


SUBJECT CONSUMER ADVOCATE	POLICY NUMBER 11.03	
POLICY MAINTENANCE ADMINISTRATOR: Customer Service Manager, Motor Services		
PURPOSE/SCOPE: To establish department policy and procedures for resolving consumer issues and complaints filed against the Department or its members.		

I. AUTHORITY

Section 23.30, Florida Statutes, Florida Customer Service Standards Act

Section 20.055 (6) (b), Florida Statutes, Agency Inspectors General

II. DEFINITIONS

- A. Complaint- Any allegation, written or verbal (and reduced to writing), filed by a member of the public against the Department or a department member.
- B. Customer- Any member of the public who uses or requests services or information provided by the Department or who is required by statute to interact with the Department. Any member of the public affected by departmental action.
- C. Consumer- A member of the public transacting business with the Department. For the purposes of this policy, customer and consumer are used interchangeably. Any member of the public affected by departmental action.
- D. Consumer Advocate- A member appointed to monitor, track, and facilitate the resolution of customer issues and complaints. The Consumer Advocate has the responsibility for facilitating resolution of complaints.
- F. Bureau of Personnel Services- Assists members in human resource development and personnel administration that support the agency's mission. The Office is responsible, in part, for the administration of all aspects of personnel rules, regulations, policies and procedures as they relate to employees and applicants.
- G. Office of Inspector General- Office responsible for conducting criminal and administrative investigations for the Department.

Executive Director SIGNED ORIGINAL ON FILE	Effective Date 05/01/2000
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III. POLICY

It is policy of the Department to fairly and quickly resolve consumer complaints. All department members are expected to promptly and courteously resolve consumer complaints within their immediate chain of command. Members of the Department will provide available information, except information which is confidential pursuant to any other state or federal law, and accurate responses to questions and requests for assistance. When unable to resolve the issue or complaint, the member's chain of command will refer the consumer to the Consumer Advocate unless the complaint may indicate the need for member discipline or require an administrative or criminal investigation. In these situations, the Chief, Bureau of Personnel Services, should be contacted as appropriate.

IV. PROCEDURES

- A. Department members may receive a consumer complaint in person, electronically, through the mail or via telephone. Members will also receive complaint referrals from other state agencies. If appropriate, the member should attempt to resolve the complaint within their immediate chain of command.

The Department will also make available the following options for consumers to contact the Consumer Advocate directly by email, mail or phone at <http://www.flhsmv.gov/html/contact.html>; 2900 Apalachee Parkway, Mail Stop 99, Tallahassee, FL 32399-0500; 850-617-3028.

- B. Department members should immediately contact their chain of command if the complaint alleges member misconduct or criminal activities. The chain of command will be responsible for contacting the Bureau of Personnel Services regarding the complaint. The Bureau of Personnel Services will contact the Agency Inspector General's Office to conduct any criminal and administrative investigations. Department Policy 11.07, Section IV B (Investigative Activities) describes roles and responsibilities for these offices.
- C. Consumer Appeal Process
1. The completed form, along with copies of all related material, research and correspondence will be forwarded to the Consumer Advocate.
 2. Upon receipt, the Consumer Advocate will review the complaint, determine the appropriate routing, log it into a tracking system and forward it to the responsible division director or designee within two (2) work days.
 3. The division director or designee will have up to ten (10) work days to research the issue. The consumer may receive a written or verbal response, however

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- written confirmation of the resolution will be provided to the Consumer Advocate tracking system to verify the issue has been resolved.
4. Additional time may be granted for complaints requiring extensive investigation. Such extensions must be approved by the Consumer Advocate.
 5. In all instances, the consumer must be advised of the status of our research at least every ten (10) work days.
 6. The Consumer Advocate will monitor outstanding items and conduct appropriate follow-up to ensure a timely and thorough response to consumer issues.
 7. If an issue cannot be resolved to the consumer's satisfaction, if the complaint is escalated or if the consumer seeks an appeal, a proposed letter of final determination will be drafted and signed by the appropriate division director or Executive Leadership and submitted to the Consumer Advocate for review prior to delivery to the consumer.
 8. The Consumer Advocate is responsible for final resolution thereby initiating consultation on complex issues, issues with more than one division/office, and anything controversial to reach an amicable determination.
 9. An issue will be closed once the consumer receives a response and no additional follow-up is required.
- D. The Consumer Advocate will track and report statistical data on customer complaints and resolutions of those complaints and will periodically brief executive leadership on those findings.