



TOWN OF HIGH PRAIRIE POLICY

Policy Number ADM – 02-2020	Approval Date June 23, 2020	Resolution Number 232/20
Supersedes	Effective Date June 23, 2020	Legal Authority

Title: TOWN OF HIGH PRAIRIE RESIDENT COMPLAINTS POLICY

1. POLICY STATEMENT

The Town of High Prairie provides guidelines for resolution and the treatment of complaints made by our residents.

At the Town of High Prairie, we believe that if a resident wishes to file a complaint or express dissatisfaction, it should be easy for them to do so. It is the Town of High Prairie's policy to receive complaints and consider them as an opportunity to learn, adapt, improve and provide better service.

In addition, a quick resolution of complaints, in a way that respects and values the resident's feedback, can be one of the most important factors in recovering the person's confidence that their complaint will be dealt with in the most efficient, effective and fair manner.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that complaints are handled properly and that all customer complaints or comments are taken seriously. The Town expects administration and staff at all levels to be committed to fair, effective and efficient complaint handling.

2. PURPOSE

This policy is intended to ensure that the Town of High Prairie handle complaints fairly, efficiently and effectively. The Town's objective is to ensure that its complaints procedure is properly and effectively implemented, and that complainants feel confident that their complaints and worries are listened to and acted upon promptly and equitably.

The Town's complaint management system aims to:

- allow us to respond to questions raised by people who file complaints in a timely and cost-effective manner.
- Increase resident confidence in our administrative process, and

- Provide information that we can use to improve the quality of our services, personnel and concepts of our complaint management system.

This policy provides guidance to administration and staff receiving or managing complaints from a resident made to or about the Town's services, administration or staff.

3. SCOPE

This policy applies to administration and staff receiving or managing complaints from a resident regarding our services, administration or staff complaint handling.

4. WHAT IS A COMPLAINT

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction about the operations, facilities services or procedures offered by the Town of High Prairie or the administrations or staff or the action or lack of action taken regarding operations, facilities, service or procedures provided by the Town of High Prairie administration or staff or by a person or body acting on behalf of the Town of High Prairie.

A formal complaint means a complaint that has not been successfully resolved through the Complaint Management Process as outlined in this policy. The complainant has chosen to formalize the complaint by completing a Complaint form.

An informal complaint means a complaint that has been received by the Town of High Prairie, by telephone, email, regular mail or in person, which has not been submitted on a Complaint Form.

All non-anonymous complaints filed necessitate a response.

5. COMPLAINT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

a) Oral Complaints

- The Town of High Prairie administration or staff who receive a verbal complaint should try to resolve the issue immediately if possible. If administration or staff cannot resolve the problem immediately, they should offer to refer it to the CAO for resolution. The CAO will be the named person who deals with the complaint through the process. When administration or staff receive an oral complaint, both should listen sincerely to the concerns raised by the complainant. Any contact with the

complainant must be polite, courteous and sympathetic. All times, administration and staff must remain respectful.

- After discussing the problem, administration or a staff member handling the complaint should suggest an action plan to resolve the complaint. If this action plan is acceptable, administration or staff should clarify the procedure of the plan with the complainant. An agreement shall be reached on a way in which the results of the complaint will be communicated to the complainant (ie. by another meeting, letter or email).
- If the proposed action plan is not acceptable to the complainant, the administration or staff should ask the complainant to make his or her complaint in writing to the Town of High Prairie and provide a copy of the policy and complaint form to be completed.
- In both situations, details of the complaint should be recorded on a complaint form and a file assigned with a number. The complaint form is set out in Schedule A of this policy.

b) Written Complaints

- When a complaint is received in writing, it must be forwarded to the CAO or a designated officer, who must enter it in the Complaint Register and send an acknowledgement receipt within five (5) working days in order to establish a relationship of confidence with the person who filed the complaint.
- If necessary, further clarification should be obtained from the complainant. If the complaint is not made by the resident but on his/her behalf, the resident's consent, preferably in writing, must be obtained in advance from the customer.
- After receiving the complaint letter, a copy of the complaint procedure must be given to the resident. Clearly explain to the complainant the complaint process, the time it can take and realistic expectations.
- Immediately on receipt of the complaint the Town of High Prairie administration or staff create a file with a file number and launch an investigation and within five (5) working days should be in a position to provide a full explanation to the complainant, either in writing or by arranging a meeting with the individuals concerned.
- The CAO or delegate must record all relevant information about the complaint and keep it as simple and accurate as possible.
- If the complaint raises potentially serious concerns, legal advice should be obtained. If legal action is taken at this stage, any investigation by the Town of High Prairie under the complaint procedure should cease immediately.



TOWN OF HIGH PRAIRIE POLICY

- If the issues are too complex for the investigation to be completed with five (5) working days, the complainant should be informed of any delays.
- If a meeting is organized, the complainant may, if he or she wishes, be accompanied by friend, relative or representative, such as a lawyer.
- At the meeting, a detailed explanation of the results of the investigation should be given and an apology should also be made if deemed appropriate. This type of meeting gives the Town of High Prairie the opportunity to show the complainant the matter has been taken seriously and has been thoroughly investigated.
- Finally, the results of the meeting should be document and any weaknesses in The Town of High Prairie's procedures, policies or bylaws should be identified and modified.

6. ROLE OF CAO OR DELEGATE

The CAO or delegate who receives a complaint will evaluate the information to determine whether it falls within the scope of this policy. If so, the CAO or delegate will collect and review all available information and attempt to resolve the issue informally through discussions with the complainant. The CAO or delegate may choose to use human resources or other resources as required if they require assistance or advice. The CAO or delegate are required to involve their departmental human resources representative before taking any disciplinary action against employees. The CAO or delegate must ensure that all administration or staff involved in resolving the complaint are aware of their responsibility to maintain the confidentiality of the matter and to respect the privacy rights of all parties involved.

Informal Complaint Files

Details of informal complaints should be noted as soon as possible and may include information such as when, where and how the alleged issue giving rise to the complaint occurring, who was involved and the names of potential witnesses. These notes may be required if a formal complaint is filed. Complaints that are resolved amicably to the complainant's satisfaction will not be followed up. However, all records relating to the

resolution of informal complaints must have a file number attached and must be kept within each department in accordance with current policies and by-laws. Any disciplinary action resulting from an informal complaint will be maintained in accordance with established human resources procedures and policies.

BM
BP



TOWN OF HIGH PRAIRIE POLICY

Unresolved Complaints

If the problem cannot be resolved amicably or if the complainant request a formal investigation into the complaint, he or she must submit a formal complaint form.

A blue ink signature of Brian Panasiuk, consisting of stylized initials "BP" followed by a flourish.

Mayor, Brian Panasiuk

A blue ink signature of Brian Martinson, featuring a cursive "B" followed by "Martinson" in a stylized script.

CAO, Brian Martinson

A blue ink signature of the date "June 26, 2020" in a cursive script.

Date of Final Signature



"SCHEDULE A" COMPLAINT FORM

Complainant Information	
Name:	Phone:
Civic Address:	Mailing Address:
Email:	
Complaint Information	
Date:	
Complaint Details: (Include name, address and nature of complaint)	
OFFICE USE ONLY	
File No:	Assigned: PW PO ADMIN
Date:	Complaint taken by:
First Response Corrective Action (within 5 working days)	
Corrective Action Persons:	
Corrective Action Follow-up:	
What steps should be considered to avoid a repeat of the problem:	
Signature:	Date:

Bm
BF