

CITIZEN COMPLAINT FACT SHEET

Dear Citizen:

The Champaign Police Department has a policy to address citizen complaints about the agency or its employees. The point of the policy is to give citizens a fair way to complain when a police employee might have done something wrong. We want to find out if complaints are true. The policy should also protect the legal rights of both citizens and employees.

The Champaign Police Department wants to do the right thing. We are committed to fair and effective law enforcement. We do not excuse any wrong acts by police.

To follow our policy, the Chief of Police will:

1. Begin discipline against employees guilty of doing wrong.
2. Remove employees who are unfit for law enforcement work.
3. File criminal charges against employees when supported by enough evidence.
4. Dismiss unfair claims against innocent employees.
5. File criminal charges against people who knowingly make a false report to Champaign Police claiming an offense.

Formal complaints claiming police employee misconduct shall be filed within 60 days of the event. Only unusual problems should prevent such filing. In such case, the citizen shall notify the Police Department of the intent to file within 60 days of the incident. Complaints claiming police employee misconduct will be accepted from any source. They may be made in person, by mail, online, or by telephone. Citizens should complain in person so that reports are as complete as possible.

Citizens who complain must:

1. Sign the Intake Form. This follows 50 ILCS 725/3.8 Chap. 85 par. 2561. (It serves as an affidavit. It explains that filing false complaint information could subject the person to criminal and civil liability).
2. Be available for interviews in person by the investigating supervisor.
3. Give the investigating supervisor evidence, documents, or names of witnesses related to the complaint right away.

If the person complaining fails to cooperate with this process, the matter will be investigated as an internal investigation. It will not be a formal complaint. If so, the citizen gives up the right to be notified in writing about the decision.

Formal Complaint processing includes the following:

1. The complaint will be received from the citizen. It will be written up as an investigative report by a police officer or supervisor. The citizen will be required to sign the Intake Form. A copy will be provided to them along with a Citizen Complaint Fact Sheet.
2. The Professional Standards Lieutenant will mail the citizen a letter. It will list the claims from the initial complaint. The citizen should review the information so that all concerns are addressed.
3. A supervisor or investigator may later interview the citizen and any witnesses whenever necessary.
4. Citizens who claim excessive use of force shall be asked to sign a release for any relevant medical records to this police department.
5. All documents about misconduct complaints are confidential.
6. An investigation will usually be done within approximately 180 calendar days after the complaint. The Chief of Police may extend this time to improve the investigation.

When a citizen complains the following will happen:

1. Facts from investigation of the complaint will be reviewed by the Chief of Police and a Division Chief. They will choose one of the following outcomes:
 - a. Unfounded: Allegation is false or not factual.
 - b. Exonerated: Allegation is true, but the action was legal and followed correct departmental policy.
 - c. Not Sustained: Not enough evidence to prove or disprove the allegation.
 - d. Sustained: Allegation is true and the action was illegal and/or did not follow departmental policy.
 - e. Misconduct Noted: There were no sustained findings pertaining to the original complaint, however, other violations of law and/or departmental policy were discovered during the investigation.
2. The citizen shall be notified in writing about the decision and if any action will be taken. This notice shall be provided by the Chief of Police at the end of the investigation. If an appeal is made by the employee, notice will come after the appeal.
3. The citizen may ask for a review of the decision by the City Manager within 30 days.

Please call the Professional Standards Unit at 217-403-6913 for questions.