



<b>Customer Service &amp; Inquiries Policy</b>		Effective:	9/24/24
		Approved:	Council Sept 24, 2024
<b>Policy:</b>	<b>Customer Service</b>	By-law:	N/A
Section:	Admin	Resolution:	<b>2024-254</b>
Application:	All Employees	Supercedes:	

**1. Policy Statement:**

The Corporation of the Township of Cramahe strives to deliver exceptional customer service. Staff are committed to providing friendly, courteous, timely and accurate responses to customer inquiries, complaints and concerns.

The success of the Township depends on our ability to work and perform functions in the most effective and efficient ways, balancing the needs of the individual with the overall needs of the Township.

We are committed to continually improving our services based on customer feedback and ongoing evaluation.

**2. Purpose:**

The purpose of this policy is to provide standards for Customer Service that individuals can expect when accessing Township Services. This policy will also outline the process for receiving feedback and resolving issues relating to public complaints.

**3. Scope:**

This policy encompasses all interactions between the Township and its residents, businesses, and other stakeholders. It applies to all forms of communication and service delivery, including in-person, phone, email, and digital interactions.

**4. Definitions:**

- I. **Customer** means residents, business owners, visitors, tourists and stakeholders.
- II. **Service Request** means an inquiry which involves further action from a servicing department.
- III. **Staff means** full-time, part-time, student employees, Council and Committee Members.



IV. **One (1) Business Day** means the 24-hour period after an inquiry is made during business hours, excluding weekends and holidays. Departments that have extended operating hours are also subject to providing a response within one (1) business day.

V. **Priority Sequence** means ranking the service request by the following criteria:

- **Priority 1 – Health, Safety Risk or Time Sensitive.** Example – watermain break
- **Priority 2 – Loss of Service or Inconvenience.** Example – Missed snow removal
- **Priority 3 – Complaints about Service.**
- **Priority 4 – Information Only.** Request for traffic calming measures, suggested improvement, compliment, etc. This priority is for a collection of information or tracking purpose only; may need to be utilized later for statistical purposes. Requests will be reviewed depending on the type. (weekly, monthly, quarterly or annually)

VI. **Response** means acknowledgment receipt of the customer request. This may include responding to the request or providing a suitable response time frame.

VII. **Complaint** means an expression of dissatisfaction related to operations, a municipal service or program, 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.

## 5. **Implementation:**

I. **Complaints:** All external complaints are to be received by or directed to Staff via online portal (report a concern), e-mail, regular mail, telephone or in-person at Town Hall. This includes any external inquiries or complaints sent to or received directly by members of Council or staff.

II. **A complaint is distinct from:**

- a request for service made on behalf of a citizen for a specific service, or to notify the municipality that a scheduled service was not provided on time.
- a general inquiry or specific request for information regarding municipal service;
- an expression of approval or compliment for a municipal staff member, program, product or process; or
- a suggestion or idea submitted by a customer with the aim of improving services, programs, products or processes.

III. **This policy is NOT for complaints regarding:**

- Staff that are employed by a service provider contracted by the municipality,



these employees shall be subject to the policies of that service provider.

- 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, these are forwarded to Human Resources.
- Matters that are handled by tribunals, courts of law, quasi-judicial boards, etc.

**6. General Service Standards:**

Due to the requirement to gather information, a full response or resolution may take longer than the response times set in this policy. In this case, an initial response acknowledging the request and clarifying, if necessary, will be provided. A response time estimate based on the complexity of the inquiry and availability of staff should not exceed 15 business days without appropriate follow up. Refer to summary chart below for specific response standards.

Service	Response Timeline
<p><b>In Person</b> Customers can receive in-person Township services at our Municipal Townhall: 1 Toronto St. Colborne ON K0K 1S0 Mon-Thurs 8:30am – 5:00 pm Friday 8:30am – 12:00 pm</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attend to walk-in customers immediately</li> <li>• Serve customers in the order in which they appear, except when a customer has a scheduled appointment</li> </ul>
<p><b>Telephone</b> Customers can contact the Townhall 905-355-2821 during business hours listed above. In addition, an after-hours call service is provided for emergency service request matters such as: Tree down on road, broken watermain or sink hole. Voicemails will be responded to by the end of the next business day.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Telephone response for high priority calls within one business day.</li> <li>• Respond to voicemail by end of next business day.</li> <li>• Provide alternate contact on voicemail should there be an extended absence.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Web Based/ social media</b> (Refer to social media Policy)</p> <p><b>Social media inquiries-</b> staff will advise social media users that social media is not a formal communication channel and will be referred to information on the Townships Website and or appropriate resource when applicable.</p>	<p>Web based service requests via <b>report a concern</b> portal will be directed to appropriate department by the end of the next business day which will be handled in priority sequence. (refer to priority ranking Section 4.v.)</p>



<b>Written Correspondence/Feedback Form</b>	If your concern is related to a service request, your information will be entered into the system within 24 business hours.  Residents can expect to hear an acknowledgement response within 3 business days, an appropriate timeline for resolution will then be discussed.
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### **7. Customer Service Requests**

Any requests that cannot be resolved by front line Customer Service staff are assigned to departmental staff. Customers can submit service requests through various channels, including phone, email, in-person or by completing service request online by visiting our report a concern portal.

<https://www.cramahe.ca/en/living-in-our-community/report-a-concern.aspx>

### **General Feedback/Inquiry or Concern Form (Schedule B)**

### **By-Law Complaints Form (Schedule C)**

### **8. Process:**

#### **I. Filing the Complaint**

Where frontline resolution cannot be achieved, complaints should be submitted to the appropriate department manager or designate, on the form attached as **Schedule 'B'**. All information must be completed.

#### **II. Receipt & Acknowledgement**

Staff shall log the complaint and forward a copy to the department manager or designate.

Within (3) business days of receipt of the complaint, the department manager shall acknowledge the complainant as indicated on the complaint form. (preferred contact method)

#### **III. Investigation**

Department managers or designates will be responsible for investigating the matter, program and/or service pertaining to their department. A department manager may need to forward complaint to Human Resources if it involves staff conduct.

#### **IV. Decision**

Within (14) business days of the acknowledgement, the department manager shall provide a response. If department manager is unable to provide a response, an estimated timeframe will be given for follow up and or resolution.



#### **V. Record**

A copy of the complaint and resolution will be filed as per our service request system. All official records shall be maintained in accordance with the Municipality's TOMRMs filing system following the records retention by-law. If a municipal employee was the subject of the complaint, a copy of the record shall be retained in their personnel file with Human Resources Manager.

#### **VI. Appeal Process**

Once the Municipality has communicated the decision to the complainant; there is no appeal process at the municipal level.

#### **9. Related Policies:**

**Commitment to Respectful Conduct Policy**

**Social Media Policy**

**[By-Law Policy](#)**

**[Accessible Customer Service Policy](#)**

**[Employee Code of Conduct](#)**

**[Council Code of Conduct](#)**

#### **10. Review Cycle**

This policy will be reviewed at least once per Term of Council.



POLICY – Customer Service & Standards

I *HEREBY* acknowledge that all complaints are confidential until such time as the complainant may be asked to testify in support of the complaint; *AND FURTHER* acknowledge that if required I will attend and testify in support of this complaint at any Court of Law in the Province of Ontario.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**PERSONAL INFORMATION:** [This information](#) is being collected for the purpose of conducting a Bylaw Enforcement Investigation. The information may be shared with applicable Township of Cramahe departments and agencies for the purpose of initiating appropriate action relative to this report. The collection of the personal information on this application is authorized and protected under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, Section 33(c). By providing this information, you have consented to its use for the above purposes. If you have questions about the collection and use of this information, you may contact the Clerk, at 905-355-2821.

**NOTE:**

*Please refer to the Bylaw Policy for all information pertaining to how a formal complaint is handled. This will ensure the most effective outcome of your complaint.*

For Office Use Only	
Applicable By-Law(s):	
Name of Owner:	
Mailing Address of Owner:	
Roll #	1411 –
Referral Date:	Referred to:



**Schedule "B"**

**Concern/ Complaint or General Inquiry Form**

**Office Use Only**

Received By: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

To assist the Township of Cramahe Staff in following up on your complaint/ Concern or General Inquiry, please print the details below. The information must be completed in full, along with any questions you would like answered. Once you have submitted this form, a staff member will acknowledge receipt by the end of the following business day. At that time a response and timeline for resolution will be discussed.

**Contact Information and Preferred Method of Contact**

**(Please check your preferred contact Method)**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Department linked to inquiry:**

Public Works

Taxation

Planning

Parks, Rec and Facilities

Building

Clerks

**Details of Inquiry/Concern or Feedback:**

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*If more space required, please use back of form.*