

The Edmonton Humane Society

	SECTION:	
	SUBJECT: Public Complaints Policy	

PUBLIC COMPLAINTS POLICY

1. GENERAL

The Edmonton Humane Society (EHS) is committed to maintaining the highest possible standards of animal care, customer and client service, ethical, moral, and legal business conduct. In accordance with these commitments, EHS expects and requires its employees, volunteers and other representatives to act professionally and appropriately.

Members of the public who have concerns may report them in accordance with the following policy and procedure using the [EHS Complaint Form](#).

2. PURPOSE

The goal of this policy is to support EHS’s positive reputation in the community by discouraging any conduct that could damage EHS’ good name, business interests, and its relationships with adopters, customers, members, donors, stakeholders, and the community at large.

This policy provides an avenue for members of the public to formally raise a concern or complaint, which in turn will allow EHS to take steps to promptly and effectively investigate and address the matter raised as required.

3. FILING COMPLAINTS

EHS encourages individuals to share their concerns or complaints with someone within EHS who can address them properly. In most cases, this is the supervisor, manager or director overseeing the department in which the concern occurred.

Individuals may ask staff to speak with their supervisor in order to facilitate a prompt resolution.

Where this does not result in an appropriate resolution, individuals may file an official complaint.

4. INVESTIGATING COMPLAINTS

Complaints are taken seriously by EHS. The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) receives all submitted complaints and will review it to determine if an investigation is necessary.

All Complaints:

If an investigation is necessary, it will follow a fair process and be conducted as quickly and efficiently as the circumstances permit. Investigations may involve interviewing staff or volunteers, contacting the complainant for further information, documentation review, surveillance camera review or other steps.

EHS employees, volunteers, officers, and directors are required to cooperate fully in all investigations and must provide accurate, timely, and truthful information.

Major Complaints:

Major complaints are those which pose a high risk to EHS, such as legal matters, regulatory matters or animal abuse.

Major complaints will be reported to the Board of Directors within 48 hours of receipt of the complaint.

Major complaints will be considered by the Complaint Review Team, consisting of the CEO and Board Chair. The CEO will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 5 business days, unless it has been filed anonymously.

If the CEO or Board Chair are the subject of the complaint, the Board Vice-Chair will replace that individual on the Complaint Review Team.

5. ANONYMOUS COMPLAINTS

Complaints may be reported anonymously by mailing or emailing a letter to the CEO and/or the Board Chair. Anonymous letters should be in a sealed envelope and clearly marked with "To be opened by addressee only."

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Although all anonymous complaints will be duly reviewed and considered, the investigation of such complaints may be compromised if insufficient information is provided by the complainant and the complainant cannot be contacted to ask follow-up questions. Additional consideration will also be given to the creditability of the concerns raised in the complaint, including whether they can be confirmed by a reliable source.

6. RESULTS OF INVESTIGATION

If the investigation concludes that the complaint is factually supported, EHS will take the requisite corrective action. As appropriate, the complainant will be notified once the investigation is complete.

7. CONFIDENTIALITY

All information disclosed in a complaint will be kept confidential by EHS, except as required by EHS to conduct a full and fair investigation or as otherwise required by law. The nature of the complaint and the identity of individuals involved will only be disclosed on a strictly need-to-know basis to allow EHS to conduct a thorough investigation, respond appropriately, and address the alleged improper conduct. In certain circumstances, EHS may also be required to disclose certain information to law enforcement.

Insofar as possible, the confidentiality of the complainant will be maintained. However, identity may have to be disclosed to conduct a thorough investigation, to comply with the law and to provide accused individuals their legal rights of defense.

Information about the complainant will be stored in accordance with the EHS Privacy Policy.

8. REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed and updated if necessary every three years.

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