

# 2024

## Complaints Policy and Procedure

### OUR VISION

We envision a healthy, resilient Lake Simcoe and it's surrounding land that will enrich our lives for generations to come.

### OUR MISSION

We raise funds for the environmental and educational initiatives of Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority that lessen the impact of climate change and inspire action.

<b>Policy Category</b>	Governance
<b>Title of Policy</b>	Complaints Policy
<b>Approved by</b>	Board of Directors
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Lake Simcoe  
Conservation  
Foundation

## Background

The Lake Simcoe Conservation Foundation (LSCF) is a registered environmental charitable organization that is governed by an elected volunteer Board of Directors. Incorporated in 1973, we continue to work to protect and restore the land and water of our Lake Simcoe watershed. This is accomplished by raising funds in support of the valuable conservation programs and projects of the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority (LSRCA). For more information on LSRCA please visit [www.lsrca.on.ca](http://www.lsrca.on.ca). LSCF has its own Letters Patent and By-Laws and Strategic Plan. LSCF is accredited under the Imagine Canada Standards Program for excellence in non-profit management.

## Introduction

The Mission of the Lake Simcoe Conservation Foundation (LSCF) is:

*We raise money to support a cleaner and healthier Lake Simcoe watershed through the funding of specific projects of the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority.*

This document will cover the policy and procedure for complaints received by Lake Simcoe Conservation Foundation (LSCF) about our fundraising practices, programs (eg: direct mail), events, staff and volunteers of LSCF, and could initially involve complaints regarding services or programs of LSRCA.

## Guiding Principles

- complaints are dealt with promptly and resolved as quickly as possible. Complaints regarding LSRCA are immediately forwarded to appropriate staff of LSRCA to be resolved by LSRCA.
- review of complaints is fair, impartial and respectful to all parties.
- complainants are advised of their options to escalate their complaint to a more senior staff person if they are dissatisfied with treatment or outcome.
- complainants are provided clear and understandable reasons for decisions relating to complaints.
- updates are provided to complainants during review / resolution process.
- complaints are used to assist in improving services, policies and procedures.

## Types of Complaints

**Definition:** A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction about the service, actions, or lack of action by LSCF as an organization or a staff member or volunteer acting on behalf of LSCF. Examples include but are not limited to:

- perceived failure to do something agreed upon;

- failure to observe policy or procedures;
- error made by a staff member/volunteer; or
- unfair or discourteous actions/statements by staff member/volunteer;

Anyone personally affected can complain and their complaint will be reviewed in accordance with this procedure.

## Complaint Receipt and Handling

- A complaint may be received verbally (by phone or in person) or in writing (by mail, fax, email).
- LSCF employee or volunteer who receives a complaint (usually the person who has the primary relationship with the complainant) should ensure that the Executive Director is aware of it first in order that we can determine the proper person to handle it. Depending on the nature of the complaint, the advice of the President or other relevant Board Director should be sought.
- It is the responsibility of the person who receives the complaint to either resolve it or transfer it to another person who can resolve it, ensuring the Executive Director is aware of actions taken.
- If the complaint is transferred, the recipient must acknowledge to the transferor that he/she has received it and will act on it.
- The person who initially receives the complaint should acknowledge to the complainant that the complaint has been received and will be acted on either by him/herself or another employee. If a timeframe for action can be determined, that should be included in the acknowledgement. Basic contact information including name, phone number and email address should immediately be recorded.
- If the complaint is regarding services or programs of LSRCA, this complaint must be transferred and resolved immediately by appropriate LSRCA staff (usually LSRCA CAO). Complainant must be made aware of this transfer to LSRCA for resolution. LSCF will ensure complainant received their reply / resolution from LSRCA.

## Resolving the Complaint

LSCF will ensure every effort is made to resolve complaints as quickly as possible. Common sense should always prevail. Verbal complaints should be understood using empathetic and effective listening skills with efforts made to resolve immediately, if possible. Complaints received in writing should be acknowledged within 2 business days and staff should attempt to resolve the matter within 5 business days. Complaints via email should be acknowledged the same day, with resolution within 5 business days.

Where an LSCF complaint cannot be easily resolved, it should be escalated as appropriate. Complainants should be kept informed of the status of their complaint. Every attempt should be

made to resolve escalated complaints within 5 additional business days so that all complaints are resolved within two weeks of being received.

## Documenting the Complaint

LSCF will document complaints as follows:

- Significant complaints (those involving money or that took a significant amount of time/resources to resolve) will be recorded in etapestry donor database, noted under the complainants /donors record.
- Complaints will also be printed hardcopy and placed in donor file if there is one.
- If there is no record of complainant in eTapestry (ie: they are not a donor), a hardcopy of the complaint and resolution will be printed and placed in the Complaints File managed by the Development Officer
- A summary of complaints will be provided to LSCF Board on an annual basis, or as required.



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