



COMPLAINTS HANDLING POLICY

Wildlife Research and Training Institute

P.O. Box 842-20117, Naivasha, Kenya

Telephone: (+254) 050 2020577

Mobile: (+254) 0700 000321 /0731 919 465

Website: www.wrti.go.ke

Email: director@wrti.go.ke, wrti@wrti.go.ke

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FOREWORD



The Institute is committed to upholding the highest standards of integrity, accountability, and transparency in all its operations. This policy reflects the Institute's dedication to these principles by providing a clear and fair process for addressing concerns and complaints.

Effective complaint handling is essential for maintaining trust and confidence among stakeholders, staff, partners, donors, and the communities. It allows the Institute to listen, learn, and continuously improve its operations and practices, ensuring that it fulfills its' mission to advance wildlife conservation and education responsibly and ethically.

This policy is in line with the Commission on Administrative Justice (Ombudsman) Act, to ensure that disputes with and among stakeholders are resolved effectively, efficiently and expeditiously; encourage stakeholders to solve their disputes through Alternative Dispute Resolution Mechanisms.

By working together to effectively manage complaints, the Institute shall foster positive relationships, and enhance our impact on wildlife conservation.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'D. Nkedianye', written over a dotted line.

DR DAVID NKEDIANYE
CHAIR, BOARD OF THE INSTITUTE

DATE:16th May, 2025

PREFACE



The Institute recognizes the importance of responding promptly to the concerns and feedback of all our stakeholders, including our staff, partners, donors, and the communities we serve.

An effective complaint handling process not only helps the Institute address issues promptly and fairly, but also establishes a solid relationship with stakeholders. It is through this open exchange that we can continue to improve our practices and better fulfill our mission of advancing wildlife research and training.

This policy outlines a clear, fair, and confidential process for managing complaints. It ensures that every complaint is handled in a consistent, fair, and timely manner, providing a safe space for individuals to voice their concerns without fear of retaliation. We are committed to resolving complaints effectively and using the insights gained to enhance our operations and strengthen our organizational culture.

By actively engaging in this process, we can foster a more inclusive, respectful, and effective working environment for everyone involved in our vital work.

.....
DR PATRICK OMONDI, OGW
DIRECTOR/CEO

DATE: 16th May, 2025

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Commission: **means Commission for Administrative Justice**

Complaint: means an expression of dissatisfaction by a person or persons or a group, institution or organization about an unsatisfactory or unacceptable situation, including an act or omission, or about the standard of a service; whether the action was taken or the service provided by the person, the institution itself or a body acting on behalf of the public institution;

Complainant: means a person, group of persons, organization or institution making a complaint within the meaning of this guide;

Complaints desk: means the service point at the Institute

Complaints mechanism: means the procedure and process of handling complaints received by the Institute;

Lodging: means the formal submission of an official complaint to the Institute;

Resolution: means a decision by the Institute regarding a complaint;

Root cause: means the primary cause of a complaint;

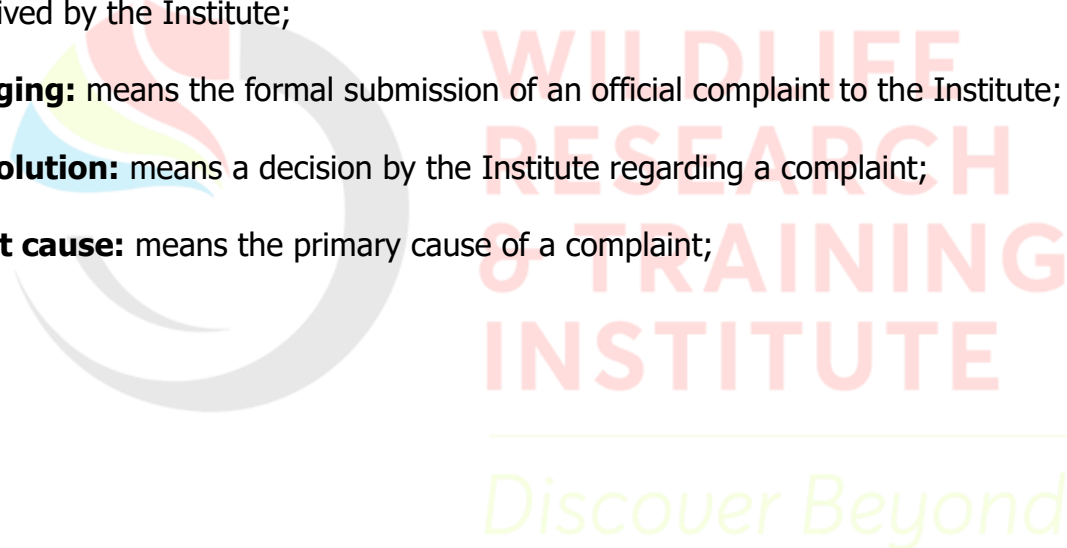


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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The Wildlife Research and Training Institute (WRTI) is a state corporation established under Section 50 of the Wildlife Conservation and Management Act. The establishment of the Institute was informed by the need to provide coordinated wildlife research and comprehensive data to inform scientific based solutions that inform policy decisions, management approaches, and create innovative wildlife-based products and services in the wildlife sector.

Vision

A globally competitive wildlife research and training centre.

Mission

To conduct and coordinate wildlife research and training through innovation, knowledge and technology transfer for sustainable wildlife conservation and management.

Core values

The Institute is guided by the following core values in its operations:

- 1) **Integrity:** We uphold honesty and transparency in all our operations.
- 2) **Professionalism:** We uphold high standards of conduct, competence and accountability in all activities to foster trust and credibility.
- 3) **Stewardship:** We nurture and foster environmental sustainability and responsible management of public resources.
- 4) **Innovation:** We endeavour to explore and adopt new ideas, approaches and technologies.
- 5) **Partnership:** We create an environment that will deliver competitive scientific output through collaborative research, capacity building and service delivery initiatives.
- 6) **Quality:** We offer excellent research and training outputs and services.
- 7) **Teamwork:** We uphold the spirit of working together to create synergy and cohesiveness towards
- 8) Common goals.
- 9) **Inclusivity:** We embrace gender and social diversity, equity, fairness, respect and community engagement.

The Institute shall remain responsive, accountable, and aligned with its mission of advancing wildlife research and training through instituting the Complaints Handling Policy to ensure the Institute promotes transparency and accountability.

1.2 Purpose of the policy

The Institute is committed to upholding the principles of transparency, accountability, and fairness in all its operations. As part of this commitment, this Complaints Policy shall ensure that stakeholders have a mechanism to raise concerns and grievances related to administrative actions in accordance with the law. Proper handling of complaints will therefore improve the reputation and image of the Institute in an aim of providing a system of handling, managing, responding and reporting customer complaints, to ensure that all complaints raised are handled in a fair, responsive, efficient and integrated manner.

The Institute shall institute the Complaints Handling Policy to:

- (a) process complaints received by the Institute to ensure that grievances from staff, students, partners, or the public are addressed promptly and fairly resolved. The Complaints Handling Policy fosters a culture of accountability and transparency, demonstrating the Institute's commitment to high ethical standards and openness.
- (b) identify areas of improvement in its operations, research activities, and training programs. Feedback from complaints can highlight inefficiencies or problems, allowing the Institute to refine its processes, improve service delivery, and enhance the quality of its programs.
- (c) build confidence and strengthen relationships with stakeholders.
- (d) help the Institute address potential issues before they escalate into major conflicts, legal disputes, or damage to the institution's reputation. Handling complaints professionally minimizes risks and ensures compliance with legal and regulatory standards.
- (e) foster a culture of open communication within the Institute to foster a healthier and more productive work environment, promoting trust, respect, and mutual accountability.
- (f) Review complaints regularly, the Institute can track patterns or recurring issues, offering valuable insights for continuous improvement. The institute can then implement proactive measures to address the root causes of common complaints, leading to long-term operational and strategic benefits.

1.3 Objective of the policy

The policy provides a road map of handling complaints, the Policy seeks to:

- (a) **Provide a Transparent and Accessible Process:** The policy shall provide stakeholders with a clear and accessible process for lodging complaints related to administrative actions taken by the Institute.

- (b) **Ensure Fairness and Accountability:** Complaints shall be addressed in a fair, impartial, and timely manner, with a commitment to accountability and corrective action where warranted.
- (c) **Promote Compliance with Legal Framework:** The policy shall ensure that the Institute's complaint-handling procedures comply with relevant laws and regulations governing administrative actions and fair treatment of stakeholders.

1.4 Scope of the policy

The Complaints Policy shall apply to all stakeholders, including but not limited to employees, clients, partners, trainees, staff, suppliers and members of the public who wish to lodge complaints related to administrative actions taken by the Institute.

1.5 Institute's Commitment

The Institute is committed to handling complaints fairly, efficiently and effectively. Consequently:

- (a) The Director/CEO shall promote an organizational culture that seeks effective complaints handling through supporting and giving direction to staff handling complaints.
- (b) Complaint handling staff shall demonstrate competence and professionalism in handling complaints by complying with this policy guidelines and complaint handling procedures.
- (c) All staff shall be conversant with the Institute's policy and procedures for handling complaints.

1.6 Guiding Principles

1.6.1 People Focus

Parties making complaints will be treated with dignity and shall be provided with all relevant information on complaint handling process and avenues for complaint resolution.

1.6.2 Accessibility

The Institute shall provide multiple channels for stakeholders to lodge complaints, including in-person, written, electronic, and telephonic methods, ensuring accessibility for all.

1.6.3 Fairness

Complaints shall be handled impartially and without bias, with a commitment to treating all parties involved with dignity and respect.

1.6.4 Timeliness

The Institute endeavours to address complaints promptly and efficiently, with clear timelines for acknowledgment, investigation and resolution.

1.6.5 Confidentiality

The institute shall accept anonymous complaints and will carry out investigation on them where there is enough information. To this effect, complaint boxes shall be strategically located.

1.6.6 Transparency

The Institute shall communicate openly with complainants regarding the status and progress of their complaints, providing regular updates and explanations where necessary.

1.6.7 No Charges

Lodging a complaint to and about the institution shall not be charged any fee.

1.6.8 Accountability

The institute shall endeavour to keep a record of all complaint to facilitate retrieval for reporting and analysis.

1.6.9 Continuous Improvement

The Institute shall ensure that the continuous improvement of complaint handling process.

2.0 GOVERNANCE

For effective governance, the Institute shall establish a Complaint Resolution committee, whose functions shall include;

- (a) Promote the sensitization of staff and other stakeholders on complaints handling;
- (b) Advise Management on complaints handling;
- (c) Receive, process and oversee the resolution of complaints;
- (d) Monitor the trends of complaints and recommend remedial action;
- (e) Prepare regular reports to management on complaints handling;
- (f) Coordinate complaints handling activities in the organisation;
- (g) Ensure the integration of complaints handling in the organisation ;
- (h) Ensure compliance with the guidelines of the Commission on resolution of public complaints, as may be issued from time to time; and
- (i) Monitor, evaluate and review complaints handling activities in the Institute.

3.0 TYPES OF COMPLAINTS

Minor complaints: these are complaints which are easily resolved on the spot and require less time to handle. This type of complaint shall be dealt with by the frontline/receiving officers.

Major complaints: these are complaints which require deep analysis and a lot of time to handle.

4.0 COMPLAINTS HANDLING CHANNELS

A complaint shall be written or oral, a person can lodge a complaint in their own name or on behalf of another person. A group, organisation or institution can also lodge a complaint.

The Institute will provide designated place and channels where complaints can be lodged including the following:

1. **In person** (persons with disability will be assisted to lodge the complaints)
2. **Online via email** (wrti@go.ke), website
3. **Telephone numbers** (0700 000321, 0731 919 465)
4. **In writing (letters or emails)** (*Director/ CEO, Wildlife Research and Training Institute P.O BOX 842-20117 Naivasha*)
5. **Text messages**
6. **Writing to the Office of the Ombudsman.** (*Secretary/CEO Commission for Administrative Justice West End Building, 2nd Floor P O Box 20414 – 00200 Westlands, NAIROBI Tel:+254-20- 270000/2303000/2603765/2441211/8030666 Email: complain@ombudsman.go.ke*)
7. **Complaints/Suggestion box**
8. **Social media handles**
9. Any other mode as may be determined by the Institute from time to time.

5.0 PROCESS OF HANDLING COMPLAINTS

The procedure of addressing complaints shall be as outlined below:

1. Once a complaint is received, it shall be recorded by the receiving officers/departments and accorded a case reference number to facilitate follow up. A record of a complaint shall include the name and contact details of the customer, full details of the complaint including the date, as well as details of all communication with the customer and any actions to resolve the complaint.

2. Where the complaint is minor, the receiving officer shall resolve the complaint immediately and update the register.
3. Where the complaint is major, the receiving officer shall escalate it to the immediate supervisor for further investigations and resolution. The escalation shall be done within one (1) working day of receiving the complaint.
4. Where the receiving officer has informed their immediate supervisor and the complaint cannot be resolved immediately, the complainant(s) shall be informed of the procedure of determining the complaint. The Institute shall inform the Complainant of progress of their complaint regularly, especially if there are any delays or changes to what has been agreed upon between the complaints officer and the complainant.
5. Where appropriate, parties who have had a complaint resolved shall be contacted within fourteen (14) working days to find out whether or not they are satisfied with how their complaint was handled.
6. Where a complaint cannot be resolved by the foregoing complaint handling procedure, it shall be referred to the Chief Executive Officer/ Director and the complainant shall be informed and given an amended timeframe for resolution.
7. All heads of directorates/departments shall forward their complaints registers to the Head of communication on a monthly basis for compilation.
8. Head of Corporate Communication shall compile all complaints (including their status) and forward them to the Complaints Handling Committee on a quarterly basis for analysis.
9. The Complaints Handling Committee shall prepare a report on complaints management in the approved format and forward to the office of "Ombudsman" on a quarterly basis.
10. The Institute shall commit itself and endeavour to resolve all complaints in good faith.

Figure 1: Process of handling a complaint



6.0 CLOSING THE COMPLAINTS

For every complaint handled, the Institute shall endeavour to keep records on the following:

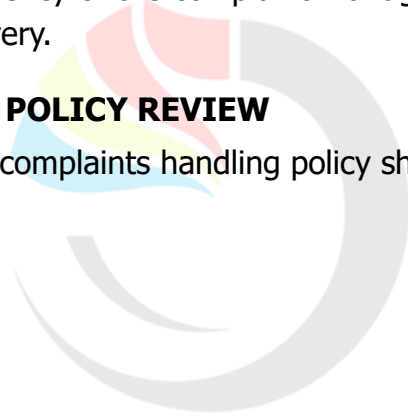
1. How the complaint was handled.
2. The outcomes of the complaint.
3. Decisions made from the outcome of the investigation of the complaint.
4. Pending actions or issues outstanding to be followed up.

7.0 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The institute shall ensure the complaint records are kept to facilitate retrieval for reporting and analysis. Frequent analysis of the complaint reports will be done to monitor the trends, audit the complaint management system, aim at improving the efficiency of the complaint management system, and measure the quality of our service delivery.

8.0 POLICY REVIEW

The complaints handling policy shall be reviewed after 3 years.



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