



Policy Number ADM 02-15	<i>Complaint Procedure</i>
Date December 15, 2015	Resolution Number 339-15
References Employees, Council, Municipal Residents	Mayor _____ CAO _____

Being a policy to provide expectations and guidelines on responding to both internal and external complaints.

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for Staff (referring to Riverdale staff and all staff providing service under a service agreement) to process and to prioritize complaints filing by both internal and external customers in order to maintain the level of service while managing the existing workload. This policy is put in place to allow staff the opportunity to respond to complaints within a reasonable timeframe more efficiently and effectively, and, at the same time, to best utilize valuable and limited resources by creating clear expectations for both staff and the public.

There is a wide array of issues that can lead to potential disputes between or among neighbors such as fences, retaining walls, property maintenance, noise, trees, pets, road games and construction projects. However, such issues are often reported as complaints or repeated complaints that result in unnecessary use of Municipality resources and enforcement actions in an attempt to resolve disputes between neighbors. This policy intends to help the Municipality prioritize issues that are deemed hazardous to public health, life and safety and how to respond to complaints.

2. POLICY

- A. This policy applies to complaints filed through the Municipal Office.
- B. Priority will be given only to those complaints that are deemed a threat to the public’s health, life and safety.
- C. No enforcement action will be taken unless the complaint meets the following criteria:
 - i. To avoid hearsay, all complaints must be filed in writing. No verbal complaints via telephone or in person will constitute formal complaints.
 - ii. All complaints filed against a property must pertain to the relevant section(s) in the Municipalities Zoning By-Laws, Building By-Laws, Property Standards By-laws, Animal Control By-Law.
 - iii. An Order or incident report must accompany any complaint(s) filed internally.
- D. Documentation or evidence may be required from the complainants in order to substantiate the complaints.

3. PROCEDURES/RESPONSIBILITIES

Staff

- In order to take formal action, or to investigate a complaint, a staff member must require the complainant to file the complaint in writing, either using the complaint form in writing.
- A staff member must ensure the written complaint to include the following items:
 - i. complainant's name, address and contact information
 - ii. the nature of the complaint
 - iii. the address of the property in question

If there is a concern from the complainant on the release of personal information to the public, staff should explain that all disclosure of information filed with the Municipality will be subject to compliance with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA).

- A staff who first receives the complaint must acknowledge upon receipt of the written complaint by contacting the complainant within 24 business hours, and to collect any missing information on the written complaint at that time.
- The intent to not accept a verbal complaint is to avoid hearsay and to eliminate potential frivolous complaints being filed through the Municipality; however, staff must exercise sound judgment to determine whether or not the complaint is legitimate, and most importantly, whether the issues as identified in the complaints pose any threats to the health, life and safety of the general public prior to dismissing the verbal complaint.
- Depending on the nature of the complaints, staff may require a meeting with the complainant in order to better understand the nature of the complaint prior to further actions. Due to lack of sufficient information, the Municipality may dismiss the complaint should the complainant refuse to meet in person.
- If the staff is unsure about which department should be involved in handling the complaint, or believe multiple departments may need to be involved, the staff should contact the department(s) first to confirm prior to forwarding the complaint and its incident report to the other department(s).

Supervisors

- Ensure all staff are aware of the Respond to Complaint Policy.
- Ensure the consistent application of the Respond to Complaint Policy.
- Maintain expectation of respond time and respond etiquette of all staff.
- Support staff in executing the Policy.
- Monitor the Policy and makes changes to the Policy as necessary in order to improve upon process efficiency.
- Where there is any conflict between the policies and procedures adopted by Riverdale Municipality and the policies and procedures set forth in a statute of the Provincial and Federal Government, the collective agreement of the Provincial or Federal statute shall supersede such other policies or procedures.



**OFFICE OF THE
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COMPLAINT FORM

Complainant: (please print)				Date: (office use only)	
Address:				Tel:	
City/Town:				Email:	

***Anonymity will be maintained between the complainant and the alleged violator except where necessary in a Court of Law**

Please provide as much of the following information as you can regarding your complaint (include dates and times of each incident).	Complaint details:				
	Signature			Date	

Subject Property:

Name:				Tel:	
Address:					
City/Town:				Postal Code:	

THIS SECTION TO BE COMPLETED BY STAFF

File No.:					
contravention of Bylaw No.:			Bylaw Name:		
Lot Size:	Zone:	Rec'd by:			