

CITY OF CENTER POINT

CITIZEN COMPLAINT POLICY

Subject: Citizen Complaint Policy

Approved By: City Council

Effective Date:

Resolution #: 2015-_____

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance to City staff, the Mayor, City Council, and the citizens of Center Point for filing and processing complaints.

SCOPE:

This policy is applicable to all citizen complaints filed in the City of Center Point. Complaints may consist of violations against the City Code of Ordinances, services provided by the City, or any other complaints a resident believes the City should become aware of or involved in.

POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Background

The City strives to maintain quality services and good public relations with the citizens of the community and visitors. It is the policy of the City to receive, investigate and resolve complaints in a timely manner to the greatest extent possible.

Policy

It is the policy of the City to require a written complaint. Citizens may file a complaint at City Hall, or via the City's website www.centerpointia.com. The City must have full information filled out on a citizen complaint form, with necessary contact information of the complainant consisting of: name, address, telephone number, and a detailed description of the complaint. If additional information is needed, it is important for City staff to be able to contact the complainant. Anonymous complaints will not be processed.

The City will also process and investigate specific complaints from non-Center Point residents that pertain to the Center Point cemetery and Center Point facility rentals.

Once a complaint has been filed at City Hall, the complaint will be thoroughly investigated. A determination will be made as to whether a complaint is founded or not. If said complaint is determined to be founded the City will follow through with the appropriate action.

Due to the varying nature and complexity of complaints, a set time frame for resolution cannot be provided in all cases. However the City shall notify the complainant that their complaint has been received within two (2) working days. The City shall provide periodic updates to the complainant as to the progress or action until a resolution is finalized. Once a resolution is finalized, a closing statement to the complainant will be made, if a verbal communication from the City is made it will be followed up via email or hardcopy mail.

Please note that certain matters discovered as a result of an investigation may be considered to be confidential under the Code of Iowa, and therefore some information may be withheld for this reason only. Complainant name and address will be kept confidential and not released pursuant to Iowa Code Section 22.7(18), unless the complainant consents to the release, or release of identity is required to pursue legal action in the courts. Information contained in the communication is a public record to the extent that it can be disclosed without directly or indirectly indicating the identity of the complainant or enabling others to ascertain the identity of that person.

Appeal Process

A person who is not satisfied with the response of the City official responding to the complaint may request further review of the matter by the City Council. This request for review must be made by filing a written request with the City Clerk no later than 20 days after the response in question. Hearing on the request for review will be made at the next regular meeting of the City Council.

If said complaint is specifically against a policy or procedure of the City of Center Point and the citizen feels that an action has been taken that is outside the City or State Code a citizen has the following recourse.

1. Citizen feels that a concern has not been properly addressed and makes a formal complaint with the City. (City requires this complaint in writing) The citizen should exhaust all efforts with the City, to come up with a resolution.
2. If the citizen is not satisfied with the results of the appeal process or if no reply to a complaint is obtained then the citizen may contact the State Ombudsman office with their formal complaint.
3. The Ombudsman's office will then contact the City to gather additional facts. They will only make this contact if they feel the claim warrants follow up actions.
4. City personnel would then contact the City Attorney for representation in the matter being addressed.
5. City Attorney would address the Ombudsman's office and work with them in determining if something was done incorrectly, if there is a procedural change required, etc.
6. The City Attorney after speaking with the Ombudsman office would give a follow up letter or email to the citizen, copying City staff. The letter will outline that either the Ombudsman's office dropped the complaint or gave the City further instruction.