and accountable way that builds the trust and respect of all our citizens. One of the ways in which we can continue to improve our service is by listening and responding to the views of our citizens, and in particular by responding positively to complaints, and by putting mistakes right.

Procedure

1. All citizen concerns will be treated with fairness, integrity and respect.
2. To meet high quality service standards we will:
 - a. Be polite, friendly and welcoming when we communicate – in person, when writing, by phone, fax or email;
 - b. Respect differences in values, cultures, beliefs and ages, and include our awareness of diversity into our daily practice;
 - c. Respect the dignity of all and show empathy and consideration in our daily practice;
 - d. Listen and respond in an attentive way to citizen inquiries,
 - e. Dress appropriately according to the organizations dress code; and,
 - f. Maintain a clean and safe environment for co-workers and customers.
3. We aim to ensure that:
 - a. Making a complaint is as easy as possible;
 - b. We treat a complaint as a clear expression of dissatisfaction with our service which calls for an immediate response;
 - c. We deal with it promptly, politely and, when appropriate, confidentially;
 - d. We respond in the right way – for example, with an explanation, or an apology where we have got things wrong, or information on any action taken, etc; and
 - e. We learn from complaints, use them to improve our service, and review annually our complaints policy and procedures.
4. We recognize that many concerns will be raised informally, and dealt with quickly. Our aims are to:
 - a. Resolve informal concerns quickly;
 - b. Keep matters low-key;
 - c. Enable mediation between the complainant and the employee to who the complaint has been referred.
5. An informal approach is appropriate when it can be achieved. But if concerns cannot be satisfactorily resolved informally, then the formal complaints procedure should be followed.

6. The formal complaints procedure is intended to ensure that all complaints are handled fairly, consistently and wherever possible resolved to the complainant's satisfaction.
 - a. The complainant's responsibility is to:
 - Bring their complaint, in writing, to the CAO's attention within one (1) week of the issue arising;
 - Explain the problem as clearly and as fully as possible, including any action taken to date;
 - Allow the CAO a reasonable amount of time to deal with the matter;
 - Recognize that some circumstances may be beyond the Village's control.
 - b. The Village's responsibility will be to:
 - Acknowledge the formal complaint in writing;
 - Respond within a stated period of time;
 - Deal reasonably and sensitively with the complaint;
 - Take action where appropriate.