



CORANGAMITE
SHIRE

Complaints and Information Access Procedures

Sometimes service requests or other correspondence with Council may not be responded to within the timeline or other issues may arise. Customers can then lodge a complaint.

Customers can make a complaint to Council where:

- Council has failed to action a request or acknowledge correspondence within the acceptable response time (refer to the Council's Customer Service Charter)
- the service experience provided by the Council officer or contractor has been unsatisfactory
- the Council service is being delivered in an unsatisfactory manner
- the communication process regarding the complaint has been unsatisfactory, or
- any other matter where a customer feels that he or she has not been treated in accordance with our service commitments.

Customers can make a complaint directly to Council:

- by writing to: Corangamite Shire Council, PO Box 84, Camperdown 3260
- by email to: shire@corangamite.vic.gov.au
- face to face at the Civic Centre, 181 Manifold Street, Camperdown
- by telephoning us on (03) 5593 7100 or
- by using the online customer request system at www.corangamite.vic.gov.au

General process for complaints handling

Generally the manager of the relevant service area will coordinate the response to complaints.

The customer will be informed of the processes and timelines within which a complaint will be processed and responded to. If a complaint cannot be satisfactorily resolved within 10 working days the customer will be advised in writing that the matter is still under investigation and will be resolved within 14 or 28 days depending on the complexity of the issue.

If the customer considers that the complaint has not been satisfactorily resolved, he or she has a right of appeal at a higher level within the Council organisation. This may be to the Chief Executive Officer.

Where customers make a request or complaint directly to a Councillor, they need to be aware that those requests are managed through the same processes as those described in the Corangamite Shire Customer Service Charter for telephone, letter, online and other forms of contact with Council. Customers who are not

satisfied with the way complaints are resolved after internal processes have been exhausted may elect to pursue matters with the Victorian State Ombudsman.

Ombudsman Victoria

Level 3, 459 Collins Street (South Tower) Melbourne, Victoria 3000

Phone: 9613 6222

Toll Free: 1800 806 314

Fax: 9614 0246

Email: ombudvic@ombudsman.vic.gov.au

Where external appeal mechanisms are available, for example for Town Planning complaints, these can be referred to the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT). VCAT deals with disputes between people and government in areas such as:

- land valuation
- licences to carry on businesses (including travel agents, motor car traders and others)
- planning and environment
- state taxation, and
- many other government decisions (such as Transport Accident Commission decisions and freedom of information issues)

Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT)

Address: 55 King Street, Melbourne, Victoria 3000, Australia; GPO Box 5408 CC, Melbourne Victoria 3001, DX 210576 Phone: 9628 9777

Fax: 9628 9789 Email: vcat@vcat.vic.gov.au

Information privacy

Corangamite Shire is committed to providing you with the highest levels of service. This includes protecting your privacy. Accordingly, Council undertakes to ensure full compliance with its obligations under the information Privacy Act 2000 (Vic) (Privacy Act) and the Health Records Act 2001 (Vic) (Health Act).

Use and disclosure

Personal or health Information collected by Council is used for municipal purposes as specified in the Local Government Act 1989 (the Act). The personal or health Information will be used solely by Council for these purposes or directly related purposes. Council may disclose this information to other organisations if required by legislation. The applicant understands that the personal or health information provided is for the stated purpose and that he or she may apply to Council for access to, or amendment of, the information. Requests for access or correction should be made to Council's Privacy Officer.

A copy of our Information Privacy Policy is available from the Council offices or on our website.

Access and correction

Should any person wish to access their personal information, contact should be made with Council's Privacy Officer (Manager Human Resources/Risk) on telephone (03)5593 7135. Access will be provided except in the circumstances outlined in the Act, for example, where the information relates to legal proceedings or where the Freedom of Information Act 1982 applies.

If any citizen believes their personal information is inaccurate, incomplete or out of date, they may request Council to correct the information. The request will be dealt with in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.

The FREEDOM OF INFORMATION (FOI) ACT 1982 gives the community a legal right to access certain Council documents. Corangamite Shire Council is subject to the Freedom of Information Act and responds to requests directly related to its operations.

Principles of the FOI Act

- The public has a legal right of access to information
- Local governments must publish information concerning the documents they hold
- People may request that inaccurate, incomplete, out-of-date or misleading information in their personal records be amended
- People may appeal against a decision not to give access to the information or not to amend a personal record

The public can request any information held by the government, provided that it is not information that is exempt under the Freedom of Information Act.

Any person has a right to seek access to:

- documents relating to their own personal affairs regardless of the age of the documents, and
- information that is incorporated in a record of an agency on or after 1 January 1989.

Forms are available online at www.corangamite.vic.gov.au and by phone. Contact Council on (03) 5593 7100.

A fee applies.

Protected Disclosures

Corangamite Shire Council is committed to the aims and objectives of the *Protected Disclosure Act 2012* (the PD Act). The Council does not tolerate improper conduct by its elected representatives or employees, nor the taking of reprisals against those who make a protected disclosure, are the subject of a protected disclosure or who might be cooperating in a protected disclosure.

Council recognises the value of transparency and accountability in its democratic governance, administrative and management practices, and supports the making of disclosures that reveal corrupt conduct, conduct involving a substantial mismanagement of public resources, or conduct involving a substantial risk to public health and safety or the environment.

The Council will take all reasonable steps to protect people who make such disclosures from any detrimental action in reprisal for making the disclosure. It will also make every endeavour to afford natural justice to the person who is the subject of the disclosure.

In order to meet our obligations under the PD Act, Corangamite Shire Council has implemented a Protected Disclosure Procedure and reporting system. A full copy of this procedure is available from Council's website or from Council offices.

Disclosures of improper conduct or detrimental action by Corangamite Shire Council officers and employees should be made to one of the following protected disclosure officers:

Andrew Mason
Chief Executive Officer
Corangamite Shire Council
181 Manifold Street, Camperdown 3260
(03) 5593 7113
Email: andrew.mason@corangamite.vic.gov.au

The protected disclosure coordinator:
Michele Stephenson
Manager Human Resources/Risk
Corangamite Shire Council
181 Manifold Street, Camperdown 3260
(03) 5593 7135
Email: michele.stephenson@corangamite.vic.gov.au

Disclosures may also be made directly to the IBAC:

IBAC
GPO Box 24234
Melbourne Vic 3000
Level 1, North Tower
459 Collins Street Melbourne
Web: www.ibac.vic.gov.au
Tel: 1300 735 135

Protected disclosures about councillors can only be received by the IBAC or the Victorian Ombudsman:

Victorian Ombudsman
Level 9, North Tower
459 Collins Street
Melbourne Vic 3000
Web: www.ombudsman.vic.gov.au
Tel: 1800 806 314

CORANGAMITE SHIRE COUNCIL

Civic Centre, 181 Manifold Street,
Camperdown VIC 3260

Telephone 03 5593 7100

Facsimile 03 5593 2695

Email shire@corangamite.vic.gov.au

www.corangamite.vic.gov.au