

COMPLAINTS MANAGEMENT POLICY

POLICY NUMBER	IRC-POL-013	DOC.ID	5453193
CATEGORY	Council Policy		
POLICY OWNER	Manager Governance and Assurance		
APPROVAL DATE	30 June 2026	RESOLUTION NUMBER	9769

OBJECTIVE

The objective of this policy is to establish a complaints management policy for Isaac Regional Council (Council) which complies with the obligations set out in section 268(4) of the *Local Government Act 2009* and other State legislation.

SCOPE

This policy **applies** to complaints made to Council about:

- an administrative action of Council (an Administrative Action Complaint),
- a disputed Penalty Infringement Notice (PIN waiver request),
- a breach of privacy,
- the non-protection of human rights,
- concerns from members of the public about Council employee behaviour or non-fraudulent conduct (see Code of Conduct),
- reviews requested by the CEO about any complaint,
- a breach of competitive neutrality principles, and
- fraud or corruption by Council officers..

This policy **does not apply** to:

- requests for service (see Request for Service Procedure)
- complaints about water and waste services (see Water and Waste Services Complaint Policy).
- complaints made under the *Public Interest Disclosure Act 2019* (see Public Interest Disclosure Policy),
- complaints about Councillors (see Councillor Conduct Policy) or the CEO (see Complaints Against the CEO Policy),
- complaints made by Council employees concerning the conduct, performance or behaviour of other employees (see Code of Conduct or Council's Speak Out Hotline),
- requests for review of a decision to reject an insurance claim (see [Claim and statement of claim | Queensland Courts](#)),
- requests for review of a decision made under the *Animal Management (Cats and Dogs) Act 2008* and reviewable on application to the Queensland Civil and Administration Tribunal (QCAT), or
- request for an internal review under the *Right to Information Act 2009*.

DEFINITIONS

The following terms are used in this policy. Definitions and examples of these terms as follows:

TERM / ACRONYM	MEANING
Accepted Complaint	Is a complaint which has been received and acknowledged as a complaint which requires formal investigation by a supervisor, the Governance and Assurance Department, or the Office of the Chief Executive Officer.
Administrative Action Complaint (AAC)	Has the meaning as defined in Section 268(2) of the <i>Local Government Act 2009</i> and can only be made by a person affected by the original decision. Examples of an AAC are: a complaint that a request for service has not been actioned, a request to waive a Penalty Infringement Notice, a complaint that Council did not follow its policy when making a decision.
Affected Person	Is a person who is apparently directly affected by a decision of Council, including a complainant of a competitive neutrality complaint, see Section 48(3) of the Local Government Act 2009
Anonymous / Anonymously	Is a person who makes a complaint to Council without disclosing their identity to Council.
Assessing Officer	An officer nominated in the complaints categorisation table in this policy and delegated by the CEO to assess the merits of a complaint for investigation under this policy.
CEO	Is the Chief Executive Officer of Council
Competitive Neutrality Complaint	Is a complaint made by an affected person relating to the failure of Council to conduct a business activity in accordance with the competitive neutrality principle - See Section 48(2) of the Local Government Act 2009
Competitive Neutrality Principle	An entity that is conducting a business activity in competition with the private sector should not enjoy a net advantage over competitors only because the entity is in the public sector. - See section 43(3) of the Local Government Act 2009
Complainant	Is a person who makes a complaint to Council about a decision, action or inaction of Council.
Council	Isaac Regional Council

Decision Making Officer	An officer nominated in the complaints categorisation table in this policy and delegated by the CEO to assess the merits of a complaint for investigation under this policy.
Internal Review	An informal term which can be used interchangeably with an AAC. Council does not have a formal internal review process outside this complaints management policy; however, a supervisor can choose to conduct an internal review of any original decision.
Investigating Officer	An officer nominated in the complaints categorisation table in this policy and requested to review original decisions under this policy.
Original Decision Maker	The employee, including the CEO, who made the decision which is subject to a complaint.
Penalty Infringement Notice (PIN)	A notice or ticket issued by Council for a breach of a local law, or a breach of a law which Council is responsible for enforcing. Examples of a PIN are a parking infringement notice, an overgrown allotment infringement notice, or an unregistered dog infringement notice.
QCA	Queensland Competition Authority
Receipting Officer	An officer who receives a complaint from a complainant.
Request for Service (RFS)	A formal or informal notification from the public asking for a service to be delivered, an issue to be fixed, or support to be given relating to a Council problem. Examples of an RFS are notifying of a pothole or road issue, complaining about excessive dog barking or an animal attack, requesting a waste bin replacement or that a park be mowed.

POLICY STATEMENT

Council's Position

Council is committed to a transparent, efficient and effective complaints management process. This means that Council will act in a way which is fair, ensures that complainants are given natural justice and procedural fairness, and that decisions will withstand internal and external scrutiny.

Council promotes regular internal review of decisions made in their departments to minimise the need for formal complaints to be made.

Council's Process (Section 306(2)(a) Local Government Regulation 2012)

Council's complaint process will be as follows:

- Receipt. Any employee can be a receiving officer and take a complaint; however, where possible, a complainant will be encouraged to speak with a customer service officer or directed to Council's website to fill out a complaint form.
- Referral. The receiving officer will refer the complaint to the assessing officer.
- Acknowledgement. The assessing officer will acknowledge that the complaint was received and assess the complaint.
- Assessment. The assessing officer will use the complaint assessment criteria to determine whether the complaint should be an accepted complaint or refused for further investigation. The complainant will be advised if more information is required.
- Assessment Outcome. The assessing officer will advise the complainant of the decision to accept the complaint for investigation, or to refuse to investigate the complaint. If an accepted complaint, a projected time for the investigation and determination will also be given, and the matter referred to the investigating officer. If a refused complaint, a review right of the decision to refuse to investigate further will be provided.
- Investigation. The investigating officer will conduct an investigation into the accepted complaint and provide a recommendation to the decision-making officer.
- Decision. The decision-making officer will decide the accepted complaint based on the outcomes of the investigation.
- Notice. The decision-making officer will advise the complainant of the decision and reasons for making the decision.
- Review. At the time of the notice, the complainant will be advised of any internal or external review rights.

Competitive Neutrality Complaints

- Referral. If a complainant advises Council that they are unhappy with Council's decision of a competitive neutrality complaint, Council will forward the complaint, any investigation report, and decision notice to the QCA as required by [Section 45\(3\) and \(4\) of the Local Government Regulation 2012](#).
- Report. Council will publish on its website, any QCA report outlining result of the competition authority's investigation of a competitive neutrality complaint against Council as required by [Section 53 of the Local Government Regulation 2012](#)
- Resolve. Council will decide, by resolution, whether to implement the recommendations in a QCA report within 1 month of receiving the report as required by Section 55 of the *Local Government Regulation 2012*.
- Notice. The CEO will give written notice of the resolution to the complainant and the QCA within seven (7) days of the resolution.

Council/s Principles (Section 306(3)(b) Local Government Regulation 2012)

- Council will attempt to resolve a complaint informally, and as quickly as possible, when able.
- Council will provide a proposed timeline for any investigation and resolution of an accepted complaint.
- Council will give timely updates when an investigation is taking longer than initially expected.
- Council will give reasons for decisions made under this policy, unless the complaint was made anonymously.
- Council will advise complainants of any external review rights associated with decisions associated made under this policy.
- Council will ensure that a complaint is not reviewed by the original decision maker.
- Council will investigate the merits of all complaints equally, fairly, and in confidence.
- Council will combine written and/or verbal advice to the complainant wherever possible.

Council's Assessment (section 306(3)(c) Local Government Regulation 2012)

The following criteria will be considered when assessing whether to accept a complaint for investigation:

- Whether the complaint is trivial, frivolous, or was made vexatiously,
- Whether the complainant is an affected person of the original decision,
- Whether the complaint can be sufficiently investigated with the information provided,
- Whether the complaint has been investigated previously, and the time between those complaints,
- Whether the complainant has another review right or avenue of appeal (including court review),
- Whether the complaint would be more appropriately investigated after another review right or avenue has been completed, and
- Whether the potential complaint outcome would justify the substantial or unreasonable diversion of Council resources for an investigation.

Council's Responsibilities (section 306(4) Local Government Regulation 2012)

All employees of Council, including Councillors and the CEO, are responsible for acting professionally and respectfully when providing information or assistance in the complaint management process.

The Manager Governance and Assurance is responsible for administering, recording, reporting, monitoring and publishing the complaints management process.

Managers and Directors are responsible for ensuring that they have sufficient delegated authority to facilitate their role in the complaint management process.

The CEO is responsible for promoting an effective and transparent complaints resolution culture within Council.

Complaint categorisation

TYPE OF COMPLAINT	Assessing Officer	Investigating Officer	Decision Officer	Review Right	Policy/Procedure
RFS	Customer Service or Records Officer	Department Officer	Department Officer or Manager	AAC	Request for Service Procedure
PIN WAIVER	Issuing Department Supervisor or Manager	Issuing Department Supervisor or Manager	Issuing Department Manager or Director	Magistrates Court	Internal PIN Waiver procedures
AAC	Governance Legal Officer	Governance Legal Officer with Department Manager or Director	Manager Governance and Assurance	Queensland Ombudsman	Administrative Action Complaint Procedure
COMPETITIVE NEUTRALITY COMPLAINT	CEO	CEO or CEO's delegate	CEO or CEO's delegate	Queensland Competition Authority	Section 48 Local Government Act 2009; Chapter 3, Part 2, Division 7 Local Government Regulation 2012
PRIVACY BREACH	Manager Governance and Assurance	Governance Legal Officer with Department Manager or Director	Manager Governance and Assurance	Office of the Information Commissioner	Information Privacy Procedure
PUBLIC INTEREST DISCLOSURE	Senior Governance Officer	Crime and Corruption Commission or	Crime and Corruption Commission	Queensland Ombudsman	Public Interest Disclosure Policy
HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATION	Manager Governance and Assurance	Governance Legal Officer with Department Manager or Director	Manager Governance and Assurance or Director	Human Rights Tribunal	Internal Human Rights complaint procedures
FRAUDULENT OR CORRUPT CONDUCT BY EMPLOYEE	Manager People and Capability / Manager Governance and Assurance	Manager People and Capability	Chief Executive Officer	Crime and Corruption Commission	Code of Conduct

FRAUDULENT OR CORRUPT CONDUCT BY THE CEO	Mayor	Mayor or delegate	Mayor	Crime and Corruption Commission	Complaints Against the CEO Policy
NON-FRAUDULENT OR BEHAVIOURAL CONDUCT BY EMPLOYEE	Manager People and Capability	Delegate of Manager People and Capability	Manager People and Capability	CEO	Code of Conduct
REVIEW REQUESTED BY CEO OF ANY COMPLAINT	Chief Executive Officer	Manager Governance and Assurance	Manager Governance and Assurance	Chief Executive Officer	Complaints Management Policy

CHILD SAFETY CONCERNS, DISCLOSURES AND ALLEGATIONS OF HARM

All complaints relating to child safety must be managed promptly and consistently by notifying the CEO and, where required, reporting the matter to the Police, relevant child safety authorities, or other regulatory bodies, with all actions undertaken in accordance with the [Child Safe Organisations Act 2024](#).

LEGISLATION

- *Local Government Act 2009*,
- *Local Government Regulation 2012*,
- *Information Privacy Act 2009*,
- *Human Rights Act 2019*,
- *Crime and Corruption Act 2001*
- *Public Interest Disclosure Act 2019*
- *Child Safe Organisations Act 2024*.

REFERENCES

ID	NAME
IRC-POL-004	Complaints Against the CEO Council Policy
CORP-POL-079	Code of Conduct
CORP-POL-054	Public Interest Disclosure Policy

CORP-PRO-020	Complaints Management Procedure
CORP-PRO-117	Administrative Action Complaint Procedure
CORP-PRO-093	Information Privacy Complaint Procedure

REVIEW

This policy is required by legislation. This policy should be reviewed at intervals of no more than three (3) years, or earlier if legislation or other circumstances change.

VERSION CONTROL

DATE	VERSION	UPDATE
11 December 2025	V1	Adopted by Council Resolution # 9460
30 June 2026	V2	Council Resolution # 9769 - Updated to include the competitive neutrality complaints process and child safety complaints following legislation updates.
