



**Essex County
Fire & Rescue Service**

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Compliments &

Complaints Policy

DRAFT

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1 Introduction

Essex County Fire & Rescue Service is committed to delivering a quality service at all times. If you are dissatisfied with any aspect of our service we would like to hear from you. Equally, if you are pleased with the services, or have a suggestion on how we might improve, do let us know.

The purpose of the Compliments and Complaints Policy is to ensure that compliments and complaints are properly administered, recorded and acknowledged and, where necessary, investigated. Members of the public can be assured that when lodging a complaint they will be treated in a fair, reasonable and consistent manner.

Compliments and complaints about service provision give an indication of how well the Service is carrying out its functions and where improvements can be made where appropriate.

They can be received in a number of ways:

- In person: At any fire station or office
- Telephone: 01376 576 000
- Email: compliments.complaints@essex-fire.gov.uk
- Online: Using the compliments & complaints submission form – [Click Here](#)
- Fax: 01376 570 466
- Post: Kelvedon Park,
Rivenhall, Witham
Essex
CM8 3HB

If you require any assistance with making your complaint we will provide any reasonable adjustment or advice you require. If this is the case please contact Corporate Communications using the contact details above.

2 Definitions

A Compliment is an expression of praise or satisfaction with the service provided by ECFRS or its employees in the course of their duties.

A Complaint is an expression of discontent or dissatisfaction regarding the standard of service, actions or lack of action by the ECFRS or by its staff when acting in the course of their duties.



3 Compliment Procedure

Compliments will be logged in the Compliment Database and allocated a unique reference number and retained for future use.

All written correspondence will be kept on file by the relevant station as well as Corporate Communications ready for inspections if required.

4 Complaint Procedure

We need to know the exact nature of your complaint. Please provide as much information as possible about the service provided, the individuals or department involved and why you felt the service we offered did not meet your expectations.

Essex County Fire & Rescue Service takes every complaint and suggestion seriously. We record the complaints received and the subsequent actions taken. The number of complaints, their nature and the way in which they are dealt with are all monitored.

The complaint will be logged in the Complaint Database and allocated a unique reference number. Written acknowledgement will be sent within five working days of receipt, which will include details of the nominated officer investigating the complaint.

The complaint will be investigated thoroughly by the appropriate parties and the complainant will be advised of the outcome. If the nature of the complaint requires further investigation complainant will be advised of this in writing along with an explanation of why this is required.

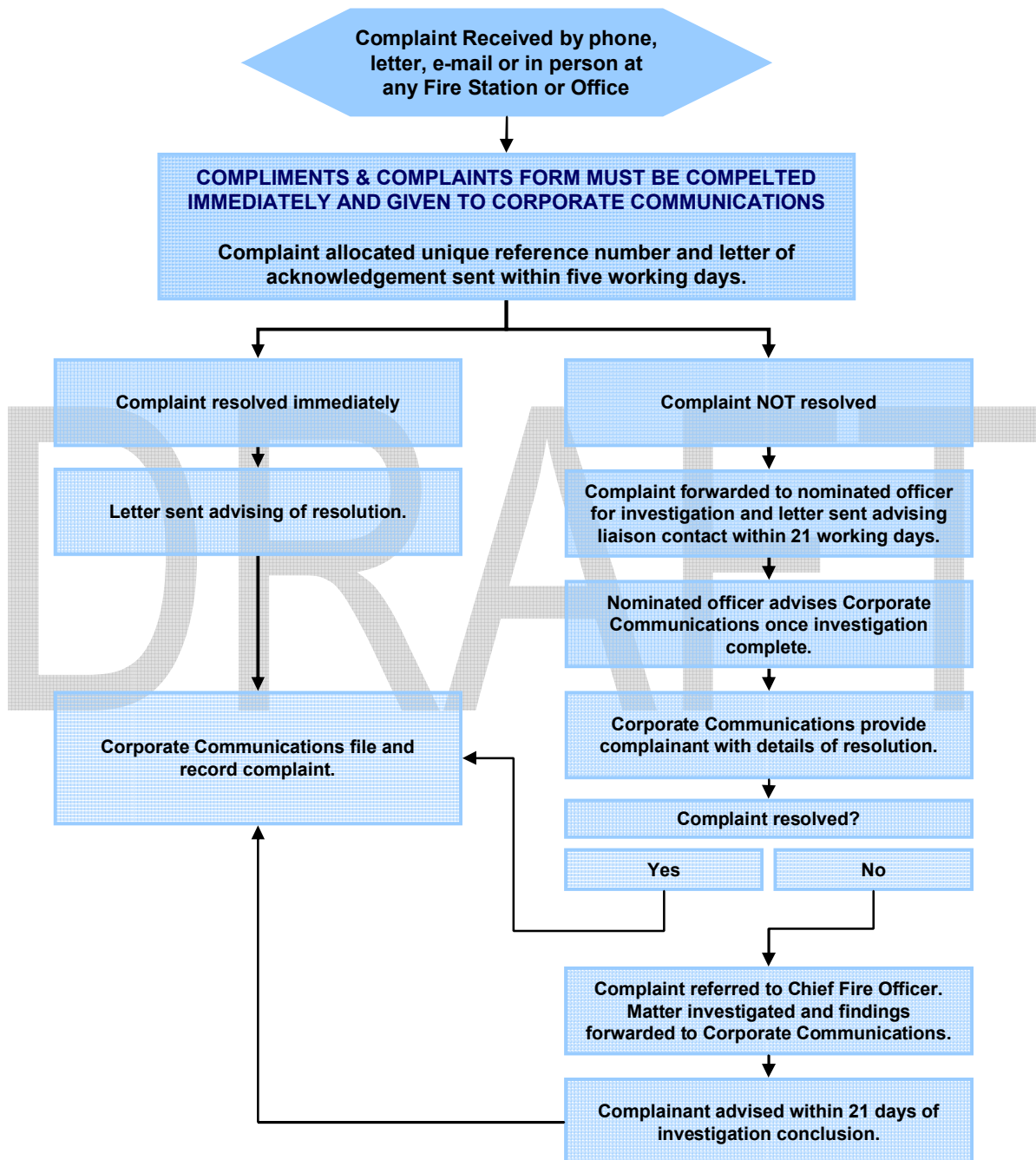
Written response to the complaint will be sent within 21 days of the date the complaint was logged, detailing the findings and of any actions taken.

Personal details will be held on our database for the purpose of investigating the complaint and monitoring trends only. These details will be retained for up to five years. After five years, personal details will be removed from our records.

If the findings of the investigation are not satisfactory the complainant can appeal to the Corporate Communications Manager, who will initiate a further review. If the complainant is still not satisfied the matter can be referred to the Chief Fire Officer. A Principle Officer will be nominated to review the case and a reply from the Chief Fire Office will be sent to the complainant within 28 days.



Complaints Process





If the response from the Chief Fire Officer is not satisfactory, the complaint can be investigated further by the Local Government Ombudsman. They may carry out an independent investigation of your complaint. However, the Ombudsman will usually only consider the complaint once our complaints procedure has been exhausted.

For more information about the Ombudsman, visit their website at <http://www.lgo.org.uk/> or contact them at:

The Local Government Ombudsman
10th Floor Millbank Tower
Millbank, London SW1P 4QP
t: 020 7217 4620 (advice line: 0845 602 1983)
f: 020 7217 4621
e: enquiries@lgo.org.uk

5 Insurance Claims

Potential insurance claims cannot be dealt with through the complaints procedure.

If you require any further information or clarification regarding the Essex County Fire & Rescue Compliments and Complaints Policy, please contact Corporate Communications who will be pleased to assist you.