



# Cloncurry Shire Council

PROCEDURE

COR 1028-01

## ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIONS COMPLAINTS MANAGEMENT - PROCEDURE

### 1. Background and Context:

This procedure should be read in conjunction with the Administrative Actions Complaint Policy.

Any staff member involved in the complaint management process must:

- Always consider the complainants privacy as paramount. All provided information is to be considered confidential. Confidentiality is governed by a range of legislation, including the *Information Privacy Act 2009*. Staff members must also have regard to the relevant sections of the *Human Rights Act 2019* when conducting investigations.
- Focus on the early resolution of any complaint
- Use effective communication to process and assist the complainant to resolve the complaint

### 2. Scope:

An administrative action complaint is:

*'An expression of dissatisfaction made to or about Council, related to its products, services, staff or the handling of a complaint, where a response or resolution is explicitly expected or legally required'.*

Some features of a complaint:

- The person will explicitly use the word 'complaint' or 'complain' when talking to Council staff or corresponding with Council.
- The person will express an action is unreasonable or wrong
- The person will challenge Council's right to do or omit to do the action
- The person indicates they wish an outcome or remedy.

Council officer's responsibility in determining if the procedure is to be started:

Council frontline staff will usually be in the position of having initial contact with the potential complainant.

Accepting complaints should be viewed as a normal and important part of Council service. Frontline staff in particular will be in a position to determine if a complaint is being made.

Council staff have the responsibility for determining if the customer is making a complaint. If you are unsure if a complaint is being made you should enquire if the customer wishes to make a written complaint and inform them that only written complaints will be investigated.

If the complaint is not an administrative action complaint and falls into another category (please refer to the policy), then the staff member will assist the customer in commencing that process or refer the customer to the appropriate staff member.

### **3. Procedure for receiving an administrative action complaint:**

#### Council reception staff at all Council facilities:

Frontline reception staff will be in the best position to:

- Determine if a complaint is being made; and
- Assist with early resolution of the complaint

If the customer wishes to make a written *administrative action complaint*, they may:

- Fill in the 'complaints form' at the time and leave it with reception staff
- E-mail the complaint to the Council e-mail address
- Send a written complaint via the post addressed to the Chief Executive Officer and marked attention to the Shared Services Manager
- Complete the 'feedback form' on the Council website

You may accept an anonymous written complaint.

All written complaints received by frontline staff must be immediately forwarded to the Shared Services Manager.

The customer may make a request to see an appropriate staff member if they wish to discuss a complaint prior to making a written complaint.

### **4. Procedure for processing an administrative action complaint:**

The Shared Services Manager is the Administrative Actions Complaints Officer.

The Shared Services Manager will:

- Assess the initial complaint
- Investigate the complaint or refer the complaint to an appropriate staff member for investigation
- Facilitate the determination of any investigation
- Communicate the resolution of the complaint to the complainant
- Escalate the complaint to an external authority if appropriate
- Ensure the complaint is registered on the 'Administrative Actions Complaints Register'

#### Benchmarks for simple complaints:

The Administrative Actions Complaints Officer will:

Communicate with the complainant within five business days to inform them of:

- The resolution to the complaint; or
- To inform the complainant of a date when they anticipate resolving the complaint and communicating the resolution

The Register is to be updated within three business days of the resolution of the complaint.

Complaints of a more serious nature:

If the complaint is of a nature where it cannot be resolved as a simple complaint the Administrative Actions Complaints Officer will:

- Inform the Chief Executive Officer of the nature of the complaint.
- Contact the complainant and inform them of the process to be adopted.
- Request further information if required (including an interview). This information may include photos, relevant documents, Statutory Declarations or electronic evidence.
- Liaise with appropriate staff members to conduct the investigation.
- Complete an investigation report.
- Communicate with the complainant the resolution of the complaint.
- Ensure the complaint is registered on the 'Administrative Actions Complaints Register'.