



The Corporation of the Municipality of  
**Central Elgin**

**BY-LAW 2437**  
**Being a By-law to Adopt a New Municipal Customer Service/  
Complaint Resolution Policy**

WHEREAS the Municipal Act, 2001 as amended provides under Section 5(1) that the powers of a municipality shall be exercised by its Council and under Section 5(3) provides that a municipal power shall be exercised by By-Law;

AND WHEREAS Council, on the recommendation of the Municipal Ombudsman, wishes to adopt an amended Customer Service/Complaint Resolution Policy;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Council of the Corporation of the Municipality of Central Elgin hereby enacts as follows:

1. THAT the Council of the Municipality of Central Elgin does hereby adopt the Customer Service/Complaint Resolution Policy, attached hereto as Schedule "A".
2. THAT Schedule "A" forms part of this by-law.
3. By-law 2129 is hereby repealed.

READ a FIRST and a SECOND TIME this 9<sup>th</sup> day of December, 2019.

READ a THIRD TIME and FINALLY PASSED this 9<sup>th</sup> day of December, 2019.

  
Donald N. Leitch, Clerk

  
Sally Martyn, Mayor



## Municipality of Central Elgin

# Customer Service/Complaint Resolution Policy

### PURPOSE

The Municipality of Central Elgin is committed to a fair, consistent, and transparent process to respond to customer service complaints received from members of the public regarding programs, facilities, services, and procedures. The Municipality of Central Elgin recognizes the importance of public feedback in improving client experience and the quality of services provided.

### DEFINITIONS

**Complaint** is an expression of dissatisfaction about the action or lack of action relating to a program, facility, service, or procedure.

**Complainant** is the person who is dissatisfied and filing the complaint. Complainants may include residents, people who work in or visit the Municipality, local businesses, or community groups.

**Resolution of Complaint** is the final stage of the complaint process, which may include an apology, explanation, reconsideration, reimbursement, compensation, and/or change in policy. The complaint is considered resolved.

### APPLICATION

This policy applies to staff of the Municipality of Central Elgin.

It **does not** apply to

- Outside boards and agencies of the County of Elgin (such as police, library, and public health), which have their own complaints handling processes
- The Municipality's elected officials (see By-Law 1730 for Council's code of conduct, complaint form, and information about the integrity commissioner).

This policy also does not apply to

- requests for service
- feedback
- compliments
- inquiries
- anonymous complaints
- requests for accommodations

- decisions of Council or of a committee of Council
- issues addressed by legislation, or an existing municipal by-law, policy, or procedure
- matters that are handled by tribunals, courts of law, quasi-judicial boards, etc.
- internal employee complaints

These requests are handled through other processes.

## POLICY REQUIREMENTS

The Municipality will respond to all complaints promptly, courteously, impartially, and professionally, in accordance with *the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

All complainants will be treated with respect and will not receive adverse treatment or any form of reprisal. The identity of the complainant will be made known only to those who need to know in order to consider the complaint.

### Process

Individuals are encouraged to speak directly with the individual regarding a customer service complaint in order to resolve any concerns prior to beginning the formal complaint process. (See Appendix 1.)

If that is not possible, individuals should fill out the Municipality of Central Elgin Customer Service/Complaint Form, available at [www.centralelgin.org](http://www.centralelgin.org) or in Appendix 2. Alternatively, complaints can chose to write a letter with the following information:

The letter should include:

- the details of what happened
- where it happened
- when it happened
- which staff member(s) were involved or present
- what was said or done
- what kind of resolution is being sought, if any, and
- signatures and contact information of the individual(s) making the complaint

All complaints should be filed as soon as possible.

Complaints will receive acknowledgement within 3 business days, as well as the contact information of the person investigating the complaint.

Normally, the CAO will oversee the complaint process. If the CAO is involved in the complaint, the mayor will oversee the complaint process.

The investigator may review relevant municipal and provincial legislation, review the municipality's policies and procedures, interview employees, and identify action that may be taken to address the complaint or improve municipal operations.

All complaints will be treated as confidential, unless authorization is given by the complainant to release his or her identity.

All actions, in writing or by telephone/voicemail, discussion and resolution shall be tracked and maintained in a confidential electronic file.

A final response or update must be sent to the complainant within 20 business days, barring exceptional circumstances. Where additional time is required, the complainant will be notified in writing.

The decision should include information such as:

- an overview of the complaint
- details of how the investigation was conducted
- a summary of the facts
- an outline of the findings
- identification of next steps
- suggestions of an appropriate resolution and the rationale of the proposed resolution

Complainants who are not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation have the right to contact the Ontario Ombudsman. They are considered an office of last resort.

Annually, the number of complaints, type of complaints, and number of resolved complaints may be included in a public report to Council. This report will not include any personal information, as per the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection Act*.

Any inquiries about this policy or making a complaint can be directed to the CAO.

## **Appendix 1 – Informal Customer Service/Complaint Resolution Procedure**

Individuals or organizations dissatisfied with service, actions, or lack of actions by a municipal employee can address their dissatisfaction by:

- 1) advising the staff member that they are dissatisfied;
- 2) encouraging the staff member to remedy the situation;
- 3) keeping a written record of the incident(s), including dates, times, locations, other people present, and any other relevant information;
- 4) telling a senior staff member about their dissatisfaction;
  - a. if applicable, advise as to whether you were satisfied or dissatisfied with the response;
- 5) consider the need to pursue the matter in accordance with the formal complaint procedure.

Individuals and organizations are encouraged to initially pursue this informal complaint procedure; however, it is not a precondition or a prerequisite to follow the informal complaint procedure prior to pursuing the formal complaint procedure.

**Appendix 2**



**Customer Service/Complaint Resolution Form**

The Municipality of Central Elgin is committed to a fair, consistent, and transparent process to respond to customer service complaints received from members of the public regarding programs, facilities, services, and procedures.

Complaints are encouraged to speak directly with the staff member involved in order to resolve any concerns.

If you are not satisfied with how your verbal complaint was handled, you can submit formal a written complaint or fill out this form, which is also available at [www.centralelgin.org](http://www.centralelgin.org).

<b>COMPLAINANT CONTACT DETAILS</b>	
<i>First name</i>	<i>Last name</i>
<i>E-mail address</i>	
<i>Mailing address</i>	
<i>Phone number</i>	
<b>SUMMARY OF COMPLAINT, INCLUDING LOCATION AND DATE</b> (ATTACH EXTRA PAGES OR RELEVANT DOCUMENTATION, IF NECESSARY)	
<b>STAFF PERSON(S) INVOLVED (IF KNOWN AND APPLICABLE)</b>	
<b>RESOLUTION PROPOSED</b>	

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date submitted \_\_\_\_\_

All complaints will be treated as confidential, unless authorization is given by the complainant to release his or her identity.

Complaints will receive acknowledgement within 3 business days, as well as the contact information of the person investigating the complaint.

A final response or update must be sent to the complainant within 20 business days, barring exceptional circumstances. Where additional time is required, the complainant will be notified in writing.