

RANGITĪKEI DISTRICT COUNCIL

# COMPLAINTS AND ISSUE RESOLUTION POLICY

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# Complaints and Issue Resolution Policy

## INTRODUCTION

Rangitikei District Council values feedback from the community. It's important that we know what we're getting right so we can keep doing it.

However, like any other public agency we will often receive complaints.

We know that we provide a wide range of services and make decisions on situations where people might have conflicting opinion: especially around us using our regulatory and enforcement powers. We also sometimes make mistakes or fail to meet expectations.

Whatever the cause, we have a duty to ensure the community has a way to positively resolve issues before they escalate into serious problems. This will help us make better decisions, make our services better, and help us build a trusting, positive relationship with our community.

This policy aims to provide a framework and process to enhance customer satisfaction by supporting an organisational culture that is:

- open to feedback, including complaints
- focused on reinforcing good practices and resolving issues quickly, transparently and equitably
- committed to learning from our experiences so that we can keep improving our services and the way we do things.

## SCOPE

This policy is relevant for all full and part-time employees, casual staff, and contractors

## DEFINITIONS

### **Compliment**

An expression of satisfaction, thanks or appreciation for something Rangitikei District Council or a specific staff member has done.

### **Complaint**

An expression of dissatisfaction with council policy, decision, process, charge, employee/contractor conduct or quality of service which may or may not request a formal response.

This is different from:

- Request for service or information
- LGOIMA request
- Feedback as part of a formal consultation process
- Any internal complaint from one staff member against another
- A complaint over which the customer or council have begun legal proceedings or has already been heard by a court or tribunal
- Allegations against a contractor or staff member of serious misconduct such as sexual harassment, fraud or assault
- Insurance claims

## OUR ISSUE MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES

Our issues management process needs to align with our council values. When managing customer issues or complaints we will:

- Strive to resolve issues as soon as possible – preferably at the first point of contact
- Communicate clearly in a way that's easy to understand
- Take ownership when we've failed to deliver or meet the expectations of our community
- Learn from complaints and use this learning to improve how we do things
- Deal with issues honestly and openly
- Report publically on the number and type of complaints we receive
- Keep records of all complaints, suggestions, and compliments
- Have an open mind and genuinely examine the issues raised
- Try and see things from the community's perspective
- Be fair, equitable and act with integrity

## ISSUES RESOLUTION PROCESS



### Level 1 Issue

A member of the community expresses their dissatisfaction which is then resolved by a frontline staff members

### Level 2 Issue

If there's no immediate resolution available, a formal response is needed, or the person raising the issue isn't satisfied, the issue will be referred to our issues resolution process. The council will then investigate and resolve the issue within 15 working days.

### Level 3 Issue

If the issue still isn't resolved, or poses a large degree of risk, it may be drawn the Chief Executive's attention. They may then either investigate, or a direct a senior council officer to resolve an issue

### Level 4 Issue

If the council has followed its process and the person raising the issue still isn't satisfied, they have the option to refer their problem to the Ombudsman

## UNREASONABLE CONDUCT

If a person raising a complaint engages in unreasonable customer conduct (UCC), we will follow our UCC policy and processes.

## RELEVANT LEGISLATION

- Employment Relations Act 2000
- The Local Government Official Information and Meeting Act (LGOIMA) 1987
- Privacy Act 1993
- The Local Government Act 2002
- The Resource Management Act 1991
- Health and Safety at Work Act 2015

## RELATED POLICIES AND PROCESSES

- Customer Charter (In progress)
- UCC guidelines(In progress)
- Managing Unreasonable Complainant Conduct