



Township of Dawn-Euphemia - Complaint Guideline

For the purpose of ensuring complaints are received and dealt with in a timely, consistent, confidential and efficient manner.

Definition of Complaint: A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction about the action or lack of action taken regarding operations, facilities or services provided by the Township of Dawn-Euphemia or by a person or body acting on behalf of the Township of Dawn-Euphemia. All complaints filed necessitate a response.

This document is to be used as a “guideline” to assist you in a course of action in the event of a complaint. Some situations are unique and difficult to explicitly detail every situation that may arise, some discretion or leeway must be used in its interpretation, implementation, and use.

This guideline *does not* address complaints:

- issues addressed by legislation, or an existing municipal by-law, policy or procedure;
- a decision of Council or a decision of a committee of Council;
- internal employee complaints;
- matters that are handled by tribunals, courts of law, quasi-judicial boards, etc.

A complaint is NOT:

- A request made to the Municipality on behalf of a citizen for a specific service, or to notify the Municipality that a scheduled service was not provided on time. Examples include:
 - ✓ Requesting that the municipality repair a street surface
 - ✓ Reporting a burnt out street light
 - ✓ Notifying the Municipality of a missed garbage collection
 - ✓ Alerting the Municipality of no water service
 - ✓ Report a bylaw or parking infraction
- A general or specific request for information regarding a municipal service;
- An opinion, comment, statement and expression of interest in a municipal program or service;
- An expression of approval for a municipal service, staff member, program, product or process;
- An idea submitted to the Municipality by a customer with the aim of improving services, programs, products or processes.

A complaint must be differentiated from a request for service or information, statements or opinions. When in doubt an issue should be treated as a complaint.

Complaints are matters or situations that the Township can take action to rectify involving (but not limited to):

- the manner in which an issue has been handled;
- by-law Infractions;
- property standards complaints;
- water quality concerns;
- perceived failure to do something agreed upon;
- failure to observe policy or procedures;
- error made by a staff member/volunteer;
- unfair or discourteous actions/statements by staff member/volunteer.

Procedure: All staff as well as the Mayor and Council are encouraged to direct customers to call the Municipal Office to register issues. The complainant’s name shall be kept “confidential”.

Customer Complaints/Support Issues can be submitted by:

- Phone 519-692-5148 – messages may be left on voicemail if after hours
- Email: admin@dawneuphemia.on.ca ;
- Mail: 4591 Lambton Line, RR 4, Dresden, ON N0P 1M0
- Fax: 519-692-5511
- After-hours drop box
- Attending in person to the Municipal Office during normal business hours

Frontline Resolution: It is the responsibility of the complainant to attempt to resolve concerns by dealing with Township employee(s) directly involved with the issue where appropriate. It is the responsibility of all Township employees to attempt to resolve issues or concerns before they become complaints, and identify opportunities to improve municipal services.

An informal complaint may be written or verbal and will generally be dealt with by front line staff for consideration or remedial action. Informal complaints may or may not be recorded. An informal complaint that cannot be resolved, at any time may enter the formal complaint process, at which time it must be in writing. Complaints that are resolved informally (without requiring any formal action to be taken) do not need to be tracked.

Process for Filing a Formal Complaint: Filing a formal complaint whereby frontline resolution cannot be achieved, should be submitted to the Municipal Office, on the Customer Complaint Form.

The Frontline Office staff will be responsible for

- Documenting the information required to facilitate the appropriate review and resolution on the Customer Complaint Form. The form may be completed by either the complainant or staff person.
- A copy of the Form will be forwarded to the Dept Head and/or staff person responsible for responding to the issue for action.
- In the event that the complainant speaks/writes directly to the Dept Head, he/she will document the complaint on the Customer Complaint Form.

The Dept Head will:

- Review the complaint and ensure that the necessary follow up is within their jurisdiction and in doing so may:
 - ✓ Review any existing file documents;
 - ✓ Interview employees or member of the public involved in the issue;
 - ✓ Identify actions that may be taken to address the complaint or improve municipal operations;
 - ✓ Review relevant municipal and provincial legislation;
 - ✓ Review the municipality's relevant policies and procedures.
- Respond to the complainant in a timely manner either by phone, email, in person or in writing.
- Document the subsequent responses and resolutions taken and return completed form to the central file.

Anonymous allegations or allegations made on behalf of an unidentified third party will not necessarily be entertained or investigated.

Frivolous and vexatious complaints, as determined by the Administrator-Clerk or designate in consultation with the appropriate Dept Head will not be investigated.

Exceptions to this guideline, may be considered by the Administrator-Clerk.

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.