



Charleston Tech Advisor

CUSTOMER COMPLAINTS AND DISPUTE RESOLUTION POLICY

Rev 01 (23rd Aug 2020)

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 “A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the Charleston Tech Advisor or its staff, affecting an individual customer or group of customers”.
- 1.2 Charleston Tech Advisor is committed to achieving transparency and accountability in its administrative and management practices and hence needs an efficient and effective complaint handling process.

2. PURPOSE.

Charleston Tech Advisor recognizes the value of customer complaints as an important tool in monitoring and responding to customer expectations. In order for Charleston Tech Advisor to respond appropriately to complaints, the complaints should be properly recorded and assessed as part of an ongoing complaints management process.

- 2.1 The purpose of the Charleston Tech Advisor Customer Complaint and Dispute Resolution Policy (Policy) is to:
 - (a) Recognize, promote and protect customers’ rights to complain about their dealings with Charleston Tech Advisor.
 - (b) Ensure that an accessible complaints management process is in place.
 - (c) Take appropriate action to resolve complaints as required.
 - (d) Provide a mechanism for resolving complaints in a timely, efficient and courteous manner.
 - (e) Record assess and review complaints on an ongoing basis in order to improve the products and services offered by Charleston Tech Advisor.
- 2.2 Charleston Tech Advisor acknowledges that a complaint may not always be legitimate and/or may be exaggerated. However, the same principles and procedures apply for all complaint resolution.
- 2.3 The use of this Procedure does not negate the right of the customer to make a complaint to the State Ombudsman or to the State/Local Government Relations or to take other legal action.

3. OBJECTIVE.

- (a) The objective of this Policy is to embed an effective and efficient complaints management process that is aligned with Charleston Tech Advisor's business values, core vision and strategic objectives.
- (b) This Policy applies to all employees and Elected Members of Charleston Tech Advisor and all individuals who wish to make a complaint relating to Charleston Tech Advisor.
- (c) In developing this Policy, Charleston Tech Advisor has adopted industry best practice and ensured that its customer complaints management process is formally reviewed.

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Standard AS ISO 10002-2006 'Customer Satisfaction – Guidelines for complaints handling in organizations'.

- (d) The Policy is also supported by the various Charleston Tech Advisor policies and procedures that form part of our broader Governance Framework, in particular, Charleston Tech Advisor's:
 - (i) Customer Charter.
 - (ii) Risk Management Policy.
 - (iii) Code of Conduct for Staff and for Elected Members.

4. POLICY STATEMENT.

- (a) Charleston Tech Advisor recognizes that all individuals have the right to complain, have their complaint heard and be treated with dignity and respect. Any individual who makes a complaint also has the right to not be discriminated against as a result of making the complaint. This means customers will not be treated unfavorably, including in the way Charleston Tech Advisor communicates and provides services both during the resolution of the complaint and once the complaint is resolved.
- (b) Charleston Tech Advisor recognizes that complaints can often highlight gaps in our processes and encourages customers to raise issues so that they can be addressed.
- (c) The guiding principles from the AS ISO 10002-2006 'Customer Satisfaction – Guidelines for complaints handling in organizations' apply to Charleston Tech Advisor in the following manner:

Commitment - Charleston Tech Advisor members, the Owners and Partners are committed to an integrated dispute resolution system and providing the necessary support and resources for the system to operate effectively (including the provision of appropriately trained employees, the implementation of an enterprise-wide internal complaints management process and the existence of a robust complaints reporting procedure).

Resources – Charleston Tech Advisor has deployed the necessary resources to ensure that the Internal Dispute Resolution process operates effectively and efficiently, and that complaints are managed by staff who have received sufficient training and are competent to deal with complaints that are received.

Visibility – Charleston Tech Advisor informs its customers of its complaints management process by making it publicly available at all times on the Charleston Tech Advisor website www.chstechadvisor.com. Employees who also receive and/or manage complaints have a thorough understanding of the Charleston Tech Advisor complaints management process and can provide this information to customers upon request.

Accessibility – All individuals have the right to make a complaint to Charleston Tech Advisor by any reasonable means (eg. in person, telephone, email, online and in writing). See attached form for written complaints.

Responsiveness – Charleston Tech Advisor will deal with and respond to complaints promptly and will keep complainants informed of the process and the progress of their complaint.

Objectivity – Each complaint is addressed in an equitable, objective and unbiased manner. Charleston Tech Advisor recognizes the need to be fair to both the complainant and any employee involved in the handling of the complaint.

Charges – Charleston Tech Advisor does not charge customers for the lodgment and processing of complaints.

Confidentiality – All complaints are recorded and dealt with in the strictest confidence. Personal information of the complainant is accessed only as necessary, and only for the purposes of addressing the complaint. All personal information is treated by Charleston Tech Advisor consistent with its obligations under the Privacy Act.

Customer-focused approach – Charleston Tech Advisor is committed to the efficient and equitable resolution of complaints and acknowledges each individual’s right to complain.

Accountability – Complaints are reported to Senior Management and to the Charleston Tech Advisor body as considered appropriate. An overview of complaints statistics is reported to the Charleston Tech Advisor’s Audit Committee for review, together with information on the Charleston Tech Advisor complaints management process.

Continual Improvement – Charleston Tech Advisor has established a complaint tracking system to ensure that systemic problems are identified, classified and analyzed. The Charleston Tech Advisor Internal Dispute Resolution process is reviewed on an annual basis to ensure it is delivering effective outcomes.

5. DEFINITION OF A COMPLAINT

5.1 A complaint:

- In accordance with the AS ISO 10002-2006 definition: an expression of Dissatisfaction made to Charleston Tech Advisor where a response or resolution is expected (either explicitly or implicitly). The expression of Dissatisfaction may be related to Charleston Tech Advisor’s products, services, policies, procedures or the complaints management process. It is to be differentiated from an ‘Enquiry’.
- Is an expression of dissatisfaction with the way that Charleston Tech Advisor conducts its business and could be an Expression of dissatisfaction with any of the following:
 - the Charleston Tech Advisor’s policies or procedures,
 - determinations or decisions made by Charleston Tech Advisor, its officers or agents
 - level or quality of service provided by Charleston Tech Advisor,
 - charges levied by Charleston Tech Advisor
 - behaviour of a Charleston Tech Advisor employee or agent, which can be investigated and acted upon
- Is a formal statement usually received in writing, by e-mail or by informal means to the OWNER, Charleston Tech Advisor members or staff.
- May require a senior level of involvement to resolve the matter.

- Is distinct from a request for service, however a request for service may develop into a complaint where the provision or timeliness of the service is considered unsatisfactory.
- Complaints lodged about decisions made within a structured process are not treated as ‘complaints’ for the purposes of the complaints management process described in this document. A structured process is where legislation specifically provides for an appeal, or an internal or external review of a decision. Eg. A planning appeal

5.2 Complaints **do not** include:

- A request for service (unless there was no response to a first request for service)
- A request for information or an explanation of a policy or procedure
- Disagreement with a Charleston Tech Advisor policy
- Reports of damaged or faulty infrastructure
- An expression of dissatisfaction with the behavior of a Charleston Tech Advisor
- Reports about neighbors, noise, dogs, nuisances or unauthorized building work

5.3 This Policy applies to customers who:

- Raise complaints on the level of services provided.
- Raise complaints on the standard of service provided.
- Have concerns regarding the conduct of an employee.
- Have concerns regarding the processes in relation to the assessment of development (not any decision arising from a development application assessment).

5.4 This Policy does not apply to customers who wish to make a complaint about the conduct of a Charleston Tech Advisor member, such a complaint needs to be lodged in writing with the OWNER or the Mayor.

5.5 This Policy does not apply to customers who wish to review a Charleston Tech Advisor, Charleston Tech Advisor Committee or Officer decision made under delegation, such a complaint needs to be lodged under Charleston Tech Advisor Policy – Procedure for Internal Review of Charleston Tech Advisor Decisions Policy.

6 OPERATION PROCEDURE

6.1 How to Submit a Complaint

Customers can provide their complaint to Charleston Tech Advisor in a number of different ways including:

- in writing via letter to 413 Underwood Lane SC 29486
- by email to office@chstechadvisor.com
- by completing a customer complaint form on Charleston Tech Advisor’s website (<https://www.chstechadvisor.com/>)
- By making an appointment to see Charleston Tech Advisor’s Manager or one of Charleston Tech Advisor’s Owners.

Charleston Tech Advisor staff will assist a customer to make a complaint when requested. Assistance could include provision of information, assistance with the procedure and/or lodging of the complaint form/documentation.

6.2 Procedure for Handling the Complaint Report Form

Upon receipt of the Complaint Report Form the Officer receiving the request shall:

- a) Ensure all details have been entered correctly on the form.
- b) Write his/her name, title and date in the space provided.
- c) Give the Complainant a duplicate copy of the form for their record purposes.
- d) Forward the original to the Records Section for logging into the Complaint Register and allocation of a file number.
- e) Once the complaint form has been registered, the Records Section shall forward it for consideration to the relevant Manager (or OWNER, if appropriate) for review, investigation, remedial action and response.
- f) The Manager (or OWNER if appropriate) may direct an appropriate Officer to investigate the complaint and respond as necessary.

6.3 Acknowledgement of Complaints

Upon receipt of a complaint by letter or email, Charleston Tech Advisor will provide the complainant with a written acknowledgement of their complaint as well as the contact details of the staff member who will be managing their complaint.

6.4 Response

- Responses must be comprehensive and deal with all the issues contained in the complaint. The response must be accurate because an inaccurate response undermines the credibility of the organization
- All complaints will be regarded seriously and will be dealt with in the shortest possible time, and every endeavor will be made to resolve complaints satisfactorily
- The relevant Manager (or OWNER) will make contact with the complainant to inform them of the investigation outcome and, if required, further actions taken. This contact may be made in person, via telephone or via written response
- Charleston Tech Advisor will strive to respond within 15 days of receipt of the complaint. Where the matter needs Charleston Tech Advisor consideration or detailed investigation (especially complaints about third parties) the complainant will be notified of the next Charleston Tech Advisor meeting date or when investigations may be concluded and when they can expect a final response.

6.5 Finalizing Documentation

The relevant manager will complete the complaint documentation outlining response and/or actions taken and return it to the Administration Officer for input into the Complaint Register.

- 6.6 If complainants are not satisfied, they may seek for the Chief Executive Officer to review the complaint and response.

7 REPORTING

Regular reporting is important for the identification of improvement opportunities for the Charleston Tech Advisor. At least monthly the Management team will review the Complaint Register so that trends can be reviewed, successes reported, and the Charleston Tech Advisor's processes can be continuously improved. It will also enable the OWNER to monitor if no action has been taken by any officers who have been given the task to deal with a complaint.

8 EXTERNAL REVIEW

While Charleston Tech Advisor prefers to work with its customers to resolve complaints quickly and effectively, a complainant will always retain the right to seek other forms of resolution, such as contacting the Ombudsman, or taking legal action at any time. Note however that as a general rule, the Ombudsman prefers a complaint to be addressed by Charleston Tech Advisor in the first instance, unless this is not appropriate in the circumstances.

9 REVIEW & EVALUATION

The effectiveness of this Procedure will be reviewed once in the term of Charleston Tech Advisor by the Management Team.

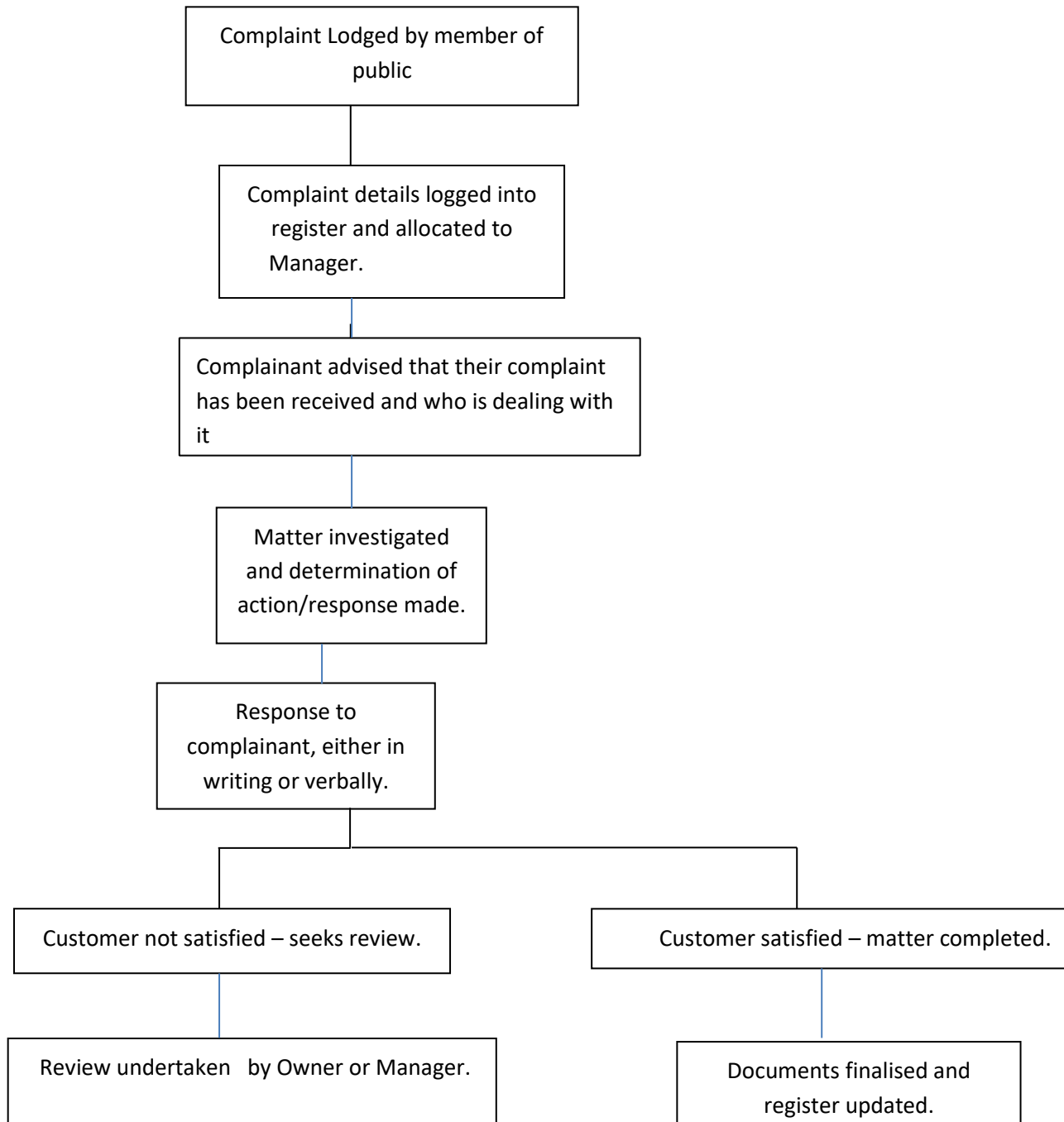
10 AVAILABILITY OF PROCEDURE

This Procedure will be available for inspection at the Charleston Tech Advisor Office during ordinary business hours and on the Charleston Tech Advisor's website www.chstechadvisor.com. Copies will also be provided to interested members of the community upon request.

11 RECORD OF AMENDMENTS

Date	Revision No	Reason for Amendment

Charleston Tech Advisor Complaint Procedure



Management Team Regularly Reviews Register and Actions Taken



CUSTOMER COMPLAINT FORM

All personal details remain CONFIDENTIAL

Use this form to lodge a complaint about Charleston Tech Advisor's services, administrative action(s) or the conduct of our people. Please do not use this form to request normal services from Charleston Tech Advisor eg reporting of potholes or overhanging trees. These should be reported by calling (08) 8752 1044, filling out a Job Docket, emailing office@chstechadvisor.com or in person at the Charleston Tech Advisor office.

COMPLAINT DETAILS

Title: _____ Last Name: _____ First Name/s: _____

Address: _____ P/Code: _____

Telephone (Home): _____ (Work): _____ (Mobile): _____

Other ways to contact you (eg facsimile, e-mail): _____

Details of Complaint*

Please provide full details of your complaint including times, dates, places, people involved and any background information you think would be useful. If necessary, please provide additional information on a separate sheet.

WITNESS DETAILS (if applicable)

Name: _____

Address: _____ Daytime Contact Number: _____

COMPLAINT OUTCOME:

As a result of making this complaint, is there any outcome you would like? Yes No

If yes, please provide details:

Have you raised your complaint with us before? Yes No If yes, tell us who you spoke to, what you were told and why you are still dissatisfied. Attach any documentation you have from your previous contact. Use a separate sheet if needed.

WHAT TO EXPECT

We take complaints seriously. Your information will be treated confidentially. We will inform you of progress and we will endeavor to resolve your complaint within 15 days.

(Signature): _____

Date: _____ **OFFICE**

Complaint received by:

Telephone Email

Letter Person

Other (Specify): _____

Date Received: ___/___/___

Staff Member who received the Complaint: _____

Position: _____

Summary of Advice provided to complainant on initial contact:

USE ONLY**INVESTIGATION DETAILS**

Name of person investigating incident: _____

Title: _____ Date of investigation: ___/___/___

Investigation Details: _____

(If no action is to be taken, please explain why)

ACTIONS ARISING FROM INVESTIGATION**Date to be completed** _____**Immediate** _____

Further Recommendations

INVESTIGATION OFFICER

Signature _____

Date: _____

Complainant Advised Yes No File No _____

Date: _____