

Title	Complaints Handling Policy		
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1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

This policy outlines and facilitates GMCT's best practice approach to complaint handling, ensuring improved outcomes for individuals and GMCT. This policy defines an open and transparent approach to complaint handling to ensure the effective, timely, consistent and appropriate response to complaints.

1.2 Scope

This policy applies to all feedback and complaints received by GMCT, regardless of the method in which the complaint is received and including complaints about third parties, such as contractors. It applies to all staff.

2 Policy Statement

GMCT is committed to best practice complaint handling as part of its customer-centric service philosophy.

We promote a culture that encourages feedback and complaints and we learn from complaints in order to improve our services.

Members of the public expect high quality, timely services and decisions that are transparent and fair. We acknowledge the right of members of the public to make a complaint when their experience and/or our services do not meet their expectations or meet the standards we have established in our customer charter.

3 Policy Details

3.1 Guiding Principles

This policy is based on the following seven principles

3.1.1 Commitment

We are committed to resolving complaints and have a culture that recognises an individual's right to complain. We value complaints and recognise them as being part of our business of serving our communities and improving service delivery.

3.1.2 Accessibility

People with a range of needs can easily complain and staff actively assist them to navigate the complaints process.

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3.1.3 Transparency

We make it clear how to complain, where to complain and how the complaint will be handled. The steps taken to respond to a complaint are recorded and will stand up to scrutiny.

3.1.4 Objectivity and fairness

Complaints are dealt with courteously, impartially, within established timeframes and are assessed on merit.

3.1.5 Privacy

Complaint information is handled according to privacy laws and other relevant legislation.

We provide clear information about how we handle personal information. Complaint data is de-identified if reported on more widely.

3.1.6 Accountability

We are accountable internally and externally for our decision making and complaint handling performance. We provide explanations and reasons for decisions, and ensure that our decisions are subject to appropriate review processes.

3.1.7 Continuous improvement

Acting on, learning from and using complaint data helps us identify problems and improve services.

3.2 Roles and responsibilities of GMCT staff

Frontline staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Taking initial complaint and assessing complaint against pre-defined criteria for complaints, in particular• Initial acknowledgment of the complaint to the complainant• Resolve and subsequently inform administrator of the complaint OR forward directly to the administrator to resolve
Managers and directors* NB: This is a point of escalation and referral	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ultimate accountability for resolution of individual complaints• Provide support and direction as required to frontline staff and complaints administrator in meeting expectations and obligations in accordance with this policy and our customer charter• Respond in accordance with the policy and workflow• Assist as required with complaint resolution external to their directorate (as part of a complaints review /process)
Chief Executive Officer* NB: This is a point of escalation and referral	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Limited to complex, serious or systemic complaints and, in relation to those complaints:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Approve and sign correspondence- Approve media statements/interviews- Attend meetings with complainant- Liaise with Department of Health and Human Services- Liaise with the Cemeteries and Crematoria Unit
Manager customer experience/ Complaints administrator	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Record/log all complaints in the ELO system• Monitor (enforce) progress to closure within defined timeframes• Report against KPIs/SLAs• Escalate/draw on resources to resolve issue• Follow up on recommended learnings and business process changes and ensure implementation
Executive manager corporate communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Oversight of communications• Develop/review written communication to complainant
Legal consultant	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review of written communication

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review of proposed compensation if offered• Review of requests against the Act/privacy |
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3.3 How can complaints be made

Complaints can be submitted verbally, by phone or in person, in writing, by email, via GMCT's Facebook page or other feedback channels, including GMCT's feedback postcards and online surveys.

Mail: The Greater Metropolitan Cemeteries Trust
PO Box 42
FAWKNER VIC 3060

Phone: 1300 022 298

Email: enquiries@gmct.com.au

In person: At any GMCT reception or to any member of staff

3.4 Accessibility

Anyone who has been affected by a decision or action of GMCT (including a failure to make a decision or take action) can make a complaint.

We work with The National Relay Service to assist those with a hearing or speech impairment to make a complaint or provide feedback.

People who would like to make a complaint or provide feedback in a language other than English (LOTE) can use the certified Victorian interpreting and translation service (VITS). This information is provided in detail in our customer charter.

GMCT accepts and responds to anonymous complaints, provided enough information has been provided.

3.5 Complaint handling procedure

Details of how complaints are handled, recorded and reported against as well as possible remedies, are outlined in GMCT's Complaints Handling Procedure. Criteria against which complaints are assessed are also outlined in the definitions section of the complaints handling procedure.

The complaints handling procedure is a four-tiered approach:

- a) Frontline resolution
- b) Investigation, if required
- c) Internal review
- d) Access to external review

3.6 Complaints about allegations of corrupt conduct

Where a complaint involves allegations of corrupt conduct, it will be handled in accordance with GMCT's Fraud Control Policy (#21) and Protected Disclosure Policy (#11).

3.7 Recording complaints

All complaints are recorded in GMCT's complaint database.

Complaint data is analysed and quarterly reports are provided to the audit and risk committee against KPIs and identifying ways we can reduce complaints and improve services. Senior management is responsible for acting on the recommendations in these reports.

3.8 Reporting on performance

To measure our performance, we have the following key performance indicators:

- Complaints agreed to (deemed valid), partially valid, not valid
- Performance against timelines set by GMCT i.e. average time to respond

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- Number of changes made to services as a result of complaints
- Number of complaint outcomes overturned on internal review
- Customer satisfaction with the complaint handling system
- Complaints escalated to the Victorian Ombudsman's office where GMCT's original decision has been overturned and/or proposals for action have been made by the Ombudsman

We will report against our complaint handling key performance indicators in our annual report.

4 References & Related Materials

4.1 Legislation & Regulations

- *Cemeteries & Crematoria Act 2003 (Vic)*
- *Cemeteries & Crematoria Regulations 2015 (Vic)*
- *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*
- *Freedom of Information Act 1982*
- *Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission Act 2011*
- *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014*
- *Protected Disclosure Act 2012*

4.2 Related GMCT documents

- Customer Service Charter No. 052
- Protected Disclosure Policy No. 011
- Social Media Policy No. 106
- Media Policy No. 054
- Complaints Framework and Workflow
- VPSC employee Code of Conduct
- Community Engagement Manual

5 Policy History

Date	Details of Change
31 May 2017	New policy established

6 Definitions

Term	Definition
complaint	A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction with: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the quality of an action taken, decision made or service provided by an agency or its contractor• a delay or failure in providing a service, taking an action, or making a decision by an agency or its contractor.
Frontline staff	All staff who engage with the public as a part of their regular work, including burial operations and horticulture staff, reception and sales staff