



Complaints Policy

Contents

1. Purpose	2
2. Outcomes	2
3. Scope.....	2
4. Principles.....	2
5. The Complaints Process	3
6. Related Internal Policies, Processes and Documents.....	3
7. References.....	4
8. Policy Review	4
9. Document Record	0



<p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em;">PONO</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 0.8em;">Integrity through transparency, trust and accountability</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 0.8em;">Integrity through standing up for what's right</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 0.8em;">Integrity through respect for our communities, environment and cultures</p> <div style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em; margin-top: 20px;">  </div>	<p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em;">WHANAUNGATANGA</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 0.8em;">One team who unites behind a shared vision</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 0.8em;">One team who is respectful and considerate to all</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 0.8em;">One team who encourages each other to succeed and excel</p> <div style="text-align: center; font-size: 3em; margin-top: 20px;">  </div>	<p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em;">WHANAKE</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 0.8em;">We will continue to evolve, adapting to our ever-changing environment</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 0.8em;">We will continue to evolve, steering our waka in the right direction</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 0.8em;">We will continue to evolve, leading our communities into a better future</p> <div style="text-align: center; font-size: 3em; margin-top: 20px;">  </div>
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1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide the public and employees with a reference for making and handling a formal complaint made regarding:

- an employee of the Tararua District Council (Council) acting contrary to their duties as an employee.
- Council delivering services, enforcement or projects contrary to its bylaws, regulations, policies, legislative requirements or standards.

2. Outcomes

- Council achieves its strategic and organisational objectives and organisational values.
- Information is available about a complaints process to customers and staff.
- We have a clear process with links to related policies.

3. Scope

4.1 In Scope

- Situations when the complainant believes an employee (permanent/casual/temporary) or contractors of Council has or is acting contrary to their duties as an employee.
- Situations when the complainant believes Council is acting contrary to its legislative requirements, standards, regulations, bylaws, or policies.

4.2 Out of Scope

- Enquiries.
- Day to day service matters including faults that can be directed through Council's CRM system, customer service, Antenno or website.
- Complaints about elected members.
- Complaints about members of the public, community groups or businesses.
- Official information requests.
- Disputes under the Building Act 2004.
- A dispute where there is an alternate disputes resolution process under legislation.
- Internal employment concerns.
- Complaints made on social media posts.
- Complaints about the libraries collection.

4. Principles

- Council welcomes feedback from residents, ratepayers and visitors.
- Council will provide information on its website and service centres, about how a complaint may be made, both in the scope of this policy and for other types of complaints.
- Council will take complaints seriously.
- Council will address complaints with respect, impartiality and fairness.
- Council will communicate with complainants in a timely and respectful manner.
- Council will respect the privacy of parties involved in a complaint.
- Council will handle complaints lawfully and in alignment with our values.

5. The Complaints Process

- Where possible complaints should be made in writing by the complainant and the preference is via Council's online form, but it can also be emailed or handed in at a service centre. The Customer Service team can provide support if necessary to submit verbal complaints in writing by completing the online form on behalf of a complainant.
- All complaints must use respectful and constructive language within their communication.
- Please complete all the questions in the online form (even if you're emailing or handwriting your complaint). This gives us the information we need to direct your complaint to the right Council Officer and to take the correct steps to assess the situation.
- All complaints will be acknowledged in writing (via email or standard mail) within 10 working days of receipt of the complaint.
- Your complaint will be addressed by the appropriate Council Officer. Once your complaint has been reviewed, a manager will write to you outlining:
 - The steps we've taken to assess the matter.
 - Any findings or decisions made.
 - Actions we've taken (or will take) to resolve the issue.

Please note: Each complaint is unique. How we handle it depends on the specific circumstances, the nature of the issue, and any relevant laws or regulations we must follow. This means outcomes may vary from case to case.

- Complaints made under specific legislation will be handled according to the requirements of that legislation. When this situation is identified, complainants will be advised of the appropriate procedure and requirements.
- If the complainant is not satisfied with the response to a complaint, they may refer the matter directly to the Chief Executive for review.
- If the complainant remains unsatisfied with the response received and the Chief Executive's review, they may write to Ombudsman New Zealand for an independent review.
- If a complainant is affected by a decision of Council, they may also apply to the High Court for a Judicial Review of the decision. More information about this process can be found on the Ministry of Justice website.
- If a complainant persists unreasonably with a complaint that Council believes is settled, at any stage from initial response to an Ombudsman's ruling, Council's Unreasonable Customer Behaviour Policy will be followed.

6. Related Internal Policies, Processes and Documents

Code of Conduct – Employees

Conflicts of Interest Policy

Disciplinary Policy

Enforcement Policy

Fraud, Corruption and Dishonesty Policy

Health and Safety Policy

Privacy Policy

Security Policy

Unreasonable Customer Behaviour Policy

[Rules of Engagement for Council's Social Media](#)

7. References

New Zealand Government, Consumer Rights and Complaints
Local Government Act 2002
Employment Relations Act 2000
Privacy Act 2020
Health and Safety at Work Act 2015
Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987

8. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed 3 yearly or whenever related policies or legislation affect content. This policy remains valid and in force irrespective of whether the review date has passed.

DRAFT

9. Document Record

Change	Made By	Date	Version
Full review	Policy project team	December 2025	2
ELT Review	ELT	January 2026	
Ability to have verbal reports supported by Customer Service	Community Connections Committee	February 2026	
Endorsed at Full Council Meeting	Tararua District Council Meeting	March 2026	3



TARARUA
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Dannevirke Service Centre

26 Gordon Street, Dannevirke
PO Box 115, Dannevirke 4942
Monday - Friday
8:00am - 5:00pm
Phone: 06 374 4080 (24 hours)
Email: info@tararua.govt.nz

Pahiatua Service Centre

136 Main Street, Pahiatua
Monday - Friday
8:00am - 4:30pm
Phone: 06 376 0110 (24 hours)
Email: info@tararua.govt.nz

Eketāhuna Service Centre & Library

31 Main Street, Eketāhuna
Monday - Friday
10:30am - 12:30pm & 1:00pm - 4:30pm
Phone: 06 376 0110 (24 hours)
Email: info@tararua.govt.nz

Woodville Service Centre, Library & isite

45 Vogel Street, Woodville
Monday - Friday
9:00am - 5:00pm
Phone: 06 376 0200 (24 hours)
Email: info@tararua.govt.nz