

The Sacramento Police Department's Citizen Complaint procedure is intended to help you, the community, and the police as well.

If you have a concern about the practices or personnel of the Sacramento Police Department, what can you do about it?

Since 1971, the Sacramento Police Department Internal Affairs Division has investigated citizen complaints regarding police department personnel or policies.

A positive relationship between the police and the public they serve, fostered by confidence and trust, is essential to effective law enforcement. While the police are charged with vigorous enforcement of the law, they must meticulously observe the rights of the people. Police personnel, at the same time, must be free to take action in a reasonable, lawful, and impartial manner without fear of reprisal.

It is important, therefore, that adequate provisions be made for the prompt receipt, investigation, and disposition of complaints regarding the conduct of Department personnel. To this end, the Sacramento Police Department welcomes criticism of the Department and valid complaints against its members or procedures.

The purpose of the Internal Affairs Division is to ensure complete, fair, and impartial investigations of citizen complaints.

HOW TO MAKE A COMPLAINT

The first step is to call, write, come in person or visit us online:

Internal Affairs Division
Sacramento Police Department
5760 Freeport Boulevard
Sacramento, CA 95822

Hours: 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Mon - Fri

Phone: 916-808-2290
(after hours: 916-264-5471)

Mailing Address:
5770 Freeport Blvd. Suite 100
Sacramento, CA 95822-3516

Web Page: www.sacpd.org

A complaint may be made ANY time of day or night. You may come in person to address your concern, or you can call or write -- anonymously, if you wish.

INVESTIGATION PROCEDURE

The person receiving your concern will ask you to provide as much information as possible regarding the incident. If you were involved in or witnessed the incident, it is extremely important to the investigation that a statement be obtained from you. From your statement, a Citizen Contact form may be completed. If your concern stems from an arrest or citation issued to a family member or yourself, it may not be investigated until the legal matter has been settled.

Depending on the circumstances of your concern, it may be investigated in one of two ways. It will either be forwarded to the employee's supervisor for inquiry or to the Internal Affairs Division for investigation.

Each allegation is examined on its own merits. Formal investigations require investigators to contact all available witnesses, including police officers, examine any relevant physical evidence, and gather all information pertinent to each allegation made in the complaint.

The Chief of Police will render a finding in each case. There are four possible findings:

Sustained: The investigation disclosed enough evidence to clearly prove the allegation.

Not sustained: The investigation failed to reveal enough evidence to clearly prove or disprove the allegation.

Exonerated: The act which proved the basis for the complaint did occur; however investigation revealed the act was justified, lawful and proper.

Unfounded: The investigation has produced sufficient evidence to prove that the act or acts alleged did not occur. This finding shall also apply when individual personnel named in the complaint were not involved in an act that did occur.

You will be notified of the finding in writing at the conclusion of the investigation.

When a finding of "Sustained" is determined, corrective action will be taken.

The type of corrective action imposed is subject to the provisions of the Charter of the City of Sacramento, the rules of the Civil Service Board and, when appropriate, the City Manager. Discipline may include counseling, training, and action up to and including termination.

If your complaint is sustained and punitive discipline is imposed, the employee has appeal rights. Therefore, you may be required to testify at one or more administrative proceedings.

Summing Up

Your valid concerns and criticisms help us protect the community from possible misconduct by employees. At the same time, a thorough and impartial investigation procedure helps protect employees from unwarranted charges when they perform their duties properly.

Per California Penal Code Section 832.5 (a):

“Each department or agency in this State which employs peace officers shall establish a procedure to investigate citizens’ complaints against the personnel of such departments or agencies, and shall make a written description of the procedure available to the public.”

Penal Code Section 148.6 (b) states that any law enforcement agency accepting a concern of misconduct against a peace officer shall require the complainant to read and sign the following information advisory:

“You have the right to make a complaint against a police officer for any improper police conduct. California law requires this agency to have a procedure to investigate citizen’s complaints. You have a right to a written description of this procedure. This agency may find after investigation that there is not enough evidence to warrant action on your complaint; even if that is the case, you have the right to make the complaint and have it investigated if you believe an officer behaved improperly. Citizen complaints must be retained by the this agency for at least five years. It is against the law to make a complaint you know to be false. If you make a complaint against an officer knowing that it is false, you can be prosecuted on a misdemeanor charge.”

Sacramento Police Department



Mission Statement

The Mission of the Sacramento Police Department is to work in partnership with the community to protect life and property, solve neighborhood problems, and enhance the quality of life in our City.

City of Sacramento Office of Public Safety Accountability

The Mission of the Office of Public Safety Accountability (OPSA) is to enhance relationships between the City of Sacramento’s public safety employees and the community by independently accepting, monitoring and investigating complaints of misconduct.

Complaints to OPSA about public safety employees may be made by phone at 916-808-5704, online at www.cityofsacramento.org/cityman/monitor.html or in person at the OPSA office, 915 I Street, 5th floor, Sacramento, CA, 95814.

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Internal Affairs Division
5760 Freeport Blvd.
Sacramento, CA 95822-3516

Phone: (916) 808-2290

Albert Nájera
Chief of Police

