

Policy on Citizen Complaints
Castle Rock Township

Policy Intent:

Castle Rock Township is dedicated to maintaining the trust that our community has bestowed upon us. Therefore, our policy is to investigate complaints regarding violations of township ordinance or other applicable laws and/or rules. If you feel that a violation has occurred, or if you directly witnessed a suspect action, we encourage you to file a formal citizen's complaint.

Once your violation complaint has been received, it will be investigated and the appropriate actions will take place to attempt to correct the violation. Please do not expect the violation to be corrected immediately, unless life safety is an issue, as we do not have full time staff and our enforcement of the ordinances has specific guidelines to follow to remedy the problem. In some instances, this may take several days, weeks or a few months. Please understand that we want to work with the public and residents of Castle Rock Township and not against them. It is the Township's policy to allow the landowner to remedy the problem once they have been made aware of the violation. If they fail to act, the Township will take further legal action to correct the violation.

Our goal is to resolve these issues quickly and courteously. Your trust is important to us. If you would like to file a complaint you can contact the Township Clerk at (651) 460-2221, or come to our town hall and speak directly with the clerk.

Policy

It is the policy of the Township to prevent instances of complaints insofar as possible and to deal promptly with those that occur. Public complaints regarding the conduct or job performance of Township employees is not covered under this policy.

Procedure for Initiating Complaint

Anyone who has personal knowledge of facts and wishes to file a formal complaint must do so in writing on forms provided by the Township of Castle Rock. Forms are available on the township website or at the town hall. Dates and details of the complaints should be provided, including photos, if available. All complaints must be personally signed. After investigating the complaint, the Township will advise you of its findings.

Resolution Process

Complaint Received

1. Upon receiving a written complaint, the Township Clerk shall properly conceal the identity of the complainant in accordance with data practice requirements.
2. The written complaint shall be reviewed by the clerk, and possibly the township attorney, for completeness.
3. If the clerk or township attorney determines that the complaint could, if true, constitute an ordinance violation, the clerk shall send a notification letter as described below.
4. If the complaint validity cannot be determined at that level, the complaint shall be referred to the full town board for discussion and resolution.

Notification Letter

5. After being reviewed and being deemed valid, a letter will be sent by the Township Clerk to the property owner and/or resident of the complaint; requesting a response within thirty (30) days.
6. Upon receipt of a response from the property owner, the Township Clerk will review the proposed solution with the board to determine if the solution is reasonable and not in violation of any Township Ordinances.
7. The Township should notify the resident if no action can be taken and that the only remedy is through private legal action.

Immediate Inspections

8. If the alleged violation concerns an imminent hazard to the Township, inclusive of open/vacant buildings, fire and/or health hazards, unsecured pools or other health and safety hazards, the Township will endeavor to respond with an immediate inspection. The violation should be abated to meet code requirements within a reasonable time. Violations that are not abated will go straight to Formal Notice of Violation.

Regular Inspection

9. If the alleged violation is not a potential health or safety hazard, the Township may send an inspector(s) to inspect the violation under direction from the board. A re-inspection may be scheduled for thirty (30) days following the initial inspection. The complaint will be closed if the violation has been abated. If the violation has not been abated, a Notice of Violation will be issued.

Formal Notice of Violation

10. If the Violation has not been abated upon re-inspection, a formal Notice of Violation shall be sent by the Township Attorney to the property owner and/or resident of the complaint. The violation must be abated within thirty (30) days or formal legal action will be initiated in conjunction with the Township attorney. A compliance action plan may be submitted within thirty (30) days and approved by the Town Board in lieu of legal action.
11. Except in cases involving health and safety violations, imminent hazards and previous code violations, the responsible person will be notified in writing that a violation has been discovered through in inspection and advised of specific corrective action required. They will also be advised through this process of what further action will be taken by the Township if they do not comply.
12. Also included with the Notice of Violation to owners/responsible persons who have not previously received the information with a notification letter or inspection will be an explanation that repeat violations will receive only one notice of ordinance violation and that future offenses of the ordinance may result in legal action without issuance of further notices of ordinance violation.

Civil Infraction/Criminal Prosecution

13. Owners/responsible persons who fail to comply with be subject to the issuance of a civil infraction or criminal prosecution that will be adjudicated by the applicable Court. All court enforcement shall be implemented through the Township Attorney.

Maintenance and Disclosure of Data

Maintenance and Disclosure of Data collected, created or received by the Township of Castle Rock in connection with this policy shall be in accordance with applicable Federal Data Privacy Laws and the Minnesota Data Practices Act.

OFFICIAL COMPLAINT FORM

Complainant:

Name:	Address:
Phone Number: (mandatory)	

I hereby request the Township to commence action under the appropriate ordinance for the Township. I hereby further declare that if required, I will provide or present evidence in support of this complaint at any hearings in a court of law.

Complainant's Signature:	Date:
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Complaint Lodged Against/Location of Complaint:

Address:	Name:
Phone Numbers (if available):	
Action Taken (if any):	
Date of Offense:	Time (if applicable):
Nature of Complaint:	

Office Use Only: () 1st Complaint () 2nd Complaint () Subsequent Inspectors Initials: _____
 Date Received: _____ Time: _____
 Date of Inspection: _____
 Notes: