

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND INVESTMENT

Customer Complaint Policy

Date Created: 19th April 2023

Modified: 24th August 2023

Summary

File reference:	CCP/POL/v1
Policy name:	Customer Complaints Policy
Security Classification	Not Protectively Marked
Disclosable under FOI 2021:	Yes
Publication Date:	
Review Date:	
Related legislation/applicable section of legislation:	Trade and Business Licensing Act 2021
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Policy Owner	Charmane Dalhouse- Morgan
Approved by:	Claudia Brady
Approval date:	15 th September 2023
Applies to:	Department of Commerce and Investment staff
Version:	V1

Customer Complaints Policy

1. Introduction

Complaints are an important way for the department to be made accountable to the wider public, providing valuable prompts to review its performance as a whole, as well as insight into how its employees conduct themselves.

This policy has been developed to protect the interests and reputation of the department and applies to all employees.

The purpose of this policy is to enable customers to make complaints, enable its employees to effectively handle and resolve complaints, and to provide a process to collect, collate and retrospectively analyse complaint data to continuously improve operations.

The department may take disciplinary action against employees if they fail to adhere to the Customer Complaints Policy or Procedure.

2. Objective of the policy

The Department of Commerce and Investment (DCI) seeks to maintain and enhance our reputation of providing our clients and customers with excellent services. We appreciate information and complaints as they assist us in improving our services.

The DCI is committed to responding to our customer's or potential customers' needs and concerns and resolving their complaints as quickly as possible.

This policy has been designed to guide our clients and staff on how the department receives and manages a complaint. We are committed to being consistent, fair and impartial when handling complaints submitted to the department.

The objective of this policy is to ensure:

- The staff and clients/customers are aware of our complaint-handling processes,
- Staff and clients/customers understand our complaints-handling process,
- Complaints are investigated impartially with a balanced view of all information or evidence,
- Reasonable steps are taken to protect personal information,
- Complaints are measured on their merits, considering individual circumstances and needs.

3. Definition of a Complaint

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction or concern made by a customer or complainant about the standard of service, actions, or lack of actions by the department and its staff, affecting an individual customer or group of customers.

4. Responsibilities:

Management is responsible for:

- Establishing a system that manages complaints effectively and efficiently
- Ensuring the complaints process is effectively administered
- Ensuring all staff are appropriately trained in complaints management
- Facilitating the development of the complaints management policy and procedure and the delivery of an effective complaints management system
- Conducting internal reviews where the department has conducted an investigation
- Ensuring that recommendations made through investigation reports and internal reviews are actioned
- Referring matters to an external agency for action where appropriate
- Maintaining accurate complaint records
- Determining the response to complaints where escalated

Employees are responsible for:

- Handling complaints in accordance with the department's Customer Complaint Procedure
- Maintaining accurate complaint records

5. How to file a formal Complaint

- A complaint can be made in the following ways:
 - By emailing the completed complaints form to info@dci.gov.ky or enforcement@dci.gov.ky
 - Completing the complaints form and hand delivering it to the DCI counter in a sealed envelope on the ground floor of the Government Administration Building.
 - By phone, Monday to Friday, 9 am to 4 pm (945-0943).
 - Speaking to a member of staff or Trade Officer directly, and handing them the completed Complaint form, in the case of matters relating to breach of the following Acts
 - i. Trade and Business Licensing Act

- ii. Liquor Licensing Act
- iii. Music and Dancing Act
- iv. Local Companies Control Act
- v. Tobacco Act

6. The complaints process

6.1 Let the customer explain and listen carefully

When a customer makes a complaint, in person, on the phone or via email, you must concentrate solely on what the customer is telling you. Make notes of the key facts and their concerns so you may fill out the Complaint Report Form.

Do not interrupt the customer, stay calm, and in control and avoid defensive reactions. If the customer is particularly difficult, it is important to remember the person is not complaining about you personally. Stay composed, be positive, and be helpful. In a supportive but concerned tone of voice, you can demonstrate you are actively listening and empathetic to the customer.

6.2 Acknowledge, thank, and apologize to the customer

At the appropriate time during the conversation acknowledge the customers perspective, and the stress this may have caused them.

Thank the customer for bringing this matter to your attention. This demonstrates that you are concerned and want to assist them and resolve the matter.

In the case of a customer service complaint, you may also need to empathise with the complainant concerning the failure to deliver the level of service expected, if appropriate. By saying 'sorry' you are again demonstrating to the customer that you are genuinely apologetic that this has happened to them and showing that you wish to put things right.

6.3 Ask questions and summarise your understanding

If a customer is angry, ask their permission to ask questions prior to doing so. This allows you to collect all of the facts needed to understand what has happened and to identify how best to resolve the situation.

Ask a combination of open ("what", "how", "who", "why", "where" and "when"), as well as closed questions (for example, "did you?", "is he?").

Finally, summarise your understanding back to the customer to ensure you are clear of the facts. In addition, give the customer the opportunity to share any further facts they may have omitted.

6.4 Explain the actions you will take as a result of their complaint

Ensure that you only commit to the steps you have the authority to take. For example, explain what you will personally undertake to resolve the complaint, including a specific time that a team member will get back to them.

Remember to be realistic about timescales and do not over-promise. When receiving the complaint, you should take ownership of it. If you need to escalate to a more senior staff member, explain to the customer who will be in contact with them, their name and job role.

6.5 Feedback

Ask the customer what they expect as an outcome. Check that the customer is happy with the suggested actions you have committed to. Where appropriate, ask the customer if there is anything further that you could do at this stage to help them.

6.6 Record the complaint

Immediately record the complaint on the Complaint Report Form, including what preventative measures should be made to avoid the issue occurring again.

Retaining these forms allows the department to see patterns emerge over time. Numerous complaints about a particular process or service might indicate that changes need to be made. This data also allows employees to see what actions were taken to resolve complaints in the past, and can help streamline them in the future.

6.7 Action the agreed next steps and follow up

If the matter was not resolved when the complaint was made and you need to follow up with the client, record your attempts and the outcomes achieved at each attempt. Complaints are to be responded to promptly and handled objectively.

Ensure that all further actions have been taken and all promises made to the customer have been met.

Provide the customer a confirmation via email when everything has been done as promised.

6.8 Review preventative measures

The department will review Complaint Report Forms on a continual basis to determine any measures that will be implemented to minimise the risk of similar occurrences in the future.

In the case of a complaint regarding breach of legislation which may require investigation by the Enforcement Team. The following actions should be followed:

6.9 Acknowledgement:

Within three business days of receiving a complaint, a Trade Officer will acknowledge receipt of a complaint in writing via email or phone in the absence of an email contact.

6.10 Review:

An initial review of the complaint will be conducted, and a determination of additional information or documentation is required to complete an investigation. Contact will be made with the complainant to clarify details or request additional information where necessary.

6.11 Investigation:

Within ten (10) business days of receiving a complaint, an investigation into the complaint objectively and impartially by considering the information provided, our actions concerning your dealings with the business entity and any other information which may be available that could assist us in investigating your complaint.

6.12 Feedback:

Following the initial investigation, the complainant will be notified of the findings and any actions which may have been taken regarding the complaint.

6.13 Action:

Where appropriate, sanctions will be applied to the business as deemed fit from the investigation.

6.14 Record

A record of the complaint received concerning the business entity will be created. (see form at Appendix A)

Should a complainant prefer to remain anonymous, a letter outlining the issue addressed to the DCI Enforcement Team is to be delivered to the DCI counter at the Government Administration Building. In addition, a phone call to the Enforcement team is also acceptable and there will be no requirement to provide identification.

Complaints Form

Personal Details

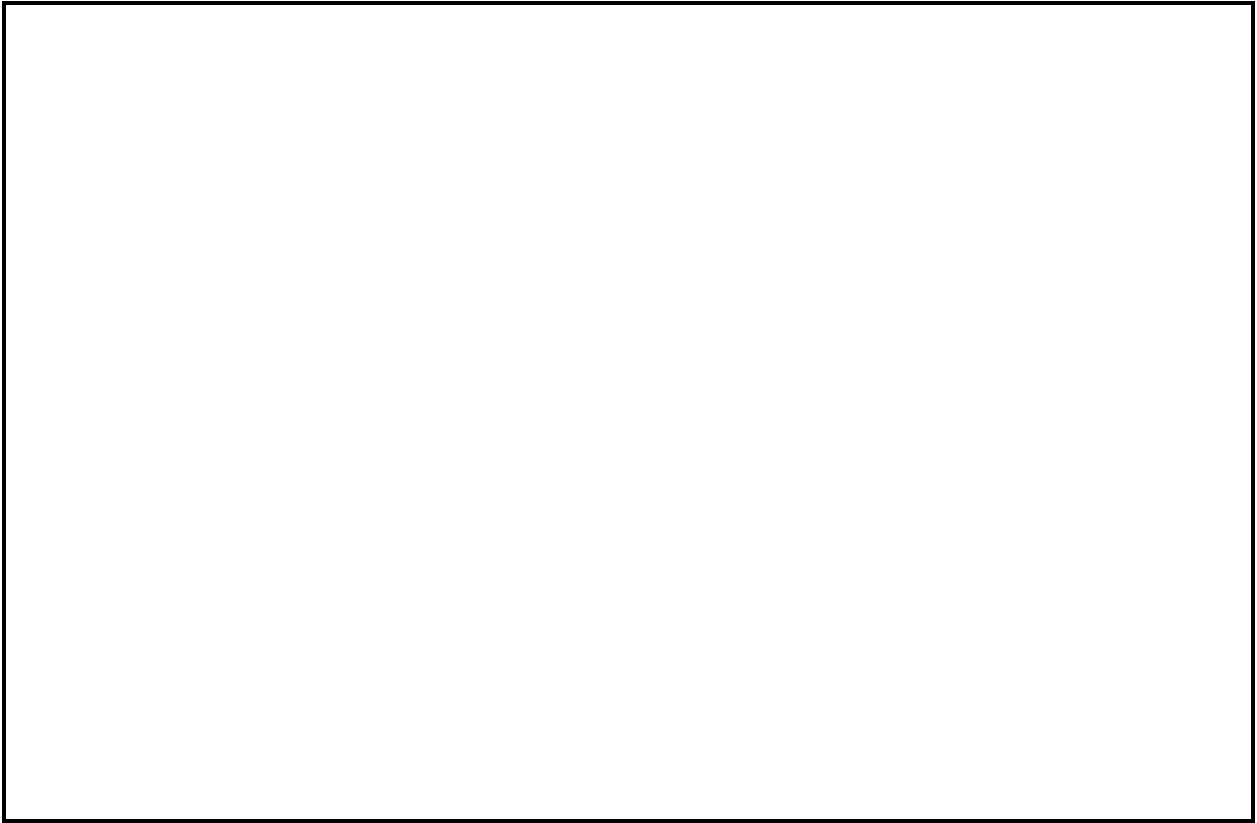
Full Name (First, Last):		
Postal Address:		
Street Address:		
District of Residence:		
Contact Details:	Phone:	Mobile:
	E-mail:	

Accused/Business Details (If known)

Full Name (First, Last):		
Postal Address:		
Street Address:		
District of Residence:		
Contact Details:	Phone:	Mobile:
	E-mail:	

Complaint Details

Nature of the complaint: (Select which apply) Customer Service / Investigations for breach of legislation / Other
Date and Time of Incident:
Details of complaint



I certify that my Complaint against the business entity/person is true to my knowledge. I understand that I will face criminal prosecution for making a false complaint under section 124 of the Police Act (2021 Revision).

Signature: _____ Date: _____

For Official Use Only

