



Policy Type	Governance		
Responsible Department	Office of the Chief Executive Officer		
Responsible Officer	Chief Executive Officer		
Related legislation	Water Industry Act 2012 Water Industry Guidelines No. 2 (WG2/01) Water Industry Regulations 2012 Water Retail Code – minor and intermediate retailers Australian Standards AS ISO 10002-2006		
Related Policies	Water & Sewerage Retail Services Customer Charter Water & Sewerage Services – Customer Hardship Policy Customer Service Charter Water & Sewerage Retail Services – Pricing Policy Statement		
Date adopted	17 May 2022	Minute Number	2022.61
Version	Version 2		
Last reviewed	2016		
Next Review date	2026		

1. Purpose

The District Council of Elliston was issued with a water retail licence for Class-Minor (2) retailer on 10 January 2013. The Water Retail Code – Minor and Intermediate Retailers, issued by the Essential Services Commission of South Australia, sets out the requirements with which we must comply in relation to the provision of our water and sewerage services.

More information on these requirements can be found in our Customer Charter at www.elliston.sa.gov.au.

This document outlines our Customer Complaints and Dispute Handling processes and should be read in conjunction with our Customer Charter and other policies and procedures referred to within the document.

This process applies to all enquiries and complaints received from our customers who benefit from the water and sewerage services we provide and ensures that customers are fully aware of the channels available to them to raise queries or complaints about the services.

It also ensure that accurate information is collected and can be used to analyse trends and areas for improvement.

2. Complaints and Dispute Resolution

The District Council of Elliston welcomes your complaint as an opportunity to maintain your confidence and trust as well as improve our customer service.

We consider complaints as an opportunity to better understand dissatisfaction with our service and provide you with a response in order to arrive at a resolution. It may be related to our products, services or the complaints handling process itself. If you are dissatisfied with any aspect of our services or products, please contact us so that we can resolve your concerns.

We will ensure enquiries, complaints and dispute resolution is available to our customers via:

- Telephone
- Email
- Written correspondence
- Council's Website
- In person

We will:

- Provide a source of customer related information as directed by the Water Retail Code including the Water & Sewerage Services Customer Charter and the District Council of Elliston Customer Service Charter
- Provide early resolution of customer enquiries and complaints and resolve matters at the first point of contact where possible
- Manage customer expectations by providing relevant information and meeting the service standards related to enquiry and complaint responsiveness
- Ensure customer enquiries and complaints are dealt with in a fair, reasonable and consistent manner
- Encourage customers who may require a language interpreting service to access an independent interpreting service

3. Commitment to Customer Complaints and Dispute Resolution

The District Council of Elliston will ensure our staff are equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to provide quality service to customers. We will address customer concern with a view to resolving issues in a friendly, timely and efficient manner.

We will:

- Listen to your concerns
- Identify ourselves
- Ensure that our correspondence has a contact name and telephone number
- Respect your right to privacy
- Provide you with high quality information and advice
- Provide information and guidelines in plain language
- Make an accurate record of the contact so the matter can be tracked, monitored and reported

When you contact us with a complaint we ask our customers to:

- Treat us with courtesy
- Be honest in all your dealings with us
- Provide us with information when requested to help us address the issue.

4. Guiding Principles

We are committed to following the complaints management guiding principles when handling your complaints:

Visibility and Accessibility – Information about the “how and where” to make a complaint is visible and well publicised

Confidentiality – Personally identifiable complainant information should be available if needed, but only for the purposes of addressing the complaint within the District Council of Elliston. The complainant’s information will be actively protected from disclosure, unless the customer expressly consents to its disclosure

Objectivity – Each complaint will be addressed in an equitable, objective and unbiased manner

Fees – No fees will be charged to manage legitimate customer complaints

Customer Focused Approach – A customer focused approach will be adopted and the rights of customers to disagree will be respected and supported by providing and promoting an accessible, timely, fair and friendly process for the lodgement and management of customer complaints. All complainants should receive timely acknowledgement that their complaint has been received and best endeavours will be made to provide a response within the required response targets.

Accountability and Improvement – We will ensure that systematic reporting of customer complaints against documents standards and lessons learned is undertaken. Analysis of customer complaints will drive improvement in customer service and the complaints handling process

5. How to Make a Complaint

There are two (2) ways to contact and lodge a complaint with us:

1. Speak to a relevant staff member

If you are dissatisfied with any of our products or services, please contact us on 8687 9177 and discuss your concern with a relevant staff member. Alternatively you can speak to us in person at the Council office at 21 Beach Terrace Elliston.

The staff members will endeavour to resolve most of your concerns over the telephone at the first point of contact. If you remain dissatisfied with the outcome, you may request to have your complaint reviewed by a Manager who will further investigate the matter.

2. Write to us

If you prefer, write to us at the following address with the details of your complaint:

District Council of Elliston, PO Box 46 Elliston SA 5670

Alternatively, you can send an email to dce@elliston.sa.gov.au

Upon receipt of your correspondence, we will provide you with a written acknowledgement of your complaint as well as the contact details of the relevant staff member who will be managing your complaint.

6. Method of Response

We endeavour to resolve all complaints at the first point of contact. However, there are some circumstances where this is not possible and further investigation may be required. In these instances, we will acknowledge receipt of your complaint within two (2) business days and aim to provide you with a resolution within ten (10) business days (refer Customer Service Charter).

Should we be unable to meet these timeframes we will advise you of our suggested course of action and timeframe, as well as the name of a contact person for any further queries regarding the matter.

As a general rule, we will respond via the same channel as the complaint is received unless advised otherwise.

7. Complaint Escalation

If you have attempted to resolve your concerns through the above process without resolution, you may escalate your complaint to the Chief Executive Officer for further review.

If the matter still cannot be resolved, you will be advised of your option to escalate your grievance to an independent external dispute resolution body.

8. Complaint Recording

The District Council of Elliston will record and monitor all complaints received from customers for the purposes of monitoring compliance with regulatory service standards but also to assist in improving the experience of our customers.

9. Customer Charter and Customer Service Charter

Customers requiring more information should refer to our Water & Sewerage Services Customer Charter and the District Council of Elliston Customer Service Charter which are available on our website.

10. Privacy

All personal information that is supplied by a customer will be treated in confidence. Personal information should only be collected from a customer where it is necessary to assist the District Council of Elliston with its investigations and a resolution of a complaint.

11. References

Australian Standard AS/NZS 10002:2014
The District Council of Elliston Customer Charter and Customer Service Charter
Water Industry Act 2012
Water Industry Guideline No. 2 (WG2/01)
Water Industry Regulations 2012

Water Retail Code – Minor and Intermediate Retailers

12. Availability of Policy

This Policy is accessible on Council's website www.elliston.sa.gov.au. Further information about this policy can be obtained by contacting Council during office hours on 8687 9177 or email dce@elliston.sa.gov.au

Version Control

Version no.	Date adopted by Council	Amendments Made	Prepared by:
Version 1	May 2015		CEO
Version 2	17 May 2022	Updated template Added reference to Customer Service Charter	Executive Assistant