



Internal Ombudsman

The Internal Ombudsman of Mildura Rural City Council deals with customer concerns which cannot be resolved by the General Managers or the Chief Executive Officer. Based on industry best practice principles, customers and ratepayers can bring issues which have not been dealt with to their satisfaction directly to the attention of the Internal Ombudsman.

The Internal Ombudsman conducts impartial investigations into the administrative practices of the Council but does not represent complainants or defend the Council. In essence, therefore the Internal Ombudsman's role is to investigate concerns about the way in which a Council Officer has handled their request, query or complaint.

Who can complain to the Internal Ombudsman?

The Internal Ombudsman responds to complaints from ratepayers, local businesses, customers, people using the municipality and members of the general public with an interest in the Mildura Rural City Council area.

How is a complaint made?

A complaint to the Internal Ombudsman must be made in writing. The correspondence must include full details of the matter/issue and provide full details of the complaint and signed by the complainant. If personal assistance is required, an appointment can be made with the Internal Ombudsman.

When can a complaint be made?

Complaints are accepted by the Internal Ombudsman only if they have been previously dealt with by the responsible General Manager or Chief Executive Officer.

Can a complaint be made about a Council decision?

No, the Internal Ombudsman is only empowered to investigate administrative matters. Any complaints concerning Council decisions must be directed to the Chief Executive Officer.

What does it cost to have a complaint investigated by the Internal Ombudsman?

There is no charge for lodging a complaint with Mildura Rural City Council's Internal Ombudsman.

What happens once a complaint is made?

Once the Internal Ombudsman has determined the complaint can be appropriately dealt with, the Internal Ombudsman will review all relevant documentation and information related to the complaint. A recommendation, with a course of action, is discussed with both the responsible General Manager and the Chief Executive Officer. A letter will then be forwarded to the complainant outlining the results of the investigation and any actions, if appropriate arising from the review.

Will the Council be advised about the investigations processed by the Internal Ombudsman?

Yes, quarterly reports will be submitted to the Council by the Internal Ombudsman.

Can I still direct my complaint to the Victorian Ombudsman?

Yes, this service is still available. The role of the Internal Ombudsman is a service provided by Mildura Rural City Council and remains an optional service.

The Victorian Ombudsman can be contacted on:
(03) 9613 6222
12th Floor, 303 Collins Street
MELBOURNE VIC 3000

What are the benefits of establishing an Internal Ombudsman at Mildura Rural City Council?

- It serves to resolve disputes between the Council and customer without the need for the customer to make representations directly to the Council, the Victorian Ombudsman or the Office of Local Government.
- It ensures that the customer's complaint is dealt with fairly and impartially.
- It ensures that the customer sees that justice is done rather than believing that the Chief Executive Officer/Council uncritically supported the action of an officer; and
- It assists staff in focusing on the customer and promotes greater commitment to Council's Customer Service Charter.

Mildura Rural City Council Privacy Collection Statement

Mildura Rural City Council collects Personal and or Health Information for municipal purposes as specified in the *Local Government Act 1989*. The information collected in Complaint forms is used only for the purposes specified (primary purpose) and is not passed on to third parties. Council may disclose this information but only if authorised or required by law. Council may not be able to process your complaint unless sufficient information is given. Should you need to change or access your personal details, or you require further information regarding Council's Privacy Policy please contact Council's Privacy Officer.