

# FACT SHEET

## Guide for Customer Complaints



This fact sheet has been prepared to assist anyone who is considering lodging a complaint to Council. Further details can be found on council's website or by visiting customer Service Centres at Innisfail, Tully or Cardwell.

Cassowary Coast Regional Council has established a complaints process in line with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2009*.

The types of complaints dealt with by this process include—

- A complaint about the conduct or performance of a councillor
- A complaint about the conduct of a council employee
- A complaint about a council service or other administrative action.

### How to make a complaint

Complaints can be made—

- In writing addressed to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
- Telephone (land line at cost of local call) 1300 763 903.
- Visit council's Customer Service Centres at Innisfail, Tully and Cardwell.

Complaints are accepted only from 'affected persons', i.e. from someone who has been affected by the conduct, service or other action of Council.

### What to include in your complaint

To assist Council in dealing quickly and effectively with your complaint, you are asked to provide the following—

- As much detail as possible about the matter
- Details of any loss or detriment that you have suffered
- List any other agencies or authorities you have already reported this matter to
- Your contact details, i.e. your name and at least one method of contact (*phone, email, address*)
- An outline of the outcome you are seeking
- Any supporting information including, photos, or contact details of anyone else who can support your complaint.

### What happens next?

Your complaint will be recorded and you will be provided with a complaints Reference Number. This will occur within three working days of receipt of a complaint.

If your complaint is about a Councillor, the CEO will refer the matter to the mayor to deal with (*if the matter is of a minor nature*).

If the complaint is more serious, or is about the Mayor or Deputy Mayor, the CEO may refer the complaint to the Department of Infrastructure and Planning. The Department may call upon a Regional conduct Review Panel or Local Government discipline Tribunal to deal with the complaint on its behalf.

If your complaint is about a Council Officer, service or other action, it will be investigated in accordance with council's Complaints Management process.

### **How long will it take to resolve a complaint?**

Council aims to resolve all complaints as quickly as possible. The circumstances vary considerably between complaints, so it is not possible to guarantee a set timeframe for all complaints. However, Council will try and resolve most complaints within twenty-five working days.

Complaints about simple matters not requiring a formal investigation are usually capable of being addressed within a few days. More serious and complex matters can take considerably longer.

As a complainant, you should be kept informed of the progress of any investigation and you will be notified of the outcome..

### **Can I make a complaint and remain anonymous?**

Council acknowledges that in certain circumstances a person may prefer to remain anonymous when making a complaint. This is not encouraged as it can compromise the quality of the investigation, however Council respects this right and will investigate all complaints received.

### **What happens to the documentation?**

Documentation relating to a complaint will be treated as confidential information. This includes the written complaint, investigation report and correspondence between the complainant and the investigator.

### **Further Action**

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of your concerns, you have the right to take your complaint to an external agency, such as the Queensland ombudsman or Judicial Review.

### **Other reference documents**

- ⇒ Complaints Management process Policy
- ⇒ Administrative Action Complaints Procedure
- ⇒ Councillor Code of Conduct

## **CONTACT US**

For more information contact Cassowary Coast Regional Council, PO Box 887, Innisfail Qld 4860, Telephone 4030 2222 or visit our website [www.cassowarycoast.qld.gov.au](http://www.cassowarycoast.qld.gov.au).