

1. Introduction

- The following procedure applies to complaints directly related to services and processes within the City Manager's Office
 - Executive Management
 - Human Resources
 - Internal Audit
 - Strategic & Corporate Policy
 - Strategic Communications
 - Equity, Diversity & Human Rights Office
- Complaints are reviewed upon receipt and complainants are advised if alternate complaint procedures apply.

2. Guiding Principles

- It is in the interest of all parties that complaints are dealt with promptly and resolved as quickly as possible.
- Staff will treat complaints as confidential and protect the complainant's privacy and staff's privacy as much as possible.
- Review of complaints is fair, impartial and respectful to parties involved.
- Complainants are advised of their options to escalate their complaint if they are dissatisfied with treatment or outcome.
- Complainants are provided clear and understandable reasons for how decisions on the complaint were made.
- Updates are provided to complainants during review processes.
- Complaints are used to assist in improving services, policies and procedures.

3. Types of Complaint

Definition: A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction about the service, actions, or lack of action by a City Manager's business unit or staff. Complaints may relate to the actions of an individual or to a City Manager's Office policy, process or procedure.

- Examples include but are not limited to:
 - a perceived failure to do something agreed to do;
 - a failure to observe policy or procedures;
 - an error made by staff; or
 - unfair or discourteous actions/statements by staff
- Anyone personally affected can submit a complaint and it will be reviewed in accordance with this procedure.

4. How a Complaint is Made

- A complaint may be received verbally (by telephone) or in writing (received by hand delivery, mail, fax or electronic means).
- The complainant may use the [Complaint Tracking Form](#) to submit their complaint; however, this form is not always required for a complaint to be received and reviewed.
- The City of Toronto strives at all times to provide equal treatment and equitable benefits of City services, programs and facilities in a manner that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities

Ways to make a complaint:

- Mail: City Hall 11th Floor, East Tower (ATTN: CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE COMPLAINT). Assigned staff will pick up the complaint, deliver it to the Corporate Issues and Council Liaison Advisor (or designate) where it is recorded and given a complaint number in the database and a copy of the written complaint is delivered to the appropriate Director/designate or Deputy City Manager.
- Electronic: talktocitymanager@toronto.ca (ATTN: CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE COMPLAINT) or TTY (416) 338-0TTY (0889). Complaints received are forwarded immediately to the Corporate Issues and Council Liaison Advisor (or designate). The complaint will be recorded and given a complaint number in the database, and immediately directed to the appropriate Director/designate or Deputy City Manager.
- Fax: 11th Floor, East Tower fax number 416-392-1827 (ATTN: CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE COMPLAINT). Fax letters are picked up by assigned designated staff, delivered to the Corporate Issues and Council Liaison Advisor (or designate), where it is recorded and given a complaint number in

the database, and immediately copied to the appropriate Director/designate or Deputy City Manager.

- Telephone:
Executive Management – 416-392-8102
Human Resources – 416-397-4120
Internal Audit – 416-392-8034
Strategic & Corporate Policy – 416-392-8102
Strategic Communications – 416-392-1818
Equity Diversity & Human Rights Office – 416-397-4095 TTY 416-397-7332

5. Initial Receipt of Complaint

- All complaints are taken seriously and dealt with in a manner that meets and/or exceeds customer expectations.
- Staff should ensure that the complainant is directed to the designate in the relevant service area (i.e. Executive Management, Human Resources, Internal Audit, Strategic & Corporate Policy, Equity, Diversity & Human Rights Office or Strategic Communications or appropriate Deputy City Manager).
- If determined that the complaint is not within the City Manager's jurisdiction, the complaint will be immediately forwarded to the appropriate Division Head and Deputy City Manager, and the complainant notified of where the complaint was referred.

6. Handling of Complaints

Verbal complaints (Telephone)

- A complaint can be received anywhere within the City Manager's office.
- When staff receive a complaint it should be directed to the designate in the appropriate service area and ensure all contact information is provided when they are redirecting complaints.
- Designate within the service area should make every attempt to resolve the complaint. Designate is responsible for logging the complaint in the shared database once received and when resolved.
- Designate should refer the complaints to the Director/designate when:
 - the complainant requests the complaint to be referred to senior management;

- the complaint is about conduct of a staff person, and/or significant disciplinary action is a possible outcome;
- the complainant is unusually upset, extremely angry or threatening;
- the complaint cannot be resolved by the frontline staff because it is outside their specific delegation or area of expertise;
- the complaint is of a serious nature such as alleged controversial conduct, illegal conduct, or there is threat of legal action.
- anonymous complaints

Written complaints (Mail, Fax, E-mail & Write-up of unresolved verbal complaints)

- The original version of written complaints, including Complaint Tracking Form, letters, forms, emails and faxes, are date-stamped and immediately referred to the designate of the appropriate service area.
- The designate acknowledges receipt with the complainant in accordance with defined standards, and if necessary, clarifies the complaint and captures missing information. (See Response Times)
- The designate reviews the database to see if there are any previous complaints from the complainant or information about the issue concerned.
- The designate reviews the complaint, and may attempt to resolve the complaint immediately, or contact the complainant and discuss concerns.

Expanded review process

- If required, the Director may conduct an expanded review of the complaint to determine its validity and explore a resolution.
- Management staff may request a verbal complaint be put in writing, especially if it involves a serious or complex matter. If the complainant declines, staff should record details as described by the complainant using the Complaints Tracking Form. A copy should be given to the Corporate Issues and Council Liaison Advisor (or designate).
- Discussion(s) with the complainant to clarify the complaint, confirm common understanding, clarify outcome sought, and explain complaint procedures.
- Discussion(s) with staff involved to obtain their perspective (with union representative if applicable).
- Discussions(s) with witnesses to the complaint, if applicable.

- Review of background information such as policies and procedures, previous written communications and other documentation. (Confidential information such as Human Rights Office files are not included)
- Obtain and review other expert opinions or perspectives.
- The Director/designate will advise complainants when they will contact them with a resolution or update. (See Response Times)

7. Decision and Resolution

- Written complaints receive a written notice of decision unless otherwise requested by the complainant.
- Verbal complaints receive written and/or verbal notice at the Director's discretion or as requested by the complainant.
- If it has been determined that the reasons for the complaint are not justified, and no further action is required, the complainant is notified in writing.
- If it has been determined that the complaint is justified, the complainant is notified, in writing, of corrective action taken and any remedy proposed. Confidentiality will be maintained to protect staff's privacy.
- Designate will update database and the Complaint Tracking Form
- A copy of all written notifications and the Complaint Tracking Form is sent to the Corporate Issues and Council Liaison Advisor (or designate) who scans and/or saves the complaint in a secure central file.

Unresolved or Dissatisfied:

- Director/designate refers the complaint to the Director of Executive Management, and notifies the complainant.
- The Director/designate briefs the Director of Executive Management, updates the database and the Complaints Tracking Form and forwards it to the Director of Executive Management.
- The Director of Executive Management will contact the complainant and provide a written outcome of the investigation. (Advice from the City Manager in certain situations is sought)
- If the complainant remains dissatisfied with the decision of Director of Executive Management, in consultation with the City Manager, the complainant is advised of the opportunity for external review by the Ombudsman. (Complainants unsatisfied with a harassment/discrimination

finding/remedy can take their concerns to the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario)

8. Logging of the Complaint and Record

- A shared complaint database is maintained to ensure a central record of the complaint.
- Each entry is given a complaint number beginning with the year followed by the letters 'CM' (i.e. 2011-CM0001).
- The Corporate Issues and Council Liaison Advisor (or designate) is responsible for maintaining the complaints database and ensuring it is up-to-date.
- The Corporate Issues and Council Liaison Advisor (or designate) scans and/or saves all hard copies of documentation in a secure central file.
- If written complaints are submitted directly to the service area, the Director (or designated staff) ensures copy is sent to the Corporate Issues and Council Liaison Advisor (or designate) for filing.
- Designated staff and all senior management team in the City Manager's Office will have read/write access to the database.
- Regular monitoring and review of complaints will be conducted to identify issues, trends, areas of concern and opportunities for improvement.
- Complaint issues are a standing agenda item for information and discussion at monthly senior management meetings. Based on monitoring and review of the complaints database, a report is provided to the City Manager's Office senior management team for information and action at least once per quarter.

9. Response Times

- The City Manager's Office applies certain standards for responding to complaints. Depending how the complainant requests to be contacted, the following standards for acknowledging complaint receipt at Second Stage apply:
 - Complaints are acknowledged by telephone within 1 working day of being received by the relevant service area.

- Complaints are acknowledged by email within 1 working day of being received by the relevant service area.
- Complaints are acknowledged by fax within 2 working days of being received by the relevant service area.
- Complaints are acknowledged by mail within 3 working days of being received by the relevant service area.
- Where an expanded review is required, complainants are contacted within 14 days with either a final response or update. At that time the complainant is advised of when the next contact will be – either for a proposed resolution or for the next progress update.
- Complainants are automatically contacted when their complaint is escalated.
- The director may exercise discretion and contact the complainant more frequently or sooner than the above standards.
- NOTE: From time to time, there may arise extraordinary circumstances where the City Manager's Office may not be in a position to guarantee these standards can be satisfied (e.g. during labour disruption, emergency management situation, etc.)

10. List of Forms:

1. Complaint Tracking Form