



Administrative Policies & Procedures

Policy No. CORP- 14 – Complaints and Compliments Policy

Topic:	Complaints and Compliments Policy	Affects:	All Staff
Section:	Corporate	Replaces:	N/A
Original Policy Date:	September 5, 2017	Revision Date:	N/A
Effective Date:	September 22, 2017	Proposed Revision Date:	September 22, 2019
Prepared By:	Corporate Services	Approval Authority:	CAO

1.0 Policy Statement

The Town is committed to promptly and effectively addressing systematic program and service delivery concerns raised by members of the public. This policy will assist the municipality in providing excellent service to the public and contribute to the continuous improvement of the Town’s operations.

2.0 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline the underlying principles and processes for the disposition of complaints related to services delivered by the Town of Aurora, ensuring and supporting transparency and accountability. This policy provides for a local dispute resolution process before complaints are escalated to the Ontario Ombudsman. This policy attempts to ensure that any response and review of complaints is fair, impartial and respectful to all parties involved.

This policy also provides a mechanism for the public to express their approval for the efforts of a staff member while completing the duties associated with their position. This policy should be used when residents of the Town of Aurora are not satisfied with the results of informal discussions that have been had with Town of Aurora staff.

3.0 Scope

This policy does not apply to complaints made by employees, contractors, or

Policy No. CORP - 14 – Complaints and Compliments Policy

volunteers working on behalf of the Town, complaints about Members of Council or issues already addressed by legislation or an existing municipal by-law or policy. Examples of complaints that could be made under this policy are as follows;

- A failure to do something agreed to do;
- A failure to observe policy or procedures;
- An error made by an employee, contractor, or volunteer of the Town;
- Unfair or discourteous actions or statements made by an employee, contractor, or volunteer of the Town;
- Access, or lack thereof, to services;
- Timeliness of service; and,
- Quality of service.

4.0 Definitions

Complainant - means a member of the public making a complaint under this policy.

Complaint - means a written expression of dissatisfaction about services, actions, or lack of actions by an employee, contractor or volunteer of the Town of Aurora by a member of the public. Examples include but are not limited to perceptions of:

- A failure to do something agreed to do;
- A failure to observe policy or procedures;
- An error made by an employee, contractor, or volunteer of the Town;
- Unfair or discourteous actions or statements made by an employee, contractor, or volunteer of the Town;
- Access, or lack thereof, to services;
- Timeliness of service; and,
- Quality of service.

Compliment - an expression of approval for a Town of Aurora program, service, facility or staff member:

Frivolous - means a Complaint that is reasonably perceived by Town staff to be (a) without reasonable or probable cause, (b) without merit or substance, or (c) trivial;

Policy No. CORP - 14 – Complaints and Compliments Policy

Harassment or Harass - involves engaging in a course of behaviour, comment or conduct, whether it occurs inside or outside the work environment, that is or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome. It includes but is not limited to any behaviour, conduct or comment by a member of the public that is directed at or is offensive to another person:

- (a) on the grounds of race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, age, disability, sexual orientation, marital status, or family status, as well as any other grounds under the provisions of the Human Rights Code; or
- (b) which is reasonably perceived by the recipient as an intention to bully, embarrass, intimidate or ridicule the recipient.

Ombudsman - means the Ombudsman of Ontario or the Ombudsman appointed by Council in accordance with Section 223.13 (1) of the *Municipal Act, 2001*, as amended where applicable;

Town - means The Corporation of The Town of Aurora;

Vexatious - means a complaint that is frivolous and which is pursued in a manner that is reasonably perceived by Town staff to be (a) malicious, (b) intended to embarrass or harass the recipient, or (c) intended to be a nuisance.

5.0 Procedure

Wherever possible, The Town will attempt to address concerns from members of the public through discussions in an informal manner. If the member of the public is not satisfied, the following process allows the member to file a formal complaint that will be addressed by the Director of the relevant service delivery area.

1. When informal discussions do not lead to a satisfactory resolution, a member of the public may file a formal complaint on the form designated as “Schedule A” attached to this policy. The form should be submitted to the Legislative Services Division at clerks@aurora.ca.

Policy No. CORP - 14 – Complaints and Compliments Policy

2. A member of the public may use the same form attached to this policy to compliment the Town of Aurora. In this case, the Town Clerk will forward the compliment to the appropriate Director who will pass it along to the employee(s) associated with compliment.
3. When a complaint is received by the Town Clerk, the Clerk's Office will log the complaint for record keeping purposes and immediately forward the complaint to the Director responsible for the service area in which the complaint is being made, with a copy to the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO). Complaints being made about a Director will be forwarded to the CAO. Complaints about the CAO will be forwarded to the Manager of Human Resources.
4. Upon receiving a complaint from the Town Clerk, the CAO, Director or Manager has three (3) business days to contact the complainant to advise of receipt of the complaint and to set up a meeting, if the complainant has selected that option.
5. Within ten (10) days of receiving the complaint, the CAO, Director or Manager must notify the complainant of the expected duration of the investigation, if deemed necessary, including an approximate timeline for when the complaint will be formally responded to. The timeline may not be longer than thirty (30) days, except for extraordinary circumstances.
6. When the CAO, Director, or Manager has completed their investigation, they must provide a written response to the complainant, copying both the Town Clerk and the CAO. The written response must include, but not be limited to, a summary of the actions taken to correct the issue in the complaint or reasons why no action is being taken. All responses must be on Town letterhead and emailed to the complainant whenever possible.
7. After the complaint has been responded to by the CAO, Director or Manager and logged by the Town Clerk, it will then be considered closed. The Town Clerk will provide Council with an annual information report regarding the number of complaints and compliments received and their outcomes.
8. Should the complainant not be satisfied with the outcome of his/her complaint, he/she may choose to file a complaint with the Ombudsman.

Policy No. CORP - 14 – Complaints and Compliments Policy

Frivolous, Vexatious and Anonymous Complaints

Anonymous, frivolous or vexatious complaints, or if the complaint is initiated with the intent to embarrass or harass an employee, will not be considered. This determination can be made by the Town Clerk and/or the CAO.

Policy No. CORP - 14 – Complaints and Compliments Policy

Schedule 'A'

Town of Aurora Complaints Policy – Complaint or Compliment Submission Form

Name:	Email:	Phone Number:	
Address:			
Would you like a meeting with the appropriate Director to further discuss the complaint?		What method of communication would you prefer?	
Yes	No	Phone	Email

Please outline the complaint or compliment in the space provided below. Include any relevant dates, times, locations, and background information which may be relevant. Also include any municipal employees who you have spoken to regarding this complaint. Attach additional pages as needed.

Please submit the completed form to clerks@aurora.ca

Personal information on this form is collected and retained under the authority of the municipal freedom of information & protection of privacy act.

Staff to fill out the following;

Date Received	File No.
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