



CUSTOMER COMPLAINTS & FEEDBACK POLICY

GOV_PLCY25

Policy Title	Customer Complaints & Feedback Policy		
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Policy Custodian:	Chief Executive Officer	Review Date:	16/10/2030
Authorised Delegate	Executive Manager		
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Purpose

This policy outlines the West Daly Regional Council's (Council's) approach to receiving, handling and responding to complaints and feedback.

Scope

This policy applies to all members of the public who wish to submit a complaint or provide feedback regarding council services, programs, decisions, operations, or the conduct of council staff. Furthermore, it applies to any relevant council staff members and the authorised delegate for ensuring the complaints and feedback process is thoroughly documented and appropriately handled.

This policy does not apply to any matters that are subject to legal proceedings, freedom of information requests, complaints about Council Members (handled under the *Local Government Act 2019* and relevant code of conduct), or internal staff grievances (handled under People and Culture policy).





Policy Statement

1. Policy Principles

- 1.1. Council is committed to protecting the privacy and confidentiality of individuals who lodge complaints or provide feedback, in accordance with the Information Act 2002 (NT), the Information Privacy Principles and Council's Information Privacy Policy.
- 1.2. Council values community input and recognises that complaints and feedback are essential to improve service delivery.
- 1.3. Council will treat all complaints and feedback seriously and respectfully and will respond in a timely and consistent manner.
- 1.4. Council will maintain confidentiality and privacy throughout the complaints and feedback handling process.
- 1.5. Anyone making a complaint may have a support person at all stages of the complaint's resolution process.
- 1.6. All complaints and feedback will be used to encourage continuous improvements in all aspects of local government service delivery.

2. Privacy and confidentiality

- 2.1. All complaints and feedback will be managed confidentially, with access to information restricted to authorised personnel who require the information to perform their duties.
- 2.2. All personal information will be managed in accordance with Information Privacy Principles (IPPs), Council's Information Privacy Policy and the *Information Act 2002*.

3. How to provide feedback

- 3.1. Feedback can be provided verbally or in writing:
 - 3.1.1. By calling:
(08) 7922 6403
 - 3.1.2. By email:
info@westdaly.nt.gov.au; or
 - 3.1.3. Via the online form on Council's website:





www.westdaly.nt.gov.au

- 3.2. All feedback will be taken seriously and treated as valuable insight into community needs and expectations.
- 3.3. Feedback may or may not require a formal response.
- 3.4. The authorised delegate will determine the appropriate level of follow up on a case by case basis.

4. How to make a complaint

- 4.1. Complaints must be made in writing:
 - 4.1.1. By letter to:
Chief Executive Officer
West Daly Regional Council
GPO Box 36294, Winnellie NT 0821; or
 - 4.1.2. By email to:
info@westdaly.nt.gov.au
- 4.2. In circumstances where the complaint is in relation to the CEO, then the correspondence should be addressed to the Mayor and emailed to info@westdaly.nt.gov.au.
- 4.3. Assistance will be provided to anyone who requires it to lodge a complaint or provide feedback.
- 4.4. In accordance with the *Ombudsman Act 2009*, complaints about administrative actions of Council must be made within one year after the date the complainant first had notice of the administrative action.

5. Handling a complaint

- 5.1. Any employee or Authorised Delegate involved in handling or investigating a complaint must disclose any actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest. Where a conflict exists, the complaint must be reassigned to an appropriate independent officer or external investigator.
- 5.2. The registered complaint will be directed to the appropriate Executive Manager or Director for investigation and response.
- 5.3. Serious complaints will be assigned to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) for investigation and response and will ensure the matter is referred to an appropriately authorised person or external authority where required.
- 5.4. The CEO may determine, at their discretion, to inform Council Members, regarding the substance of a complaint.





- 5.5. In circumstances where the complaint is in relation to the CEO, referral to the Mayor, Council Members, or external investigation may be deemed necessary.
- 5.6. All complaints will be investigated, and any recommendations will be reported to the Executive Leadership Team for decision on corrective action and resolution.
- 5.7. The investigation will include an assessment of evidence which must be tested and evaluated for relevance and reliability.
- 5.8. If required, corrective action will be taken to either remedy the issue as soon as possible or determine that no action apart from an explanation is needed.
- 5.9. The Executive delegate is responsible for managing any disciplinary action if it is deemed appropriate during the investigation. Council will take reasonable steps to protect complainants from victimisation, intimidation or retaliation arising from making a complaint in good faith.

6. Unreasonable complainant conduct

- 6.1. Council may limit, block or modify communication with complainants whose behaviour is considered unreasonable or abusive in a way that impacts staff wellbeing or service delivery.
- 6.2. If repeated, unreasonable or vexatious complaints are made, Council reserves the right to block communication with that complainant.
- 6.3. Unreasonable complainant behaviour may be making repeated complaints about the same matter, despite Council responding to the matter, or a vexatious complaint.
- 6.4. Any decisions to modify or block communication will be thoroughly documented and include rationale for decisions made.

7. Timeline for complaints

- 7.1. A written acknowledgement will be sent to the complainant in all cases within 3 business days of receipt of any complaint.
- 7.2. Initially Complaints will be assessed based on the following criteria:
 - 7.2.1.1. The complexity and seriousness of the complaint.
 - 7.2.1.2. Whether the complaint requires internal or external review.
 - 7.2.1.3. The urgency of the complaint (loss, damage or safety considerations).
- 7.3. Following the assessment, complaints will be categorised and further responded to under the following banners:





- 7.3.1.1. Simple complaint – within 3 business days.
- 7.3.1.2. Complex complaint – within 10 business days.
- 7.3.1.3. Serious complaint – within 30 business days.
- 7.3.1.4. If the abovementioned timeframes cannot be met, the complainant will be kept informed of progress and alternative timeframes.

8. Complaints register

- 8.1. All complaint records, including correspondence, investigation findings and supporting documentation, will be securely stored and managed in accordance with Council's records management requirements and applicable legislation.
- 8.2. All complaints will be recorded in the Council's Complaints Register.
- 8.3. The Complaints Register will contain, at minimum, the following information:
 - 8.3.1.1. Date and time received.
 - 8.3.1.2. Details of complaint.
 - 8.3.1.3. Complaint category (simple, complex or serious).
 - 8.3.1.4. Timeline for resolution based on complaint category.
 - 8.3.1.5. Corrective actions taken.
 - 8.3.1.6. Resolution details.
- 8.4. The Complaints Register will regularly be reported to the Executive Leadership Team and will include reports of any identified trends and improvement actions.

9. Reporting the outcome of complaints

- 9.1. In all cases, when the matter is resolved by either corrective action or explanation, details of the resolution will be sent in writing to the complainant.

10. Northern Territory Ombudsman

- 10.1. If the complainant is dissatisfied with the complaint resolution, they may choose to raise the complaint with the Northern Territory Ombudsman.





Legislation, References and Related Documents	
Related Legislation	<i>Local Government Act 2019 (NT)</i> <i>Information Act 2002</i> <i>Ombudsman Act 2009</i>
Related Policies	Code of Conduct (Elected Member, Local Authority and Council Committee) Policy Code of Conduct (Council Staff) Code of Conduct (Chief Executive Officer) Information Privacy Policy
Related Procedures	Customer Complaints and Feedback Procedure
Related Forms	Breach of Code of Conduct Complaint Form
Related Documents	Complaints Register

Definitions

In the context of this policy, the following definitions apply:

Term	Definition
Council	refers to the West Daly Regional Council
Council Members	means the Elected Members duly elected under the <i>Local Government Act 2019</i> , to serve as representatives of their respective Council wards and as the Council governing West Daly Regional Councils jurisdiction.
Policy Custodian	means the individual, position, or department designated with primary responsibility for oversight, maintenance, interpretation, and implementation of this policy, serving as the authoritative point of contact for matters arising under it.





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Complaint	An expression of dissatisfaction about a council service, action, decision, or staff conduct, where a response or resolution is expected.
Feedback	A comment, suggestion, compliment, or general observation about council services operations that may or may not require a response.
Unreasonable conduct by complainant	Behaviour that is aggressive, abusive, persistent, or otherwise unreasonable, which may cause harm to Council staff and which may require modified communication or management strategies.
Complainant	Any person including members of the public, stakeholders, residents and service recipients that wishes to make a complaint
Simple complaints	Straightforward issues with service provision that can be resolved quickly.
Complex complaints	May involve challenges to a decision or policy, or a complaint about a staff member or elected member.
Serious complaints	Complaints concerning matters that come under legislation: discrimination, sexual harassment, fraud, child protection issues etc.
Vexatious Complaint	is an unfounded claim made without a genuine basis and with the primary intent to harass, annoy, or cause distress to the person, staff member or Council.

Review History					
Version Number	Approval Date	Policy Number	Policy Name	Resolution	Doc ID
1.0	01/01/2019	GOV05	Dealing with Public Complaints Policy	NA	27344
2.0	30/01/2019	GOV25	Dealing with Public Complaints Policy	013/2021	27345
3.0	12/10/2026	GOV_PLCY25	Customer Complaints and Feedback Policy	NA	27346





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Endorsement	
Signature:	 John Thomas (Oct 16, 2026 13:05:49 GMT+9.5)
Date:	Oct 16, 2026
Name and Position:	John Thomas, Chief Executive Officer

