

## PERSONNEL COMPLAINTS

All Police Departments of the State of California are required by law to have a process by which citizens may make a complaint against police personnel. The information in this pamphlet will assist anyone who has occasion to make a complaint against any member of the Petaluma Police Department.

### **What is a Citizen's Complaint?**

There are two types of complaints. The first is an informal complaint. This complaint is normally handled by the employee's supervisor for minor transgressions.

The second type of complaint is the formal complaint. This is for more serious types of transgressions. The formal complaint is lodged with the employee's supervisor or Watch Commander.

### **Who Can Make a Complaint?**

A personnel complaint may be made by anyone. However if the complainant is under the age of 18 years, we require an adult accompany the complainant.

## COMMENDATIONS

Everyone enjoys receiving recognition for their efforts. Commendations, either verbal or written, are one of the best ways to let someone know that you appreciate their hard work. A commendation for an employee of the Police Department is most often sent to the Chief of Police. You may also advise the employee's supervisor or Watch Commander. Your comments can be made in person, by telephone or by using this brochure.

A commendation may address any event that you deem noteworthy on the part of an employee whom you believe should be recognized. This may range from the display of unusual courtesy or professionalism, to significant life-saving measures or heroic acts.

Commendations are formally documented and shared with the affected employees.



From:

To: CHIEF OF POLICE  
Petaluma Police Dept.  
969 Petaluma Blvd. No.  
Petaluma, Ca. 94952

# CITY OF PETALUMA POLICE DEPARTMENT



CITIZEN COMMENDATION

AND

COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF POLICE

U.S.  
POSTAGE

**How Can a Personnel Complaint be Made?**

A complaint may be made by telephone, by mail or in person. The complaint may be made at the Police Department or another mutually convenient location. The department is primarily interested in learning of your concerns about police professionalism or need for improvement in our delivery of services.

**When Can a Complaint be Made?**

A complaint may be made at any time. After normal business hours, a personnel complaint may be made with any supervisor, the on-duty Watch Commander, or by calling (707) 778-4372.

**What Happens After I File a Complaint?**

The complaint is received, reviewed and assigned to an investigator to look into the matter. If the investigator is able to resolve the complaint after examining all the facts and circumstances, you will be notified.

If the complaint requires further review, it will be forwarded to a Police Captain for a formal recommendation, and the Chief of Police for a final determination. You will be notified in writing as to the disposition of the complaint.

**PETALUMA POLICE DEPARTMENT CITIZENS REPORT FORM**

Please print or type       Complaint       Commendation      (Attach summary on additional paper)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: (    )      Business Phone: (    )

Gender:     Male     Female      Date of Birth:    /    /

Where did this incident occur: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of employees involved: \_\_\_\_\_

**Name, address and telephone number of any persons who may have observed or have direct knowledge of the incident.**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: (    )

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: (    )

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**REPORTS OF POLICE MISCONDUCT**

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 the right to a written description of this procedure. This agency may find after the investigation that there is not enough evidence to warrant action on your complaint; even if this is the case, you have the right to make a complaint and have it investigated if you believe the officer behaved improperly. Citizen complaints and any reports or findings relating to complaints must be retained by this agency for at least five years.

Complainant Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Will I Have to Testify if I Make a Complaint?**

A complainant does not normally have to testify in any formal hearing. During the investigation you, along with all witnesses, will be questioned concerning the incident. It is essential to any investigation to ask all pertinent questions and obtain factual information. Once an investigation is concluded, a disposition will be determined.

Employees of the City of Petaluma have the right to appeal any discipline recommended or imposed. In some cases, these appeals may be heard by the City of Petaluma Personnel Board, which is comprised of three citizens from the community. You may have to testify at such a hearing.

If you have a complaint and you are unsure how to proceed, a telephone call to any on-duty Watch Commander will provide you with the options available.

