



The Corporation of the Municipality of Wawa Policy Manual

POLICY TITLE:	Municipal Public Complaint Policy
SUBJECT:	Public Complaint Policy
POLICY NO.	HR-030
EFFECTIVE DATE:	July 11, 2023
ENACTED BY:	By-Law No. 3613-23

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1. Policy Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to provide a consistent and uniform process to respond to complaints received from members of the public regarding the dissatisfaction of programs, facilities, services, employees or operational procedures of the Municipality of Wawa.

By introducing guidelines and standards, the process of managing and resolving complaints will become more efficient allowing staff to respond to complaints in a timely manner and provide an opportunity to improve Municipal programs and services.

2. Applicability

This Policy will assist the Municipality of Wawa in providing excellent service to the public, and it will contribute to the continuous improvement of Municipal operations and service standards.

3. Definitions

For the purposes of this policy:

- (a) “**Clerk**” means the Clerk or his/her designate.
- (b) “**Complaint**” means an expression of dissatisfaction related to a municipal program, service, facility, or staff member, where a citizen believes that the municipality has not provided a service experience to the customer’s satisfaction at the point of service delivery and a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected.
- (c) “**Employee**” means an employee, whether full-time, part-time, student or contractor of the Municipality including Volunteers of the Wawa Fire Department.
- (d) “**Frivolous**” complaint means one that has no serious purpose or value, is about a matter so trivial or one so meritless on its face that any investigation would be disproportionate in terms of the use of resources.
- (e) “**Vexatious**” complaint means that the complaint is initiated with the potential intent to embarrass or annoy the recipient or is part of a pattern of conduct by the complainant that amounts to an abuse of the complaint process.

4. Policy Scope

This Policy applies to all complaints received by staff from members of the public regarding all administrative actions and functions of the Municipality of Wawa.

This Policy does not apply to:

- A decision of Council or of a Committee of Council;
- Internal employee complaints;
- Matters addressed by legislation or an existing municipal by-law;
- Matters that are handled by tribunals, courts of law, quasi-judicial boards, etcetera.

This Policy does not address:

- Inquiries;
- Requests for service;
- Compliments;
- Criticisms, frivolous, vexatious or anonymous complaints.

5. Policy – General

5.1 Procedure

A public complaint may be made in the following ways:

- Online through the Municipality of Wawa website (www.wawa.cc) using the Public Complaint Form;
- Verbal complaints made in-person or by telephone directly to municipal staff or through a member of Wawa Council;
- Written complaints sent by mail, e-mail or hand-delivered directly to municipal staff or through a member of Wawa Council.

All complaints should be filed as soon as possible.

5.2 Informal Complaint

It is recommended and encouraged that a Complainant first contact the Director or Manager from the service area from which the complaint arises.

The Department Director will use their best efforts to resolve these informal complaints before they become formal complaints, and after the resolution of such informal complaints, identify possible improvements in municipal services and operations.

5.3 Formal Complaint

5.3.1. Filing the Complaint

A Formal Complaint is generated when an informal resolution could not be reached. Formal complaints should be submitted to the Clerk on the Municipal Complaint Form attached as Schedule "A". All formal public complaints must be dated and signed by an identifiable individual.

5.3.2. Receipt and Acknowledgement

The Clerk shall log the complaint and forward a copy to the Department Director or designate. As soon as possible, or within five (5) business days of receipt of the complaint, the Clerk or designate will acknowledge that the complaint has been received in writing.

5.3.3. Review and Investigation

The Clerk will review the formal complainant and may:

1. Review relevant municipal and provincial legislation.
2. Review the municipality's relevant policies and procedures.
3. Review any existing file documents.
4. Interview employees or member of the public involved in the issue.
5. Identify actions that may be taken to address the complaint or improve municipal operations.

5.3.4. Decision

Within twenty (20) calendar days of receipt of a complaint, the Clerk or designate will provide a response in writing to the complainant, which may include any of the following responses;

1. Whether the complaint was substantiated.
2. If the complaint is not substantiated, reason(s) for the decision.
3. Any actions the municipality may take because of the complaint.
4. If the Municipality is unable to provide a response within twenty (20) calendar days, the Clerk will advise and provide an estimate of when a response will be provided.

5.3.5. Tracking and Reporting

The complaint must be tracked from its initial receipt to its resolution. Complaint records will be needed for regular review and analysis to identify recurring issues and to improve customer service and satisfaction. Annually, the number of complaints, type of complaints, and number of resolved complaints will undergo review by the Clerk, with an annual presentation to the Senior Management Team.

All personal information collected in carrying out this Policy will be dealt with in a confidential manner in accordance with the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

6. Review

This Policy shall be reviewed and updated as required by Municipal Council and/or the Clerk.

7. Policy Adoption and Review Guidelines

Date of Adoption by Council	By-Law No.	Date of Most Recent Review by Council	Changes Made Yes/No

8. References to Other Policies or By-laws

Policy Title	Policy Number	By-Law



Schedule "A" – Municipality of Wawa Formal Complaint Form

Name	
Address	
Phone Number	
Email	
Please provide the details your complaint, including relevant dates, times, location, and background information that might include municipal employees you have contacted to resolve the complaint, witnesses to the incident, photographs, etc.	
Do you have a recommendation or suggestion as to how to improve the situation or resolve the complaint?	

Complainant Signature: _____ Date: _____



Schedule “A” – Municipality of Wawa Formal Complaint Form

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY	
Complaint #:	
Received By:	Date:
Forwarded To:	Date:
<input type="checkbox"/> Acknowledgement Letter	<input type="checkbox"/> Additional Correspondence
Date Sent:	Date Sent:
Sent By:	Sent By:
Action Taken:	
Final Decision Letter:	Check items filed with the Clerk <input type="checkbox"/> Initial Complaint <input type="checkbox"/> Acknowledgement Letter <input type="checkbox"/> Additional Correspondence <input type="checkbox"/> Final Decision Letter
Date Sent:	
Sent By:	

Thank you for taking the time to express your concern(s). We will provide a response within twenty (20) calendar days of receiving your complaint. If you have any questions about this process, please contact the Clerk at 705 856-2244 ext. 223 or moneill@wawa.cc.



Schedule "B" Acknowledgement of Complaint

File No. M04

Date: _____

Name: _____

Address:

Dear Ms./Mr./Mrs. _____

Thank you for taking the time to express your concerns regarding

Your written complaint was received by the Municipality of Wawa on _____
(date complaint was received)

by: _____
(person who received the complaint)

We will provide a response within twenty (20) calendar days of receiving your complaint.

If you have any questions regarding the process, please do not hesitate to contact myself at 705-856-2244 ext. 223 or by email at moneill@wawa.cc

Sincerely,

Maury O'Neill
CAO/Clerk