

# The Hills Shire Council

## Customer Complaints Procedure



### OVERVIEW

The Hills Shire Council is committed to the efficient and timely handling of requests from members of the community to:

- Provide services
- Provide information
- Complaints feedback is utilised by Council to assist in management processes and to assist in the improvement of the delivery of customer service.

### DEFINITION OF A COMPLAINT:

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction received by Council from a customer. It includes situations where:

1. The customer is dissatisfied with the quality and/or range of services provided
2. Council has failed to meet a service performance standard
3. An officer of Council has failed to follow a policy or procedure
4. A customer is dissatisfied with the performance of a staff member

### A complaint is not:

1. An initial request for service or action by Council
2. A request for information or an explanation of Council policies or procedures
3. The lodgement of an appeal in accordance with legislative appeal provisions
4. Negative feedback in a submission or a survey, or the dislike of a policy or a procedure.

### EXCLUSIONS

This procedure does not apply to complaints regarding:

- Decisions made by an elected member of Council
- Competitive neutrality
- Conflict of interest
- Access to information
- Internal staff complaints
- Complaints about third parties (e.g. a neighbour)
- Complaints regarding the behaviour of a staff member (under the principle of natural justice)

If a complaint relates to an elected member of Council, the provisions of the Code of Conduct shall apply.

If the complaint relates to suspected corruption, unlawful behaviour, maladministration, serious or substantial waste relating to a Councillor or a Council staff member, the **Policy 4: Public Interest Disclosures** shall apply. These complaints must be referred to either the General Manager, the Public Officer, or the Internal Auditor (whichever is most appropriate in the circumstances.)

### How customers contact Council to lodge a complaint

- In writing – to the attention of the General Manager
- By fax (02) 9843 0409
- By email [council@thehills.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@thehills.nsw.gov.au)
- By phone (02) 9843 0555
- By personal attendance at any of Council's Customer Service Centres