



1 HEAD OF POWER

- *Local Government Act 2009 (Qld)*
- *Local Government Regulation 2012 (Qld)*
- *Industrial Relations Act 2016 (Qld)*

2 POLICY PURPOSE

Pormpuraaw Aboriginal Shire Council (Council) is committed to providing a safe, respectful, and productive work environment for all employees.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- establish a fair, transparent, and consistent process for addressing workplace grievances
- ensure that all employees complaints are taken seriously, handled confidentially, and resolved in a timely manner
- protect employees from victimisation or retaliation when raising a complaint in good faith
- support a positive workplace culture by addressing conflicts constructively and at the lowest possible level

3 POLICY OBJECTIVE

The objective of this policy is to provide a clear framework for submitting, managing, and resolving internal individual employee complaints within Pormpuraaw Aboriginal Shire Council (Council).

Appendix A: Flowchart

4 POLICY SCOPE

This policy applies to all employees, contractors, and volunteers who conduct work for or with Council.

5 POLICY STATEMENT

An employee may raise a complaint if they honestly believe that they have or are about to be treated unfairly or inconsistently because of:

- an administrative decision, which they feel is unfair and unreasonable
- the conduct or behaviour of an employee, agent, or contractor is unfair and unreasonable
- the conduct or behaviour of an employee, agent, or contractor constitutes bullying, discrimination, sexual harassment, vilification, or any other protected attribute
- the conduct or behaviour of an employee is in breach of the Code of Conduct

This policy does not override, modify, or replace any statutory obligations regarding the management of specific complaints. Where required by law, Council will refer serious complaints to the appropriate external authorities or governing bodies.

5.1 RESOLVING COMPLAINTS INFORMALLY

Employees are encouraged, where safe and appropriate, to resolve grievances informally by discussing the matter directly with the individual or their immediate supervisor. If an employee feels that they are unable to take this approach, they are encouraged to seek guidance from a next level manager or Human Resources (HR). If the complaint is resolved through these informal steps, no further action is required.

5.2 FORMAL COMPLAINTS RESOLUTION

There are up to three (3) stages to resolving a complaint and an employee may elect to be represented by their Union at any stage.

5.2.1 First Stage – Report the Complaint

Employees can report a complaint directly to their immediate supervisor, who will record the details of the matter. While it is not mandatory to submit a complaint in writing, doing so as soon as possible after the incident greatly assists the resolution process. Employees are encouraged to use the *Employee Complaints Resolution Form* for this purpose.

Appendix B – Employee Complaints Resolution Form

When submitting a complaint, the employee should clearly outline:

- the grounds of which they believe they have been (or will be) adversely affected
- any previous attempts made to resolve the issue
- the specific action or outcome they are seeking to resolve the complaint

Management and Escalation

- standard resolution: the supervisor will take all reasonable steps to help resolve the issue as soon as practicable
- alternative contacts: if the employee has a valid reason for not wishing to raise the issue with their supervisor, they may seek support from and submit their complaint to HR
- serious allegations: if the complaint involves serious allegations including but not limited to bullying, sexual harassment, discrimination, or any other protected attribute, the supervisor must immediately escalate the complaint to the formal stage of the resolution process

5.2.2 Second Stage – Seek Higher Assistance

If the complaint is not resolved by the direct supervisor to the employee's satisfaction within seven (7) days, the employee may escalate the matter to a senior manager or HR, who will seek to resolve it within a further seven (7) days.

5.2.3 Third Stage - Referral to the CEO

If the complaint remains unresolved by stage 2, it may be escalated to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) or their designated representative. The CEO's determination on the matter constitutes the final internal decision, and will be made within fourteen (14) days. If the complaint is not settled, the employee or their union may refer it to the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission in accordance with the applicable Award.

5.3 REFERRAL TO EXTERNAL MEDIATION

Where all parties to the complaint and Council agree, the complaint may be referred to external mediation.

5.4 INVESTIGATION

Investigation will be conducted at all stages of the formal complaint process. While Council acknowledges that discussing workplace concerns can be difficult, employees are required to provide sufficient information and detail to ensure the alleged incidents can be thoroughly and fairly investigated.

5.5 CONFIDENTIALITY

All parties involved must maintain strict confidentiality throughout the entire complaints process. If witness interviews are necessary, the critical importance of confidentiality will be emphasised to each witness.

5.6 DOCUMENTATION

Any agreed resolutions resulting from the formal complaint process must be documented and signed by all involved parties. Where an investigation leads to disciplinary action, a formal record of this action will be placed on the relevant employee's personnel file. All documentation pertaining to the investigation will be maintained in strict confidence.

5.7 POSSIBLE OUTCOMES

Council may implement a range of measures to resolve a complaint. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- requiring one or both parties to attend coaching or training to address the underlying issues
- ongoing monitoring of the situation to ensure no further problems arise
- reviewing, implementing, or amending relevant policies and procedures
- facilitating a verbal or written apology

5.7.1 Disciplinary Action

If an investigation confirms that a breach of Council's policies or Code of Conduct has occurred, formal disciplinary action may be taken. Disciplinary action is dealt with in accordance with the Performance, Misconduct and Discipline Policy.

5.8 WHEN A COMPLAINT IS CONSIDERED RESOLVED

A workplace complaint will be deemed resolved and officially closed under any of the following circumstances:

- withdrawal: the employee voluntarily withdraws the complaint at any time
- inaction: the employee stops actively pursuing the matter or fails to respond within a reasonable timeframe, after Council has given the employee written notice that the complaint will be closed
- process exhaustion: the complaint has progressed through, completed, all three stages of the internal resolution process
- mutual agreement: the employee or their representative accepts a reasonable resolution at any stage of the process

5.9 MALICIOUS, FALSE, OR VEXATIOUS COMPLAINTS

Lodging a formal complaint is a serious matter. Council may take disciplinary action against a person who knowingly makes a false or vexatious allegation. This clause does not affect the protections available to a person who makes a public interest disclosure under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 2010 (Qld).

5.10 ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND STATUS UPDATES

At any time prior to a final decision being made, any party involved in a complaint may request an update on its progress. Managers and supervisors are required to provide these status updates promptly upon request.

5.11 CONTACT OFFICERS

Council understands that resolving or raising a complaint can be difficult. As such, Council have appointed contact officers that can provide confidential support and advice.

6 HUMAN RIGHTS COMPATIBILITY STATEMENT

This policy has been assessed as compatible with Human Rights protected under *the Human Rights Act 2019*.

7 DEFINITIONS

Term	Definition

8 RELATED POLICS AND OTHER DOCUMENTS

- Code of Conduct for Staff
- Code of Conduct for Staff Summary
- Bullying, Anti-Discrimination and Harassment Policy
- Performance and Misconduct Disciplinary Policy

9 MONITORING AND REVIEW

Notwithstanding the above, this policy is to be reviewed every four (4) years for relevance and to ensure that its effectiveness is maintained.

10 RESPONSIBILITY

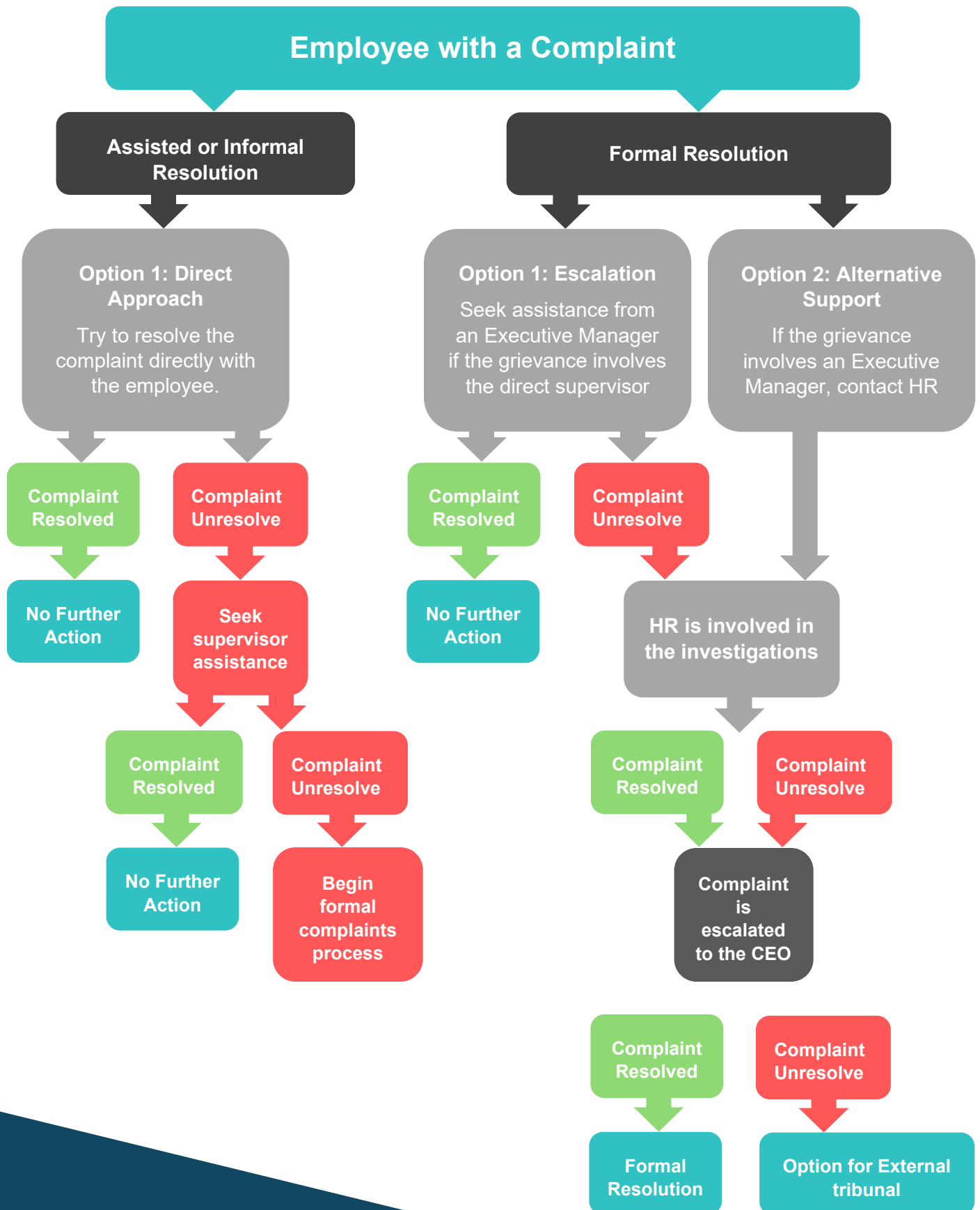
This Policy is to be:

- implemented by the CEO; and
- reviewed and amended in accordance with the Governance and Records Officer

11 VERSION CONTROL

Version	Details	Resolution No	Date
V1	Developed and adopted	2026/193	19 October 2026

Complaints Resolution Flowchart



Employee Complaints Resolution Form

You can submit a complaint to your direct supervisor in writing using this form or via email. Alternatively, you can discuss your concern with them directly.

Add any additional pages if more space is required.

1. Details of the Complaint

2. Provide the exact time, date and location of the incident(s)

Time(s):

Date(s):

Location(s):

3. If your concern involves specific individuals, provide their details including their name, job titles, work locations and contact numbers

4. Describe any informal actions you have already taken to try and resolve this matter

5. What is your desired outcome for this matter?

Confidentiality

Council treats all concerns with discretion. However, please be aware that information from this form may be shared with relevant parties if necessary to properly investigate and resolve the issue.

Declaration

Name		Signature	
Date		Preferred Contact Details	