

As a means of maintaining both police performance and police/community relations, the Port St. Lucie Police Department:

- ◆ Encourages citizens' recommendations for improvements in our policing;
- ◆ Welcomes the commendations of police personnel who admirably perform their duties; and
- ◆ Responds to complaints and/or questions about the Department's performance or the actions of its members and employees.

This pamphlet explains how you can assist the Port St. Lucie Police Department and, if a complaint is involved, how to file that complaint and what to do if you are not satisfied with the outcome.

HOW AND WHERE TO GIVE COMMENDATION, REGISTER A COMPLAINT, OR ASK A QUESTION

If you wish to commend a police officer, or if you feel that a police officer has acted improperly, you may register your commendation or complaint in three ways:

1. Telephone the Port St. Lucie Police Dept. at 772-871-5000 any time, or the Internal Affairs Section Office at 772-871-5106, Monday through Friday, 8 AM to 4:30 PM.
2. Come in person to the Port St. Lucie Police Dept., Police Administration Bldg. C, 121 SW Port St. Lucie Boulevard and present your commendation or complaint to a Supervisor, Sergeant, Lieutenant, Captain, Bureau Chief, or Internal Affairs Investigator.
3. Communicate by writing directly to the Chief of Police, Port St. Lucie Police Dept., 121-C SW Port St. Lucie Blvd., Port St. Lucie, FL 34984.

WHAT HAPPENS TO YOUR COMMENDATION

Commendations received by the Chief of Police for any Port St. Lucie Police Department employee result

in advising the employee of your gratitude and in permanently recording his/her actions and your appreciation in the employee's personal file. He/she could also be considered for other departmental/community awards or recognition. Minimally, the employee is made aware of your kindness and appreciation.

WHAT HAPPENS TO YOUR COMPLAINT

Investigative Process

Every complaint, regardless of its nature is assigned for investigation.

Complaints will be investigated by, or under the direction of, members of the Port St. Lucie Police Department's Internal Affairs Section. Statements, videotaping, and photographs may be taken, and a thorough, impartial, and confidential investigation is conducted. The completed investigative report also includes a narrative summary of events, a finding of facts as determined by sworn statements of those involved, and evidence, if any. The report must not reflect any personal opinion, but rather present an unbiased picture of factual circumstances as they actually occurred.

At the conclusion of the investigation and review, you will be notified of the final outcome of your complaint in writing. If necessary, a departmental staff member will personally visit you.

You may inquire about the progress of your complaint at any time.

Internal Affairs Section

The function of the Internal Affairs Section is to protect the integrity of the Police Department and its personnel, both sworn and non-sworn.

A professional relationship between officers and citizens, fostered by confidence and trust is essential to effective law enforcement. Police officers must feel

free to exercise their best judgement and act in a sensible, lawful, impartial manner without fear of reprisal. At the same time, officers must respect the rights of all individuals.

Dispositions

- ◆ Unfounded - The allegation was demonstrably false or there is no credible evidence to support the complaint.
- ◆ Exonerated - The incident occurred but the individual's actions were lawful and proper.
- ◆ Not Sustained - Investigation failed to disclose sufficient evidence to prove or disprove the allegation.
- ◆ Sustained - The allegation is supported by sufficient evidence.

Disciplinary Action

There are four types of disciplinary action which can be recommended when an allegation is sustained: 1) Written Reprimand - A memorandum containing a statement of charges and reason for reprimand to the employee with copies to Internal Affairs and the employee's permanent personnel file. 2) Suspension - All suspensions must be recorded by memorandum and prepared for approval by the Chief of Police. 3) Demotion - In lieu of dismissal, when an employee is not performing satisfactorily. 4) Dismissal - The Chief of Police must make a recommendation of dismissal to the City Manager who upon concurrence can dismiss an employee.

Non-disciplinary action in the form of a verbal warning/counseling may also be recommended. A verbal warning is administered orally, by a supervisor in the chain of command of the employee and is sometimes supported by a subsequent memorandum. The employee may also be required to receive additional training.

This system of complaint and disciplinary procedures not only subjects employees to corrective action when

they conduct themselves inappropriately, but also protects them from unwarranted reproach when they perform their duties properly.

Moral Character Violations

All sustained complaints of moral character violations must be reported to the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE). FDLE reviews the case file to determine if probable cause exists to file action against the officer's law enforcement certificate.

In addition to action taken by the agency, FDLE can reprimand, suspend for up to two years, place on probation for up to two years, order counseling, order remedial training, issue a letter of guidance, accept agency discipline or revoke the officer's law enforcement certificate.

Public Record

All investigations of complaints become a matter of public record upon final determination. Information that is exempt from public disclosure is excised prior to release.

WHAT YOU CAN DO IF YOU'RE NOT SATISFIED

If you are not satisfied with the disposition of your complaint, you can call the Internal Affairs Section at 772-871-5106 and ask for a more detailed explanation. Any complainant retains the right to initiate a civil lawsuit against the City of Port St. Lucie within 90 days of the incident. Cooperation with the Police Department in its investigation of your complaint insures prompt consideration and proper handling of our mutual concerns.

WHAT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY

While the Port St. Lucie Police Department does accept and respond to persons who file complaints, complaints must be made in good faith. Should the Police Department discover that the person or

persons making the complaint or acting as a witness made statements which he/she knew or believed to be false, the Department could institute criminal action against that person. In addition, if the charges are found to be false, unfounded, or exonerated, the accused employee has the right to pursue civil recourse against the complainant.

WHY IT IS IMPORTANT

The standards of the Port St. Lucie Police Department are among the highest in the nation and our officers among the best trained. Our community and the level of police service that we all benefit from can best prosper by your support of these standards -- by commendation, recommendation, question, or complaint.

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Port St. Lucie Police Department

Commendation or Complaint Procedures

How to officially
commend or
complain about a
police employee



John A. Bolduc
Chief of Police



City of Port St. Lucie Police Department

Instructions for Proper Completion of Complaint Documents

PART I

The Complaint Packet contains the following:

- Part I:** Administrative Complaint – Instruction Sheet – *For Complainant*
Part II: Administrative Complaint – Complainant Information & Statement Form (2)
Part III: Administrative Complaint – Witness Statement Form (2)

Procedure to follow for completing the necessary paperwork, when filing a complaint about an employee of the police department:

1. Upon advising of your desire to file a complaint against a police employee you may be asked some basic questions by a supervisor that are required to start the complaint process. You may refuse to provide the information requested if you wish. Your refusal will not impact the filing of the complaint itself.
2. You will then be provided with the paperwork to complete and return at your leisure. If you require assistance in completing the documents please notify the person who has provided the documents to you so that arrangements can be made for assistance.
3. If you should decline to provide any information, or state you do not want or have time to meet with anyone and only want to know the procedure or would like the papers required to file a complaint, the party you are speaking with will provide you with the information or appropriate documents.
4. Upon completion of the applicable complaint forms, place them into an envelope and seal it. You can then either mail the packet to:
 - Port St. Lucie Police Department – Internal Affairs
121-C S.W. Port St. Lucie Blvd.
Port St. Lucie, FL 34984

Or you may drop off the completed documents at either Port St. Lucie Police Department building by placing them into a sealed envelope and writing on the front of the envelope:

TO: PORT ST. LUCIE POLICE DEPARTMENT - INTERNAL AFFAIRS
CONFIDENTIAL

5. When the complaint is received by Internal Affairs it will be documented, logged, assigned a number, and will be assigned to an Internal Affairs investigator.
6. Once the complaint documents have been received by Internal Affairs the complainant will receive confirmation of receipt of the complaint via mail. If you have any questions about any part of this process contact the Internal Affairs Division at 772-871-5106.



**City of Port St. Lucie
Police Department
Administrative Complaint Statement
PART II**

Name of Person Receiving Complaint:

Date Received:

INCIDENT	Incident: _____ Date/Time: _____ Location: _____ Related Port St. Lucie Police Case # (if applicable): _____
COMPLAINANT	1. Name: _____ Address: _____ Phone Nos.: (H) _____ (w) _____ 2. Name: _____ Address: _____ Phone Nos.: (H) _____ (w) _____
WITNESSES	1. Name: _____ Address: _____ Phone Nos.: (H) _____ (w) _____ 2. Name: _____ Address: _____ Phone Nos.: (H) _____ (w) _____ 3. Name: _____ Address: _____ Phone Nos.: (H) _____ (w) _____
POLICE/CITY PERSONNEL INVOLVED	1. Name(s): _____ Physical description (if name unknown): _____ Job Assignment, if known (i.e., police officer, clerk, etc.) _____ 2. Name(s): _____ Physical description (if name unknown): _____ Job Assignment, if known (i.e., police officer, clerk, etc.) _____ 3. Name(s): _____ Physical description (if name unknown): _____ Job Assignment, if known (i.e., police officer, clerk, etc.) _____

COMPLAINT NARRATIVE – GO TO NEXT PAGE

