

Building Consents Authority

Complaints Policy

Policy Owner:	Building Quality Manager
Date approved:	April 2026
Next review date:	April 2029
Document number:	4056581
Required by legislation:	Building (Accreditation of Building Consent Authorities) Regulations 2006

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Waikato District Council (Council) is registered and accredited to carry out work as a Building Consent Authority (BCA) and, as such, under Regulation 7(2)(h) the BCA is required to have a BCA Complaints Policy. All complaints are taken seriously, and every effort will be made to resolve the issue(s). All comments will be used as an opportunity to learn and improve services.

2 Purpose

- 2.1 The purpose of this policy is to explain:
- What constitutes a complaint (for the purposes of the BCA);
 - The principles that will be applied when dealing with complaints and suggestions.

3 Application

- 3.1 This policy applies to the Waikato District Council BCA, and specifically to complaints and suggestions that relate to the Waikato District Council BCA functions.
- 3.2 BCA services are comprised of:
- Navigating our processes
 - Issuing or refusing building consents
 - Performing inspections
 - Issuing or refusing CCCs and Compliance Schedules
 - Issuing Notices to Fix
- 3.3 Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act (LGOIMA), Privacy, and Ombudsman requests are managed under the relevant legislation.

4 Guiding Principles

4.1 The BCA will ensure that:

- a) Investigations will be undertaken in a way that ensures objectivity and fairness to all parties, and will be investigated by a staff member with no direct involvement;
- b) Complaints will be triaged, then prioritised according to risk and urgency;
- c) Complaints will be responded to as quickly as possible by the most appropriate method. Either a full response will be made within two working days, or an acknowledgement will be sent. If the issue needs more time, we will let you know and keep you updated;
- d) Remedies will be proportionate to the issues raised;
- e) Complaint records will be kept and will cover:
 - details of the investigation,
 - the outcome (e.g. whether the complaint is upheld, action taken, apology, or reason why the Council is unable to assist), and
 - information on the right of further redress and escalation if the customer remains dissatisfied.

5 Complaints

5.1 A complaint is defined as any expression of dissatisfaction about BCA service or the actions of a staff member that cannot be resolved at the first point of contact. Other issues, such as fees or negative comments about a staff member, can also trigger a complaint.

5.2 The BCA is committed to ensuring that complaints are dealt with fairly and impartially.

5.3 Complaints about staff members will be escalated and resolved by the appropriate manager.

How to submit a complaint

5.4 You can submit a complaint via the following mechanisms:

- in person, at any Waikato District Council Office
- by phoning 0800 492 452
- by posting to
Building Consent Authority Complaints,
Private Bag 544,
Ngaaruawaahia 3742
- emailing info@waikatodc.govt.nz
- online at [Feedback & Complaints](#)

- 5.5 When submitting a complaint, customers are welcome to seek support. Where someone is acting on behalf of the complainant, this must be notified at the start of the process, along with the contact details to be used for any communication.
- 5.6 If the assistance of an interpreter is required to facilitate the issue, the BCA will endeavour to arrange this.

How complaints are managed

- 5.7 All complaints will be investigated and dealt with in confidence, consistent with the needs of the investigation. To enable the BCA's policy to be adequately reviewed and revised, monitoring of our compliance with the policy will be undertaken. The Building Quality Manager has overall responsibility for managing complaints about the BCA.

Response timeframes

- 5.8 Issues will be responded to as quickly as possible by the most appropriate method, usually by email with a response letter attached. Where a response or resolution is made by telephone, written records will be kept and written confirmation sent.
- 5.9 Simple complaints will be responded to within two (2) working days.
- 5.10 If more time is needed to investigate the complaint, an acknowledgement email will be sent within two (2) working days, and the complainant will be kept updated throughout the process. We will aim to provide a full written response within ten (10) working days.
- 5.11 All responses will include a reference number, summary of the issue, and the contact details of the team / person investigating the complaint.

Complaints that cannot be resolved by the BCA

- 5.12 Some matters cannot be resolved by the BCA and are more appropriately addressed elsewhere. In some cases, this may be clear from the outset; in others, it may become apparent after concerns have been reviewed.
- 5.13 The BCA cannot change decisions already made on a building consent or a code compliance certificate. These can only be reviewed through a formal determination process managed by the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE). Information on this process can be found on MBIE's Determinations page, [Resolution options | Building Performance](#)
- 5.14 Additionally, if a customer believes the BCA has acted unfairly or unreasonably, such as in the way a decision was made, or how any concerns raised were handled, they may contact the Office of the Ombudsman, which investigates complaints about the administrative conduct of public sector agencies. Information on this process can be found on Ombudsman's website, [How to make a complaint | Ombudsman New Zealand](#)

6 Policy statements

- 6.1 The BCA is committed to the delivery of quality services to meet the needs of its customers in line with its responsibilities as a BCA and Council's values.
- 6.2 The BCA welcomes feedback from customers as this provides opportunities for learning and improving services related to Building Consent processing or Inspection and issuing Code Compliance Certificates.
- 6.3 Learning from our mistakes is an important part of our continuous improvement. The BCA will always try to resolve complaints in a fair, timely and confidential manner in order to achieve positive outcomes for both customers and staff.
- 6.4 Complaints that fall outside the scope of the responsibilities of a BCA will be passed to Council as a Territorial Authority for investigation and action. BCA complaints relate to an active building consent, specifically, after an application has been made and prior to receiving a code compliance certificate.
- 6.5 All complaints will be investigated and dealt with in confidence, consistent with the needs of the investigation. To enable the BCA's policy and procedures to be adequately reviewed and revised, monitoring of compliance will be undertaken by Council's Building Quality Manager. The information will be used to monitor BCA performance, highlight areas of failure and feed into the continuous improvement process.

7 Policy review

- 7.1 This policy shall be reviewed at three yearly intervals, or as otherwise required by the Chief Executive or Building Quality Manager