

Employee Complaint Process

The Department's Personnel Complaint policy provides guidelines for the reporting, investigation and disposition of complaints regarding the conduct of its members and employees. Personnel complaints consist of misconduct or improper job performance that is a violation of department policy, federal, state or local law.

A person can file a formal complaint or informally inquire about a department employee's conduct. Inquiries involve actions by an employee that is of concern to a complainant, but is determined not to be misconduct and the complaining party is satisfied that appropriate action was taken. A formal complaint is a matter in which the complaining party requests further investigation, or which a supervisor or command officer determines further action is warranted.

A complaint may be filed in person, in writing, by e-mail, or by telephoning the Department. Complainants making a complaint in writing are encouraged to be completed on a Personnel Complaint Report available at the Police Department or online. Although not required, the Department encourages the complaining party to appear in person. A complaint can be made anonymously or by a third party and the matter will be investigated to the extent that sufficient information is provided.

Every Department employee becoming aware of alleged misconduct shall immediately notify a supervisor. A supervisor receiving a complaint from any source alleging misconduct of an employee will initiate a preliminary investigation. Depending upon the nature of the allegation, the matter may be handled by the supervisor or turned over to the Professional Standards Unit for investigation.

An administrative investigation of an officer is governed by a variety of State laws and Department policies. The investigation shall proceed with due diligence. Upon completion, the report is forwarded to the employee's commanding officer. A review board comprised of Department supervisors or command officers and a representative from the City Manager's Office recommends a finding for each allegation. The Police Chief then classifies each allegation of misconduct with one of the following dispositions:

- Sustained - The act occurred and that it constituted misconduct.
- Unfounded - The alleged act did not occur, are frivolous, or did not involve department personnel.

- Not Sustained - There is insufficient evidence to sustain the complaint or fully exonerate the employee.
- Exonerated - The act was justified, lawful and/or proper.
- No Finding - The complaint was dropped, the complainant did not cooperate, or the employee resigned prior to the process' conclusion.

Sustained allegations can result in discipline to include training, reprimand, suspension, demotion and/or termination. State law prevents the Department from disclosing the specifics of any disciplinary action, but the Department will notify the complainant of the disposition for each allegation in the investigation. For further information, please contact the Police Department's Professional Standards Unit at (650) 903-6339.

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The Police Records Unit is responsible for processing police reports, citations, subpoenas and other related paperwork; registering sex, narcotic, arson and gang offenders; staffing the main counter and assisting the public with questions, copies of reports, taxi, tow and dance permits, and vehicle releases; and other essential services. The Unit is comprised of 2 Lead Records Specialists, 8 Police Records Specialist, 1 Records Police Assistant and 1 Records Unit Supervisor.