
WATER & WASTE SERVICE COMPLAINTS

APPROVALS

POLICY NUMBER	WW-POL-108	DOC.ID	3536163
CATEGORY	Community		
POLICY OWNER	Water and Waste		
APPROVAL DATE	28 May 2024	RESOLUTION NUMBER	8753

OBJECTIVE

To respond to all complaints in a prompt, efficient and fair manner and make all reasonable efforts to resolve the complaint to the satisfaction of the customer, in an effort to:

- Enhance customer experience
- Improve Council's products and services
- Ensure compliance with the customer service standards under the *Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008*.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all complaints that are received from customers related to the water, wastewater and waste services provided by the Water and Waste Directorate of Council.

DEFINITIONS

TERM / ACRONYM	MEANING
ADWG	Australian Drinking Water Guidelines
Complainant	Affected person or organisation making a complaint.
Complaint	<p>This following definition is derived from ISO 10002:2018 Quality management – Customer satisfaction – Guidelines for complaints handling in organisations:</p> <p><i>A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction made to Council or its contractors about its products or the complaint handling process itself, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A complaint may be lodged by a customer, consumer, their representative or a member of the public.• A contact requesting information is not a complaint.• A contact reporting a service difficulty or fault is not a complaint and these contacts are recorded separately.

- A contact expressing dissatisfaction with repeat service difficulties and faults is a complaint.
- A contact where a credit adjustment on the account has been made due to a meter misread is a complaint.
- A contact that results in a water quality issue is a complaint (i.e. due to particles, discolouration, smell, taste, or a health issue).
- A contact that results from an internal wastewater overflow is a complaint.
- Any civil actions taken through a court for loss or damage arising from Council's performance is a complaint.
- More than one complaint from the same customer arising from the same cause are reported separately.
- A contact regarding a matter that is not the responsibility of Council is not recorded as a complaint.

This policy only applies to complaints other than those defined as per the following:

- Section 48, Competitive neutrality complaints of the *Local Government Act 2009*.
- Section 268, Process for administrative action complaints of the *Local Government Act 2009*.
- Council's Complaints Management Process Policy. Council's Administrative Action Complaints Policy.

Council	Isaac Regional Council.
Customer	A customer is any consumer of Council's water, wastewater and waste products or services.
Products and Services	Products and services provided by Council include, but are not limited to:

- Provision of water to ADWG:
 - Installation of new service connections.
 - Repairs to service connections.
 - Water meter testing.
 - Removal of service connections.
 - Replacement of stolen water meters.
 - Relocation of service connection point.
- Provision of reticulated wastewater services including wastewater treatment and by-product disposal.
- Provision of treated effluent (recycled water) and biosolids for reuse purposes.
- Provision of information:
 - Water and Waste location plans.
 - Water meter readings at request.
 - Physical location of water mains.
 - Physical location of sewer mains.
 - Inspection of sewers before and after construction of structures.
 - Inspection of wastewater infrastructure sub divisional works.
- Collection of kerbside waste and recycling collections.
- Actioning of requests for new or additional waste collection services.
- Collection of Council-provided commercial waste and recycling collection services.
- Acceptance of domestic household or commercial waste for disposal or recycling at Council Waste Management Facilities.

POLICY STATEMENT

Council's Position on Matter

The Water and Waste Service Complaints Policy has been developed to ensure that every complaint is dealt with fairly, promptly, professionally, in confidence (subject to any legal requirements), and in a manner respectful to the complainant in accordance with Council's Customer Charter and the Water and Waste Customer Service Standards.

Guiding Principles

Council is committed to effectively and efficiently receiving and managing enquiries, complaints and disputes to ensure effective customer service.

We will achieve this through:

- Adequately resourcing the complaints handling system to provide an effective framework to resolve complaints.
- Training employees to deal with complaints in a consistent and appropriate manner and empowering them with sufficient levels of delegation to resolve complaints effectively. Where possible, complaints should be resolved at the first point of contact.
- Providing an efficient, fair and accessible mechanism for the resolution of complaints and disputes in accordance with the principles of the ISO 10002:2018 Quality management – Customer satisfaction – Guidelines for complaints handling in organisations.
- Increasing the level of customer satisfaction by dealing with all enquiries and complaints in an expedient and effective manner.
- Providing, where requested, written responses to enquiries and complaints, dealing with the substance of the enquiry or complaint, within seven (7) business days. Where the enquiry or complaint is complex a reply will be provided within seven (7) business days informing the customer when they will receive a reply that addresses the nature of the enquiry or complaint.
- Investigating the causes of complaints and disputes to enable rectification and to improve policies and practices to prevent re-occurrence, when appropriate.
- Accurately and systematically recording all complaints in Council's customer relationship management system.
- Ensuring the information provided by customers during the course of lodging their complaint is treated in accordance with Council's privacy requirements.
- Recognising, promoting and protecting customers' rights including the right to complain and providing reasonable assistance to a customer who wishes to initiate a complaint.
- Providing customers with clear information about how to lodge a complaint and Council's complaint handling procedures.
- Providing customers with the opportunity to have their enquiry or complaint referred for an independent review if the matter cannot be satisfactorily resolved. If the matter cannot be resolved, the

customer will be informed of the opportunity to have the matter referred to the Energy and Water Ombudsman Queensland.

- Handling disputes and complaints in an effective and efficient manner to minimise risk to corporate reputation.

Council will learn from complaints and disputes, maintain a consistent resolution process and embrace a philosophy of continuous improvement.

Senior management will communicate the content of this policy to employees, customers and stakeholders and the policy will be publicly available.

LEGISLATIONS AND RELATED GUIDELINES

- *Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008* (Part 4 Division 3)
- *Local Government Act 2009* (Chapter 7, part 2, section 48)
- *Local Government Act 2009* (Chapter 7, part 6, section 268)
- ISO 10002:2018 Quality management – Customer satisfaction – Guidelines for complaints handling in organisations

REFERENCES

ID	NAME
N/A	Isaac Regional Council Customer Service Charter
N/A	Isaac Regional Council Water and Waste Customer Service Standards
WW-POL-046	Concealed Leak Remission Policy
WWW-POL-012	Recycled Water Policy
STAT-POL-033	Water Restrictions Policy
CORP-POL-085	Water and Sewerage Connections and Disconnections Policy
WW-POL-084	Water Meter Reading and Billing Policy
WW-POL-014	Building Over or Near Local Government Service (Water, Wastewater, Recycled Water and Stormwater) Infrastructure Policy