

POLICY STATEMENT AND REGULATIONS

Number: 100.7

CUSTOMER SERVICE POLICY PROCEDURE AND APPEAL

PURPOSE

The District of Summerland seeks to maximize service to our residents and customers. Through this Administrative Fairness Policy, a mechanism is established to provide for appropriate and timely review of decisions and recommendations. It is important to the District of Summerland to have this policy as part of quality assurance and good service to the public. A copy of this policy will be provided to members of the public upon request. Any member of the public who questions the manner in which a decision may be reviewed should also be provided with a copy of this policy in addition to any other relevant information.

APPLICATION

The Administrative Fairness policy applies to all staff and those non-Council Committees and Commissions which have decision making and/or recommendation responsibility to Council. Excluded from this policy are those functions for which there is either a statutorily prescribed appeal process or prohibition to local review of the decision, such as the Board of Variance, and Subdivision Approving Officer authority. Also, excluded from this policy are those functions, which are outside the jurisdiction of the local government. The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act may have a potential effect on this policy.

PROCEDURE

Administrative procedure for handling complaints regarding administrative practices, processes and procedures.

1. Receipt of a Complaint

a) Informal Complaint

Where a public complaint (either verbal or written) is made against a staff decision and cannot be resolved by a decision-maker, the complainant should be directed to the supervisor of the person or department from which the complaint has been generated. The supervisor will attempt to resolve the matter in consultation with the decision-maker and the complainant. If it cannot be resolved, the complaint should be formalized.

The complaint shall remain confidential as well as the complainant's identity.

b) Stage One B Referral/Review

The complaint is then referred to the individual(s) or committee whose decision precipitated the complaint and the immediate supervisor of that person(s) for review. The immediate supervisor is required to invite the complainant to discuss the concerns. Upon completion of the review, the results will be conveyed in writing to the complainant, including reasons for the decision, as well as any legal, legislative, or policy restrictions, which may have affected the decision. The results should also be copied to the Municipal Clerk and the Chief Administrative Officer.

c) Stage Two B Review by Chief Administrative Officer

Where the complaint has not been resolved by the previous steps, the complaint will be reviewed by the Chief Administrative Officer who will invite the complainant and staff or committee to discuss the concerns. Upon completion of this review, the results will be conveyed in writing by the Chief Administrative Officer to the complainant, including the reasons for the concerns. Upon completion of this review, the results will be conveyed in writing by the Chief Administrative Officer to the complainant, including the reasons for the decision, as well as any legal, legislative or policy restrictions, which may have affected the decision. The complainant should be advised at this time that if they are not satisfied with the results, an appeal can be made.

4. Appeals

In the event the complainant is not satisfied with the efforts of the Chief Administrative Officer to address the complaint, the complainant may file a further complaint with the Council which must be in writing, and the local government authority must conduct a review *Aln-Camera*.

Local Authority Review

- a) When conducting a review, the Council must give reasonable and timely notice to all persons, including the Chief Administrative Officer and the complainant, who might be affected by the review process. All supporting information shall be provided to the local government authority. There may be circumstances where a complainant would prefer to make only a written submission.
- b) The complainant and Chief Administrative Officer shall appear before the Council. However, if the complainant is not comfortable appearing in a formal setting, at the request of the complainant, discussion may be held informally, possibly before an Executive Committee of the Council.
- c) The decision of Council in respect of the review should be made reasonably promptly in all circumstances.

- d) The decision shall be confirmed in writing, outlining the reasons for the decision and noting any legislative, bylaw, or policy restrictions affecting the decision. This decision will also be copied to the staff member and the supervisor.
- e) The complainant should be advised at this time that if they are not satisfied with the results, the matter can be referred to the Office of the Ombudsman.

ADOPTED: August 24, 1998