

Complaint process 7-step checklist

Use this list to make sure you handle complaints fairly and follow all required steps. It's particularly useful for complaints about a serious fault with a product or service. You can print it out and check off each step, or edit it on your computer or smartphone.

Step 1	Name of person handling it	Tick when done		
Tell the customer who will handle it from start to finish, eg you or a trusted staff member.				
If it's not you handling it:		Yes	No	Not sure
• Has your staff member handled complaints before?				
• Do they know the product or service well?				
• Do they know enough about consumer law requirements?				
TIP: If you answer "no" or "not sure", think about how you will support them — or if you should take over. Check out Training staff to handle complaints on the business.govt.nz website.				

Step 2	Tick when done
Record the customer's contact details, details of the problem, and other background information.	
It's worth asking: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> when the problem arose if the problem could be due to overuse or incorrect use customer's version of what was said during the sale — and your staff's version. 	
TIP: Use our complaint form to record these details — including who is handling the complaint in your business.	

Step 3	Tick when done
Once satisfied it's a valid complaint, work out what needs to be done to put it right.	
For faulty products, this might mean:	Yes No n/a
• Can it be fixed?	
• Will you send it to the manufacturer to be checked and/or repaired?	

Step 3 continued on next page

Step 3 continued	Tick when done		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any extra costs to cover, eg repairing damage caused by the fault? 			
For faulty services, this might mean:	Yes	No	n/a
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will you redo the work? 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any extra costs to cover, eg repairing damage caused by the fault? 			

Step 4	Tick when done		
Check if the remedy you plan to give meets your legal requirements.			
TIP: See Obligations under the Consumer Guarantees Act on the Consumer Protection website.			

Step 5	Tick when done		
Discuss what will happen next with your customer.			
TIP: It's helpful to keep our visual guide to what you must do for customers handy.			

Step 6	Tick when done		
Do what you say you'll do, whether it's giving a remedy or not.			
TIP: Use our complaint form to record the details.			

Step 7	Tick when done		
Work out what your business will do to prevent the problem from happening again.			
If necessary, tell your customer.			
TIP: See advice on Analysing complaint data on the business.govt.nz website.			