

# 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 builds confidence and trust, which 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 feedback about 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 (24 hours a day)  
Mailing Address: 5770 Freeport Blvd. Suite 100  
Sacramento, CA 95822

Web Page: [www.sacpd.org](http://www.sacpd.org)

## 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, an extremely important part of the investigation is to obtain a statement from you. 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:

An informal investigation may be resolved in a number of ways and without requiring a letter of disposition, if, for instance, the complaining party:

- Is satisfied that appropriate action has been taken by a Department supervisor.
- Is merely requesting clarification of a policy or procedure, or the alleged misconduct or improper job performance, even if true, would not constitute a violation of law or Department policy or procedure.
- Withdraws the allegation(s), refuses to cooperate, or becomes unavailable.
- Makes an allegation(s) that lacks any arguable basis or merit and/or was made for the purposes of harassment.

When a formal investigation occurs at the direction of the Internal Affairs Captain, each allegation is examined on its own merits. These investigations may require investigators to contact all available witnesses, including police officers, examine any relevant physical evidence, review video, and gather all information pertinent to each allegation made in the complaint. The Chief of Police or designee 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 that proved the basis for the complaint did occur; however, the investigation revealed the act was justified, lawful, and proper.

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

At the conclusion of a formal investigation, you will be notified of the disposition of the complaint in writing. 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 feedback 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 citizens’ 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 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 916-808-7525, in person at the OPSA office, 915 I Street, HCH 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Sacramento, CA 95814, or at [www.cityofsacramento.org/opsa](http://www.cityofsacramento.org/opsa).

# Sacramento Police Department

## Citizen Complaint Procedure



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

Phone: (916) 808-2290

**Daniel Hahn**  
Chief of Police