

THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF LIMERICK

BY-LAW NUMBER 2017-

Being a by-law to adopt a Standard Operating Policy
For Complaints and Procedures Dealing with such Matters

WHEREAS the Council of the Corporation of the Township of Limerick deems it appropriate for the Township to adopt a Complaints and Procedures Policy to promote accountability and reliability;

NOW THEREFORE THE Council of the Corporation of the Township of Limerick hereby enacts as follows;

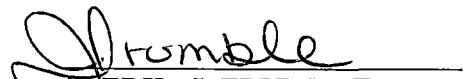
1. THAT the Appendix "A" attached hereto and forming part of this by-law shall be the Complaints and Procedures Policy for to be employed by Municipal staff for the purposes of addressing complaints as defined in the policy..
2. THAT this by-law shall come into force and have effect immediately upon the passing thereof.

READ a First time this 18th day of December 2017;

READ a Second time this 18th day of December 2017;

READ a Third Time and finally passed this 18th day of December 2017.


REEVE: SHARON CARSON


CLERK: J. TRUMBLE

**Standard Operating
Procedure for:**

**SUBJECT:
Complaints Policy &
Procedures**



POLICY NO. 2017-

Effective Date:

Revision Date:

CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF LIMERICK

Policy Statement

The Township of Limerick is committed to a consistent and uniform process to respond to complaints received from members of the public regarding programs, facilities, Municipal services, staff or operational procedures. This policy and the accompanying procedures outline the process to be followed and service standards for the handling of public complaints.

Purpose

The Township of Limerick recognises the importance of public feedback and welcomes complaints as a valuable form of feedback regarding our services, operations and facilities. The information gained from complaints helps improve the quality of the services provided by the Municipality and the client experience of residents.

Application

This policy **applies to:**

Municipal employees, with the following exceptions:

This policy **does not** apply to:

Municipal Elected Officials.

This policy applies to complaints that are received by email, by mail or by fax. Verbal or complaints received at service/reception counter or by phone shall be addressed by informing the complainant to submit concerns/issues in writing.

This policy **does not** apply to:

Requests for service
Feedback
Compliments
Inquiries
Anonymous complaints
Request for accommodations

These communications and requests are all handled through other mechanisms and processes.

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Policy Requirements

The Township of Limerick will deal with all complaints promptly, courteously, impartially and professionally. All complainants will be treated with respect and will not receive adverse treatment or any form of reprisal.

All complaints will be dealt with in accordance with *the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* and other applicable legislation. The identity of the complainant will be made known only to those who need to know in order to consider the complaint. All participants in the complaints process shall keep the details of the complaint confidential except as may be required by law. If the matter goes to arbitration, it may be necessary to release the complainant's name and contact information during the resolution process.

Procedure Description

The procedures contained within this policy outline the process governing the reception, confirmation, acknowledgement, investigation and resolution of complaints.

What is a complaint?

A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction about the action or lack of action taken regarding operations, facilities or services provided by the Township of Limerick or by a person or body acting on behalf of the Municipality.

Who can make a complaint?

Anyone who uses or is affected by Municipal services can make a complaint. This includes:

- Residents
- People who work in or visit the Municipality
- Local businesses
- Community groups

Some individuals may require assistance to make a complaint, and complaints can be made on their behalf, provided that the person affected has given their consent. A consent form for this purpose is available from each department (Appendix A).

Complaints can be submitted:

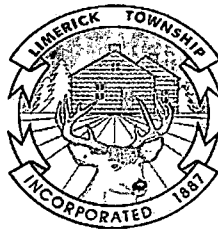
- By email;
- By mail;
- By fax.
- By filing the appropriate form (Appendix C) and submitting it to the Municipal Clerk.

Note:

Employees who receive verbal complaints or attend service/reception counters with concerns or issues shall advise the complainant of the Township policy and provide the appropriate form as stated above.

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Service Standards

The following Service Standards will be adhered to in the handling of all complaints received.

- All complaints filed necessitate a response.
- Complainants must receive an acknowledgement of receipt of their complaint within three business days. This acknowledgement must identify who will be following up on the complaint as well as their contact information.
- A final response or update must be sent to the complainant within 20 business days, barring exceptional circumstances.

Procedures

Complaint Input

- 1) Complaint made by email, mail, fax.
 - a) Staff receiving the complaint will copy the information related to the complaint to the Chief Administrative Officer.
- 2) Verbal complaint made by telephone or at a service/reception;
 - a) Staff shall inform the complainant that all issues/concerns MUST be submitted in writing.
 - b) Appendix B shall be provided to any person at a service/reception counter who wishes to submit a complaint.
- 3) Notification of a complaint
 - a) All complaints that are submitted by email shall be copied to the C.A.O. as required under Section 1 and forwarded to the appropriate staff and or Department Head or Designate.
- 4) Acknowledgement of a complaint
 - a) All complaints shall be acknowledged and the submitter shall receive the following message:

Thank you for your feedback. Your submission was received successfully. Your complaint will be sent directly to the appropriate Department Head or Designate and an acknowledgement will be sent within 3 business days. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us.

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- b) In this case, the staff submitting the complaint on behalf of the complainant will forward the complaint by email to the appropriate department and copy the chief administrative officer. It is then the responsibility of the staff receiving the email to provide the three-day timeline information to the original complainant. This may be provided to the client by email, mail, or facsimile.
- 5) Assignment of a complaint to a department by the system
 - a) Department Head or Designates are considered the "complaint owner."
 - b) Within three business days of a complaint being received by the Municipality, the departmental or staff responsible for the response must contact the complainant to acknowledge and:
 - c) confirm that the complaint is being investigated/reviewed;
 - d) will be responded to within 20 working days; and
 - e) provide the name and contact information for the person in the department who is handling the complaint.
 - f) This acknowledgement can be in the form of email, facsimile or letter (depending upon the complainant's preferred contact method indicated when submitting a complaint).
- 6) Investigation of a complaint by a department
 - a) When the Department Head or Designate receives a complaint notification, they must review the complaint and identify the appropriate departmental or branch staff to develop the response to the complaint.
 - b) If the response takes longer than 20 business days, the complainant must again be contacted and assured that the complaint is being addressed and that a response will be provided as soon as possible.
- 7) Final response and close-out of a complaint
 - a) The response to the complaint must be approved by the Department Head or Designate and sent to the complainant as quickly as possible.
- 8) Compliance
 - a) Department Head or Designates are responsible for implementation and ongoing compliance with the Corporate Complaints Handling Policy.
 - b) Annual reports will be provided by Department Head or Designates to the Chief Administrative Officer, indicating the number of complaints received during the year, the number of complaints to date, the number of complaints meeting service standards, the number of complaints outstanding, and the number of complaints not meeting service standards.

Responsibilities

Employees: All employees are to have acknowledgement and awareness of the Township's requirement to receive complaints, the process through which a complaint can be made and the service standards that apply to complaints.

Supervisors: Supervisors are responsible for facilitating prompt response to all complaints by their staff to ensure that service standards are achieved.

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Department Head or Designates: Department Head or Designates are responsible for the receipt and response of all complaints according to the service standards set out. Department Head or Designates hold responsibility for departmental compliance to the Complaints Policy.

Monitoring/Contraventions

The Chief Administrative Officer will monitor corporate compliance with this policy and will follow up with appropriate departments as required.

References

Legislative and Administrative Authorities

[Bill 8, the Public Sector and MPP Accountability and Transparency Act](#)

[Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act \(MFIPPA\)](#)

Definitions

Complaint – any expression of dissatisfaction about the action or lack of action taken regarding operations, facilities or services provided by the Township of Limerick or by a person or body acting on behalf of the Township of Limerick. **The term “dissatisfaction” is key to the definition of a complaint. Feedback of a positive or general nature, comments on a service or facility that do not require a response, or requests for service, are not complaints. Complaints imply that the complainant is unhappy with the service received** and that they require a follow-up response in regards to the issue.

Complainant – the person who is dissatisfied and filing the complaint. Anyone who uses or is affected by Municipal services can make a complaint including: residents, people who work in or visit the county, local businesses or community groups.

Compliment – an expression of appreciation for satisfactory or above-satisfactory service.

Feedback – Input from client that is neither positive, nor negative, but provides input or ideas.

Enquiries

For more information on this policy please contact:

Chief Administrative Officer

613-474-2863 x202

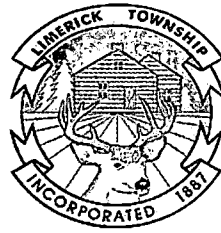
Appendices

[Appendix A – Representative Consent Form](#)

[Appendix B – Sample Acknowledgement and Receipt](#)

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Appendix A

Complaint Representative Consent Form

I, consent to have all communications and information relating to my complaint with the Township of Limerick disclosed to my representative .

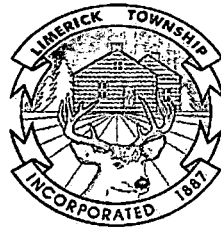
Name of complainant: <input type="text"/>
Signature: <input type="text"/>
Date: -- / -- / ----

All personal information you choose to provide on this form is collected under the authority of Section 227(c) of the *Municipal Act, 2001*, S.O. 2001, c. 25. The information will be used to confirm your consent under Section 32(b) of the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c. M.56 to disclose information relating to your complaint to the third party you identified. Questions about this collection can be directed to the County Clerk:

Township of Limerick
89 Limerick Lake Road, RR2
Gilmour, ON K0L 1W0
(613) 474-2863 – clerk@township.limerick.on.ca

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APPENDIX B

SAMPLE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND RECEIPT

[Insert name and address]

Dear [insert Mr./Mrs./Ms./Dr Surname]

Thank you for your letter dated [insert date] concerning [insert summary of letter]. I am writing to acknowledge receipt of your correspondence.

I will review the matter/s you have raised and the information you have provided. If an investigation is required, I will coordinate the investigation. All documentation related to the investigation of your concerns will be treated in a confidential manner to protect your privacy; however, you should be aware that confidentiality is different than anonymity. An individual being complained about must be informed of the complaint.

This process should be completed within 20 working days. If there are any delays, you will be contacted and informed of the progress in 15 day intervals.

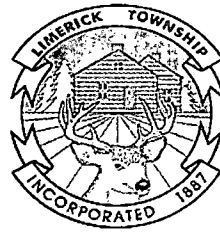
We are always striving to improve our services at [insert name of Dept.], so thank you for bringing this matter to our attention. Please don't hesitate to contact me on the number listed below if you have any further queries.

Yours sincerely

[Insert name and contact details]

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Appendix C

Complaint Form

Section 1

Do you want to remain anonymous? (Indicate your response with an X)

yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	no	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Personal Details:	
First Name:	
Last Name:	
Postal address:	
Telephone number:	
Mobile number:	
Email address:	
Please provide details of the service that the feedback concerns	
Department:	
Address of location of service:	
Contact person's name and position in the service:	

Please provide details of your main concerns, including what events led to making the complaint, compliment or feedback, approximate dates and who was involved.

Use opposite side of page if required

All personal information you choose to provide on this form is collected under the authority of Section 227(c) of the *Municipal Act, 2001*, S.O. 2001, c. 25. The information will be used to confirm your consent under Section 32(b) of the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c. M.56 to disclose information relating to your complaint to the third party you identified. Questions about this collection can be directed to the Township Clerk

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