



Customer Complaints Policy

July 2026

If you or your representative contact us and are not happy about a service we have provided, an action we have or have not taken, a decision made by Council, or the behaviour of a Council officer or contractor, we will ask if you would like to have your concern managed as a complaint.

If you would not like your concern managed as a complaint, we will take it on board as feedback and use it as the basis for our continuous improvement processes.

How do I make a complaint?

Complaints can be made:

- Online – [Make a Complaint](#)
- Phone – (03) 9209 6777
- Mail – City of Port Phillip, Private Bag 3, ST KILDA 3182
- In person – St Kilda Town Hall, 99A Carlisle Street, St Kilda

Need to contact us in your language? Please phone our language-specific service:

- Русский (Russian): 03 9679 9813
- Polski (Polish): 03 9679 9812
- Ελληνικά (Greek): 03 9679 9811
- 廣東話 (Cantonese): 03 9679 9810
- 普通話 (Mandarin): 03 9679 9858
- Italiano (Italian): 03 9679 9814

For other languages not listed, phone 03 9679 9814 or 131 450.

You also have the option of writing your complaint in your language, and we will have it translated into English for free. If writing your complaint is not possible, please contact us to discuss other ways to submit your complaint.

National Relay Service



If you're deaf or have a hearing or speech impairment, contact us through the [National Relay Service](#). Ask for **ASSIST** - Port Phillip at 03 9209 6777.



How quickly will Council respond to my complaint?

We are committed to resolving all simple complaints within five (5) business days. A simple complaint is any complaint which can be resolved without significant investigation or collaboration across Council teams. For complex complaints, which may require deeper investigation or input from several areas of Council, we are committed to providing a final response within 20 business days. We will always work to resolve complaints earlier than these timeframes if possible.

If we cannot resolve your complaint within these timeframes, we will contact you to explain the reasons for the delay and provide an updated timeframe for response. If you do not hear from us and your complaint has gone past one of these deadlines, please contact ASSIST on (03) 9209 6777 to request an update from the responsible officer.

How will council respond to my complaint?

If you decide to make a complaint, you will receive an automatic acknowledgment email containing:

- a) A unique reference number so you can identify and follow up on your complaint
- b) An estimated timeframe for when we will resolve your complaint
- c) Details on how you can get information about our complaint handling process.

Council will address different types of complaints in different ways:

- **Services** – where we have failed to deliver a service to you, we will work with you to remedy the situation. You might expect:
 - An explanation of why the error, if any, occurred and how we will prevent it from happening in the future
 - A reversal of a decision, or an explanation for why that decision will not be reversed
 - Working with you to determine what a good outcome might be
 - Offering an apology
 - Sharing any improvements identified or changes necessary to reduce the likelihood of the issue occurring again.

If you are making a complaint about a service for which you are not a direct customer, we will need to consider any impact that responding to your complaint might have on the direct customers of the service.

- **Staff behaviour** – where staff have not behaved professionally, we will coach them. Serious failures in staff conduct will be dealt with according to our Human Resource Policies. You will receive correspondence from Council outlining the steps we have taken to address your complaint.

Council is not the only organisation which provides services within the municipality. If you make a complaint which is not the responsibility of Council to address, we will do our best to help you find who is responsible so that you can resolve your complaint with them.



How can I monitor my complaint?

You can contact us at any time with the reference number provided to you at the beginning of our complaint handling process to get an update. You may also log on to your MyPortPhillip account to view any open complaints in your name.

What if I am not happy with Council's response?

If you are not happy with the outcome of your complaint, you may request an Internal Review, which will be undertaken by a Manager or other senior officer who was not involved in the handling of your original complaint. An Internal Review is the final internal escalation step in Council's *Managing Complaints Policy*.

If your complaint has already gone through an internal review and you remain unhappy with our response, you may contact the Victorian Ombudsman, who are responsible for investigating complaints about Victorian Public Service Providers.

The Ombudsman can be contacted via the channels below:

- Phone: 03 9613 6222
- Web: [Make a complaint | Victorian Ombudsman](#)

Will the details of my complaint be kept private and confidential?

Information gathered when investigating your complaint will only be used to deal with your complaint or to address issues identified in the investigation. Information may be de-identified and will only be shared with relevant staff. If your complaint is in relation to one of Council's contractors, we will only share essential information with them to help reach a resolution.

The behaviour you should expect from Council.

You should expect that you will be listened to, treated with respect, and actively involved in the complaint process where possible and appropriate.

If you wish to make a complaint, Council will:

- Accept complaints made in different ways, including in writing, online, by phone, in person or through an authorised representative



- Help people who need support to make or manage a complaint
- Communicate in plain English
- Provide information in accessible formats where practical
- Use or offer interpreter, translation and relay services where needed
- Allow a support person or advocate to assist a complainant where appropriate
- Protect complainants from unreasonable negative treatment because they have made a complaint
- Explain what Council can and cannot do in response to the complaint.

The behaviour Council expects from you.

While we strive to deliver a great service to our customers, we are not perfect and understand that at times we get things wrong, and this can be frustrating.

Like you, our staff want to be listened to and treated with respect.

Some types of behaviour are never acceptable. They include verbal abuse, threats and violence.

Where a customer's behaviour is unreasonable, Council has processes in place to protect staff. We may remove customers from the premises, consider placing restrictions on customers, or ban customers from attending certain Council premises.

We may also recommend mediation or refer a customer to the Victorian Ombudsman. Restricting customers' access to Council services or buildings is a serious decision and will only be made if there are no other options for remediation.

If Council restricts a customer's access to services or buildings, we will be clear about what the limit is, and we will always abide by the *Victorian Charter of Human Rights* to help customers access services they need.

What to do if Council has restricted your access or banned you

Council will only limit a customer's access to services or buildings if, after an investigation by senior staff, their behaviour has been found to be unreasonable. If Council has limited your access, you have certain rights:

- The right for your case to be reviewed by Council in 12 months' time. You can do this in writing or by phone.
- To make a complaint to the Victorian Ombudsman:
 - Phone: 03 9613 6222
 - Web: [Make a complaint | Victorian Ombudsman](#)

