



**The Corporation of the Municipality of St.-Charles  
2 King St. E., P. O. Box 70, St.-Charles, ON P0M 2W0**

Complaint Policy

Policy No. P-048

Effective Date: July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019

Approval: Resolution No. 2019-117

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### **Policy Statement**

The Municipality of St.-Charles is committed to a consistent, fair and uniform complaint process and to provide opportunities for feedback about the programs, services, facilities and employees of the Municipality.

The Municipality recognizes that concerns from the public are at times brought forward and dealt with informally, however not all concerns can be dealt with informally. This policy ensures a consistent and uniform approach to formal complaints with a fair and accountable level of service delivery.

### **Definitions**

**“Complaint”** means an expression of dissatisfaction relating to the Municipality’s programs, services, facilities and employees and/or by-law complaints. Anonymous complaints or complaints made on behalf of an unidentified third party will not be entertained or investigated. A complaint is different from a request for service, enquiry, feedback, compliment, or suggestion. Only written complaints shall be considered formal complaints.

**“Complainant”** means the person who is dissatisfied and filing a complaint.

**“Compliment”** means an expression of appreciation relating to the Municipality’s programs, services, facilities and employees. This type of communication does not require a response.

**“Enquiry”** means a general or specific request for information relating to the Municipality’s programs, services, facilities and employees.

**“Feedback”** or **“Suggestion”** means an opinion, comment and expression of interest relating to the Municipality’s programs, services, facilities and employees or an idea submitted to the Municipality with the aim of improving programs, services or facilities. This type of communication does not require a response.

**“Request for Service”** means a request made by a member of the public for a specific service provided by the Municipality. For example, a request for service may include a request to repair/maintain a street surface, report an issue relating to municipal services, report damage to a facility or park, or report a lost/found dog. This type of communication does not require a response.

### **Scope and Responsibility**

This policy applies to communication received from members of the public such as complaints, compliments, feedback and suggestions relating to the Municipality’s programs, services, facilities and employees.

Compliments, enquiries, feedback, suggestions and requests for service made by a member of the public should be submitted in writing and should be resolved at the point of service delivery and may be tracked to identify issues, trends, areas of concern and opportunities for improvement.

The municipality will make every effort to resolve complaints received in a timely, courteous, impartial and professional manner.

All complainants will be treated with respect and will not receive adverse treatment or any form of reprisal.

Complaints will be tracked and regularly monitored and reviewed to identify issues, trends, areas of concern and opportunities for improvement.

The Chief Administrative Officer and/or Council shall be consulted only as deemed appropriate by the Department Head or depending on the nature of the complaint.

### **Procedure for Submitting a Complaint**

Prior to submitting a complaint, members of the public are encouraged to determine whether the subject is either a request for service, enquiry, compliment, feedback, suggestion or complaint. Written complaints shall be considered formal complaints.

All complaints will be dealt with in a confidential manner according to the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. Information will be collected, used and disclosed in accordance with the *Act*. The identity of the complainant shall be kept confidential, however, if the matter becomes legal, the complainant could be called to testify and give evidence to substantiate the Municipality’s position. The personal information will only be shared with those who need to know in order to consider the complaint. All participants in the complaints process shall keep the details of the complaint confidential except as otherwise required. Complaints received by one department are to be limited to that specific department unless the complaint involves more than one department.

All By-law complaints shall be submitted in writing to the Municipality by the complainant on the prescribed "Complaint Form" (attached to this policy) and signed by the complainant.

A complaint shall be submitted in writing to the Municipality, in person at the Municipal Office at 2 King Street East, St.-Charles, Ontario, by e-mail, by fax at 705-867-5789. A complaint may also be received through other electronic means on a website or webpage established for that purpose. Complainants are encouraged to use the prescribed "Complaint Form" available on the Municipality's website or at the Municipal Office.

Complaints must include the following information:

- Specific details of what happened;
- Details of, where it occurred, who was involved (if applicable);
- Date and time of occurrence;
- What outcome is being sought, if any; and
- Contact information of the complainant.

The complaint will be tracked and forwarded to the appropriate department. Within two (2) business days of receipt of the complaint, an acknowledgement letter will be sent in writing to inform that the complaint was received. The acknowledgment letter may either be sent in paper format or through electronic means. Complaints received in person may be acknowledged at the point of service by the staff member receiving the form or will be acknowledged by letter. Complaints received electronically, will be acknowledged by e-mail.

Within twenty (20) business days of receipt of a complaint, a response in writing will be provided to the complainant and will include:

- Whether the complaint was validated;
- If the complaint is not validated, provide reason(s) for their decision; and
- Any actions the Municipality has or will take as a result of the complaint.

The response may either be sent in paper format or through electronic means.

If a response is unable to be provided within twenty (20) business days, the complainant shall be notified of the delay and an estimate of when a response will be provided.

Complaints that can be resolved quickly or easily may combine the acknowledgement and final response in a single letter within the two (2) business days time period.

Once the Municipality has communicated the decision to the complainant, there is no appeal process at the municipal level. Complainants that are dissatisfied with the outcome or process may submit a complaint to the Office of the Ombudsman at [www.ombudsman.on.ca](http://www.ombudsman.on.ca).

### **Attachments**

- Complaint Form



# COMPLAINT FORM

The Corporation of the Municipality of St.-Charles  
PO Box 70, 2 King Street East,  
St.-Charles, Ontario P0M 2W0  
Tel: 705-867-2032 Fax: 705-867-5789

Occurrence # \_\_\_\_\_ Date (DD/MM/YYYY): \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Complainant Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone / Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

What is your preferred method of communication: \_\_\_\_\_

**Description of Complaint:** *(Please include details of the matter such as date(s), time(s), specific location, and background information. Please use the back of this form if further space is required, additional information, such as relevant photographs, can be attached to this form but if used the person who provided them may be summoned to Court):*

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Signature of Complainant: \_\_\_\_\_

(Please note: Unsigned and/or incomplete forms will not be processed. Any complaints received electronically are deemed to be signed.)

## FOR ADMINISTRATIVE USE ONLY

Complaint Received by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date (DD/MM/YY): \_\_\_\_\_

Department Forwarded to \_\_\_\_\_

### Acknowledgment of Complaint

Complaints will be acknowledged within two (2) business days of receipt of complaint. Complaints received electronically, will be acknowledged by e-mail.

Complaints received in person may be acknowledged at the point of service by the staff member receiving the form or will be acknowledged by letter.

Acknowledgment Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Acknowledgment Method: \_\_\_\_\_

Staff Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for taking the time to inform us of your concerns. As per the municipal Complaint Policy, a response to your complaint will be provided within twenty (20) business days of the receipt of the complaint. If you have any questions or concerns during the process, please contact the Municipal Office.

**Notice of Collection:** The personal information collected on this form is collected under the authority of the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA) and will be used to receive and investigate public complaints. Questions about this collection can be directed to the Municipal Clerk.