

**HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT POLICY**  
**San Luis Obispo County**

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<b>Topic: Human Resources Department Procedure for Handling Citizen Complaints</b>	
<b>Subject:</b> Internal Policies	<b>Revised:</b> March 2009
<b>CSC Rule:</b> n/a	<b>Approval:</b> _____
<b>Location:</b> P:\HR Department Policies\Final Policies 2004\INTERNAL POLICIES\Human Resources Department Procedure for Handling Citizen Complaints.doc	<b>Date:</b> _____
	<b>Note:</b> Original signed copy on file in Human Resources Department.

The following procedures will be used by the Human Resources Department to investigate complaints from the public concerning allegations of misconduct or discourteous treatment by Human Resources Department staff. This process provides members of the public with a direct avenue of complaint, which will be investigated and answered. While it is intended to have complaints resolved at the lowest possible level, if necessary, a complainant has the right to speak with the Personnel Director. This process is for those areas, which fall outside an already defined process established for handling that type of complaint. Complaints such as applicants whose complaint involves an examination process and complaints, which are County employees, will continue to be referred to the County's formal Grievance/Appeal process covered in the County Civil Service Rules; or the special procedures used to document and handle complaints alleging sexual harassment in County employment.

1. **INITIAL CONTACT:** Contact will be established with all complainants, in order to attempt to resolve the complaint informally. If the complainant wants a formal response, they will be given a Human Resources Department Complaint Investigation form.
2. **INVESTIGATION:** The information gathered from the complainant and any witnesses will be used in order to ascertain the factual basis for sustaining, not sustaining, exonerating, or finding the complaint unfounded. The Personnel staff person who is the subject of the complaint will be interviewed during the investigation process, which will be conducted by that unit's supervisor.
3. **REPORT:** Findings will be sent to the complainant in writing stating the findings of the complaint allegations. These findings will include whether the allegations were sustained, not sustained, if the complainant was exonerated or the complaint was determined to be unfounded. The written response will be sent to the complainant within fifteen (15) working days. Any change in the time limits will be discussed with the complainant.
4. **RECORDS:** A record of all citizen complaints will be maintained with the appropriate documentation included in the file.

For convenience, the San Luis Obispo County Human Resources Department Citizens' Complaint Form follows. Please complete as appropriate.

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**SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT**

**CITIZENS' COMPLAINT FORM**

Complaint Investigation  
*(To be completed by Personnel Director or his/her designee)*

Complainant's full name: \_\_\_\_\_

Residence address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Incident Location: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

County staff person involved. Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Describe action of complaint: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Witnesses: \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

What was complainant doing at the time of incident? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Complaint received by Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

In person  By telephone  By mail  Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Note: Complainant may add more details of incident on separate sheet of paper if necessary.

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**Sample Letter of Complainant**

Dear \_\_\_\_\_

Re: Personnel Complaint of \_\_\_\_\_

This letter is to inform you that (name/title) have reviewed your complaint lodged against a member of the County of San Luis Obispo staff.

I wish to assure you that your complaint was thoroughly investigated by \_\_\_\_\_. I personally make the final decision in all matters of this nature. Please be advised that your complaint has been (sustained, not sustained, exonerated or not founded). Appropriate action has been taken, however, I am not at liberty to discuss any details of the investigation with you due to the rules concerning confidentiality of personnel records.

If you have any further questions, contact my office (or designated official), at \_\_\_\_\_, during regular business hours.

Sincerely,

Tami Douglas-Schatz  
Human Resources Director