



Complaints Policy

Policy Name	Complaints Policy
Department	Communications and Engagement
Owner of Policy	Director, Communications and Engagement
Version #	Version 1
Issued Date	November 20, 2024

Overview

Purpose

The purpose of this Complaints Policy is to provide a clear and transparent process for addressing and resolving complaints received by Circle Community LandTrust (Circle). The goal is to ensure that complaints are handled according to the principles below.

This policy applies to all complaints made to an employee of Circle Community LandTrust by a tenant, neighbour, contractor, vendor, or any other external stakeholder* about the operations, maintenance or occurrence of an event or incident on Circle owned properties. It does not apply to private interactions between Circle tenants and any member of the public occurring on property not owned by Circle.

*This policy does not apply to complaints or concerns expressed received from City staff or any political office. Complaints, concerns or enquiries received by City staff or a member of a political office are to be forwarded to the Director of Communications and Tenant Engagement immediately upon receipt.

Principles

Respect and Fairness: All complaints will be handled with respect and impartiality. The privacy of all parties involved will be protected.

Accessibility: Circle will ensure the complaints process is accessible to all, including those who need secondary persons advocating on their behalf, and those who require assistance for any special needs.

Transparency: The Complaints Policy will be made available on Circle's website. Complainants will be kept informed about the progress of their complaint.

Timeliness: Complaints will be addressed in a timely manner, with efforts to resolve them as quickly as possible.

Continuous Improvement: Feedback from complaints will be used to improve our services and address systemic issues.

Responsibility

The Director of Communications and Tenant Engagement is responsible for the administration of this policy and related procedures.

Definitions

Complaint: An expression of dissatisfaction about the Organization's services, policies, or actions.



Complaints Policy

Complainant: The person or entity making the complaint.

Complaints Channel: The Complaints Channel is a unique chat in the Teams environment. It will be the primary tool for tracking and resolving Formal Complaints.

Complaints Form: Circle's Microsoft form developed for receiving complaints, as updated from time-to-time

Substantive Response: Means a response to a complaint that either dismisses the complaint for reasons provided, resolves the complaint, or provides a timeline or clear next steps towards resolving the complaint.

Process

Step 1: Receipt of Complaint and Substantive Response

Complaints may be made to any employee of Circle by phone, voicemail, email, in-person, or written form. The recipient of a complaint will take steps to move the matter towards a resolution by either:

1. Where the substance of the complaint is within the recipient's capability and knowledge, addressing it by providing a Substantive Response; OR
2. Communicating to the complainant who the complaint is being directed to for a Substantive Response. The initial recipient will track and confirm that a Substantive Response is provided by the person the complaint was directed to.

This first step will be completed within 2 business days of receipt of the complaint.

Step 2: Confirmation of Satisfaction

The staff member delivering the Substantive Response will ask the complainant if they are satisfied. Where a complainant indicates that they are not satisfied with the response, the staff person will invite the complainant to make a Formal Complaint by completing the online Complaints Form.

Staff will provide the Complainant with the web address. Where a Complainant is unable to complete the online form because of an accessibility barrier, the staff person will open the form, read the questions to the complainant, and complete it in real-time transcribing the complainant's answers.

Step 3: Escalation and Review

Upon receipt of a Formal Complaint, the Director of Communications and Engagement will review the complaint, populate the details in the Complaints Channel, and ensure the relevant member(s) of the Senior Management Team are added to the channel. The Complaints Channel will be used to discuss the complaint, gather information, determine the appropriate respondent, and document the response.

Circle will respond to a Formal Complaint within 10 business days. If more time is required, the complainant will be informed of the delay and the reasons for it.

An acceptable response will address each point raised in the complaint and either (1) communicate that the complaint has been dismissed and the reasons for dismissal; or (2) detail how the issue will be



Complaints Policy

resolved or managed. The applicable respondent will follow the implementation of the resolution until its conclusion.

Internal Tracking

The Communications and Engagement department will receive Formal Complaints through the Complaint Form. The Director of Communications will log and record all Formal Complaints and their resolution. This information will be summarized and included in each report to the Board.

At least annually, the complaints data will be analyzed by the Director of Communications for the purposes of flagging trends with a view to continuous improvement.

Tracking Continuous Improvement and Review

Regular Review: This policy will be reviewed bi-annually or sooner as determined necessary by the Director of Communications and Tenant Engagement.

Compliance Audit: The Director of Communications and Engagement will conduct periodic reviews of staff adherence to this policy.

Training: This policy will be included in employee training and onboarding programs. All employees will be briefed on the complaint handling process as part of their orientation.