

## When You Have A Complaint

- Ask to speak to the employee's supervisor.
- Explain the situation to the supervisor. The supervisor will want to identify the exact nature of your complaint and the identity of those involved.
- If possible, the supervisor will take immediate steps to resolve the problem.
- If appropriate, the supervisor will begin the formal Internal Affairs investigative process. In that event, you will be asked to provide a written or recorded statement detailing the complaint.
- An Internal Affairs investigator will contact you to schedule an interview.
- Once all of the people involved have been interviewed and all the facts concerning your complaint have been gathered, the investigation will be presented to the Chief of Police.
- The Chief of Police will decide, based on a preponderance of the evidence, whether or not the employee violated any rules or regulations of the Police Department.
- If the Chief of Police determines that the employee did violate a department rule or regulation, corrective action will be taken.
- You will receive a letter from the Chief of Police concerning the outcome.

## When You Have Questions or Recommendations

The Pinellas Park Police Department is committed to providing the finest police service. Citizen cooperation and input is essential if the Department is to succeed in achieving this goal. If you have questions concerning Departmental Operations or have a recommendation on how police services can be improved, you can:

- phone the shift supervisor at:  
(727) 541-0758.
- mail questions or suggestions to :

Chief Dorene Thomas  
Pinellas Park Police Department  
7700 59<sup>th</sup> Street North  
Pinellas Park, FL 33781  
(727) 541-0760

### CONTACT INFORMATION

Patrol Supervisor  
(727) 541-0758

Internal Affairs Coordinator  
(727) 541-0790

FAX (727) 541-0889

<http://www.pinellas-park.com>



# POLICE

## COMPLIMENT OR COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

**How to officially commend or complain  
about the actions of a Pinellas Park Police  
Department Employee.**

## Commending Superior Performance

If you wish to commend the actions of any Pinellas Park Police Department employee, you are encouraged to:

- speak to the employee's supervisor and verbally communicate your praise; or,
- write a letter to the Chief of Police.

Praise received by the Chief of Police for any Department employee will result in the Chief advising the employee of your gratitude and in permanently recording the recognition in the employee's personnel file. The recognition will also be posted on the department's bulletin board and, depending upon the situation, the employee could be considered for other department or community awards.



## The Complaint Process

The department provides two methods for the investigation and resolution of complaints against members. One method is informal and the other is formal.

### INFORMAL

Informal complaints usually can be resolved by an investigation conducted by the employee's supervisor. During an informal investigation, the employee's immediate supervisor meets separately with the complainant and the employee and then determines appropriate action necessary to resolve the complaint.

### FORMAL

With more serious complaints of misconduct, the supervisor will take an initial statement from the complainant and then forward the statement to the Internal Affairs (I.A.) Coordinator for a formal investigation.

The Internal Affairs Section, which operates under the direction of the Chief of Police, investigates all formal complaints of misconduct performed by department personnel. Formal complaints usually involve the following improper conduct:

- Excessive force;
- Unlawful arrest;
- Improper search;
- Missing property or money;
- Serious misconduct.

The goal of the Internal Affairs Section is to ensure that department integrity is maintained and that objectivity, fairness and justice are ensured through an impartial investigation and review of each formal complaint.

The investigation will include interviews with witnesses, officers, complainants, and examination of evidence. When the investigation is complete, the Chief of Police determines how best to resolve the complaints.

## Filing a Complaint

It is normally the responsibility of the employee's supervisor to initially gather facts and discuss a complaint with the citizen.

If the supervisor is not readily available or it is inconvenient for you to speak then, you may talk directly with the Internal Affairs Coordinator during normal working hours, Monday through Friday, 8AM to 5PM. The I.A. Coordinator will meet with you privately, as soon as practical, to discuss your complaint. It will be reviewed in a polite, professional manner.

In addition, you may also file a complaint by writing a letter directly to the Chief of Police. Your letter will be given immediate attention.

As any action can only be taken after a thorough investigation, your cooperation will be required.

The Pinellas Park Police Department encourages citizens to file valid complaints. As such, they must be made in good faith. Should it be discovered that the person(s) acting as complainants or witnesses made false statements, which they know or believed to be false, criminal prosecution may be pursued (FSS 837.05).

