

Complaints Policy




Complaints Policy

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Name	Michael Day
General Manager	GM Engagement and Transformation
Date	17 January 2023
Signature	

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1. Background

- 1.1 Kaipara District Council values our customer's feedback and is committed to ensuring customers, citizens, ratepayers, and visitors have the best possible experience. Customers have the right to complain about functions and actions the Council undertakes, have this heard and resolved.

All complaints are taken seriously, and every effort will be made to resolve the issue. All complaints will be used as an opportunity to learn and improve service.

2. Purpose

- 2.1 The purpose of this Policy is to clarify what the Council considers is a complaint, and the principles and processes that will be applied when dealing with complaints.

3. Definitions

- 3.1 A complaint is:

- a. an expression of dissatisfaction by one or more customers, about Council's level of service
- b. allegations against a contractor, elected member or staff member about their behaviour
- c. action or lack of action by staff or contractors that is perceived as being negligent
- d. an action by Council that should have been done or was expected to be done but has not happened, e.g., an overdue response
- e. where a legally required response or resolution has not been given
- f. dissatisfaction with Council's policies or procedures.

- 3.2 A complaint is not:

- a. a request for routine services, e.g., grading a road, fixing potholes or cleaning toilets
- b. a request for readily available information, e.g., a building consent, geotechnical report or property information
- c. a suggestion for an improvement to service, e.g., an extra rubbish collection over summer
- d. matters for which there is a defined legislative process and/or right for appeal and/or legal remedy, ie a resource consent decision where there is an objection process.
- e. about the use of Te Reo Māori.

4. Scope

- 4.1 This Policy applies to complaints as provided in section 2. Matters relating to requests under the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987, the Privacy Act 2020 or the Ombudsman are managed in accordance with the required legislative processes.

5. Principles

5.1 Complaints may come through the customer call centre or other interfaces such as mail, the website or emails. Complaints will be registered and directed to the relevant Manager or General Manager. At times these requests may also be forwarded to other staff for feedback.

A complaint will be acknowledged within 2 working days and a full response will be provided within 10 working days. If more time is required because the complaint is complex, the complainant will be advised of an expected resolution timeframe.

5.2 Where relevant, Council's Customer Privacy Policy principles will apply.

5.3 The Council will:

- a. be mindful of the need to minimise customer effort and communicate in a way that is easy to understand
- b. try to see things from the customer's perspective, to understand and address why they think the Council has done something wrong
- c. resolve the complaint as close to the point of the expected service delivery as possible
- d. treat complaints with priority and give a timely response
- e. be fair and act with integrity
- f. ensure that the issues raised are assessed on their own merits
- g. learn from complaints and use this knowledge to improve how things are done
- h. acknowledge mistakes and put them right where possible
- i. maintain a centralised register of all complaints and compliments
- j. manage complaints in accordance with the defined and agreed processes and procedures
- k. educate staff to apply the policy, processes and procedures for complaints resolution.
- l. handle complaints with discretion and in a fair manner.

6. Process

6.1 Complaints can be emailed to council@kaipara.govt.nz or administrationrequests@kaipara.govt.nz, by phoning 0800 727 059 or calling into our Dargaville or Mangawhai offices and speaking to a Customer Services Representative.