

CORRESPONDENCE PROCESS

Process Background:

The Correspondence process was created to support ICANN's commitment to operate in an open and transparent manner in regard to written communications to the ICANN Board and the ICANN organization. The process provides a centralized, standard and consistent manner in which to accept, process, and respond to letters received from external sources and track outgoing letters. As part of our commitment to transparency, ICANN publishes applicable written communication to the public Correspondence page (<https://www.icann.org/resources/pages/correspondence>).

Process Scope:

This handbook defines how ICANN manages incoming correspondence and the respective responses. For the purpose of this document, "correspondence" refers to formal written communications to the ICANN Board or ICANN organization. It does not include transactional communications that are part of ICANN's day-to-day operations.

The following are generally out of the scope of ICANN's Correspondence process:

- A. Letters considered through a defined ICANN process (for example: New gTLD Program application process, public comment forum, Request for Reconsideration, letters of support for community applicants)
- B. Letters considered and responded to through a channel other than correspondence (for example: the Board responds to the GAC communiqué through its adoption of a scorecard)
- C. Letters intended to notify ICANN of some activity (for example: changes to contracted party agreements, changes of control), but does not include questions or requests for action
- D. Required notices submitted to the ICANN Secretary in the form of letters
- E. Letters submitted to ICANN as part of an ongoing dispute resolution process (such as mediation, arbitration, or lawsuit)

Process Activities:

The correspondence process includes five phases, from confirmation of receipt to closure.

1. Receive and Acknowledge

A letter or piece of correspondence can be received by any person or group of persons within the ICANN organization or the ICANN Board. The ICANN organization acknowledges the receipt of the letter. Additionally, the ICANN organization forwards the letter and initial acknowledgment to the Board if the Board or a Board member was addressed in the letter.

2. Understand

After receipt and acknowledgment, the ICANN organization reads and analyzes the correspondence for processing and determines the appropriate subject matter experts to draft a response. After the analysis of the correspondence has been completed—and it has not been determined that it is to be handled as part of a separate, defined process (as noted under Process Scope), or is intended for ICANN to keep confidential—then the ICANN organization publishes the correspondence to the public ICANN Correspondence page and routes it internally to the appropriate subject matter experts for evaluation.

3. Evaluate & Consider

The appropriate subject matter experts within the ICANN organization review the letter and determine a response approach. The Board is consulted on the response approach as necessary.

4. Respond

Targeted timeframe: 30 days

If the ICANN organization determines a response to the letter is required, the appropriate subject matter experts within the ICANN organization draft a response and, if appropriate, request input from the Board.

5. Close

If the ICANN organization determined that a response to the letter was required, the ICANN organization sends the response to the original sender and publishes the response to the ICANN Correspondence page, unless it was determined the correspondence should be kept confidential. Alternatively, if it was determined that no substantive response beyond acknowledgment was required, the ICANN organization considers the correspondence closed.