



Complaints and requests policy and procedure Village of Senneville

1. OBJECTIVES

The Municipal Council insists on excellence in the services delivered to residents. It also wishes to be aware of residents' concerns and, through this administrative tool, seeks to guarantee and improve the quality of municipal services.

TARGET AUDIENCE

This policy is primarily for persons residing within the municipal boundaries of the Village of Senneville, regardless of district.

OBJECTIVES FOR THIS POLICY

- handle complaints adequately, in a neutral and objective manner
- ensure uniform handling of complaints and requests
- respond to complaints within a reasonable time
- improve the services provided to residents

2. DEFINITIONS

Certain terms used in the present policy are defined as follows:

Complaints agent

An employee of the Village of Senneville designated by the Director General to receive, examine and present to the Director General any complaints or requests directed at the municipality.

Complainant

Any person who submits a written complaint or request directly to the village of Senneville.

Complaint

Written expression of discontent, generally related to dissatisfaction with an event, person, service, behaviour, alleged illegal activity or alleged abuse of power.

Founded complaint

A situation that entails prejudice against any person, generally leading to a change or correction of the situation. It is then part of the redress process.

Unfounded complaint

Complaint based on rumours or perceptions, or a request with multiple inaccuracies. Anonymous (unsigned) comments, suggestions, notices or requests are also considered unfounded.

Review procedure

Procedure for reviewing complaints or requests, established by the municipal council of the Village of Senneville.

Request

A specific request for a change of situation, whether immediate or on a set date, for the purpose of correcting “temporary” prejudicial situations such as potholes, slippery pavement, inadequate snow removal, etc. This type of administrative complaint is generally treated as privileged information.

Director General

The Director General of the Village of Senneville oversees the application of the present policy, and has access to all information related to complaint and request files.

3. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

This policy is founded on three guiding principles:

- 3.1. All complaints or requests must be made in writing and signed. Any complainant can have their complaint or request heard (at the office or by telephone) before making a formal written submission. If the person declines to file a written and signed complaint or request, no action is taken;
- 3.2. The complaints agent, reporting to the Director General, is responsible for applying the review procedure. The complaints agent will refer complaints to the Director General, who will then forward them to the appropriate department.
- 3.3. All complaint and request procedures are applied with utmost respect for everyone concerned, by all parties, and when appropriate are subject to strict confidentiality.

4. PROCEDURES

Subjects covered by complaints or requests are indicated in the definitions of “complaint” and “request” in Article 1 of the present document.

4.1. Submitting a complaint

In order to trigger the complaints management process, the complainant must submit their complaint in writing and send it directly to the complaints agent of the Village de Senneville, by completing the form provided for this purpose, available at the town hall and on the municipality’s website. Signed letters of complaint are also accepted.

All complaints submitted to the complaints agent must include the following information:

- the complainant's first and last name, full address, telephone number and date of birth;
- the date of submission of the complaint to the Village of Senneville;
- name of the municipal department subject of the complaint;
- the reason(s) for the complaint;
- a description of the facts of the matter.

4.2. Eligibility

Anonymous complaints and complaints not directed at the Village of Senneville will not be processed. In addition, the Village of Senneville does not handle complaints related to:

- private disputes that are not within the jurisdiction of the Village of Senneville;
- matters within the jurisdiction of a different government body;
- matters before the courts.

4.3. Confirmation of receipt

Within 72 hours of receiving a complaint, the Village of Senneville will issue a written confirmation of receipt.

4.4. Processing

All complaints and requests must first be directed to the Director General's office, which will forward them to the appropriate department for processing, which will proceed as follows:

- a) analyse the complaint, and telephone or meet the citizen if appropriate;
- b) follow up on the complaint quickly by determining the amount of time needed for analysis;
- c) determine and implement a documented solution. When appropriate, the citizen may be invited to help identify a solution;
- d) contact the citizen again, to inform them of the chosen solution;
- e) submit a written report to the complaints agent and the Director General documenting the follow-up and resolution to the matter;
- f) close the file.

If resolution of a complaint would entail amendments and/or modifications to a by-law or resolution, provision of additional services, an increase in the level of service, etc., it must be brought to the attention of the municipal council. In this case, the person responsible will inform the complainant, but must not make any promises as to the final outcome of the complaint.

A complaint concerning a commitment, action, decision or omission by a municipal employee must be submitted in writing, signed by the citizen, and sent immediately to the Director General.

4.5. Processing time

Complaints are processed in compliance with applicable laws. A window of 30 business days is standard for the processing of a complaint by the relevant department, calculated starting from the date on which the complaint was received. Additional time may be granted if circumstances beyond the department's control prevent a resolution within 30 business days, including:

- handling of a more urgent complaint or situation requiring immediate intervention by management;
- the need to consult an internal expert or, in certain cases, to seek the counsel of an outside expert;
- the nature and complexity of the complaint, with consideration for the amount of time elapsed since the events at its source.

4.6. Archiving and confidentiality

A complaint file is assigned a reference number, remains in the possession of the complaints agent, and is stored in a filing system designed to protect confidentiality. Complaint files are retained for the length of time specified on the Village of Senneville's documents conservation schedule.

4.7. Disagreement with conclusions

If the complainant does not agree with the reasoned findings received within the specified time, the complainant has a right to seek recourse from the Director General of the Village of Senneville. In case of disagreement with the Director General's response, the complainant may submit their complaint to the municipal council for a final decision.

5. EFFECTIVE DATE

The present policy is applicable starting on the day of its adoption by the municipal council, at which time it will supersede and replace any previous policies covering such matters.

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