

DOES THIS MEAN THAT THE POLICE DEPARTMENT LIKES COMPLAINTS?

Of course not. A complaint may mean that someone is not performing their duties in an acceptable manner. However, if we are to continue to improve our service to you, we must know where we need improvement.

DO I HAVE TO COMPLAIN IN PERSON?

No. We would prefer to talk to you in person, but we will accept a complaint in any manner. If you wish to remain anonymous, you may still file a complaint. However, we will not be able to respond back to you directly, nor will we be able to clarify any information given to us. We encourage you to utilize the Complaint Form that is provided in order that we may conduct as professional an investigation as possible.

WHO WILL INVESTIGATE MY COMPLAINT?

Generally, your complaint will be investigated by the accused person's commanding officer. Under special circumstances, it may be assigned to a special investigator.

DO JUVENILES HAVE THE RIGHT TO FILE A COMPLAINT?

Yes. If you are under 18 years of age, you may still file a complaint, although we would prefer that you bring a parent or guardian with you. We also will ask your parent or legal guardian to sign the Complaint Form.

DO I HAVE TO BE A LEGAL RESIDENT OR CITIZEN OF THE UNITED STATES TO FILE A COMPLAINT?

No. You do not have to be a legal resident or citizen of the United States in order to file a complaint.

WILL THE POLICE CHIEF KNOW ABOUT THE COMPLAINT?

Yes. The Police Chief receives complaints against officers/employees and ultimately reviews the investigation conducted into the complaint.

**COMPLAINTS
or
COMPLIMENTS**



**The
NOVATO POLICE DEPARTMENT**

Welcomes Your Complaints

*And
Compliments*

**Adam McGill
Chief of Police**

FROM :

To: Chief Adam McGill
Novato Police Department
909 Machin Avenue
Novato, CA 94945-3242

STAMP

WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO THE OFFICER/EMPLOYEE?

That will depend on what the officer/employee did. It will also depend on the individual officer/employee's record. If the actions were criminal, the officer/employee will be dealt with like any other citizen. If the actions were improper, but not criminal, the officer/employee will be given corrective counseling or discipline by his/her superiors.

WILL A COMPLAINT INVESTIGATION AFFECT ANY OTHER PROCEEDINGS?

Traffic citations or arrest charges will not be dismissed because of a personnel complaint investigation, unless the investigation conclusively proves that no basis for citation or arrest can be established.

WILL I FIND OUT THE RESULTS OF THE INVESTIGATION AND WHAT ACTION IS TAKEN AGAINST THE OFFICER/EMPLOYEE?

You will find out the disposition of the complaint (sustained, not sustained, exonerated, or unfounded). The action taken against the officer/employee is confidential and can not be disclosed by law.

TO WHOM SHOULD THE COMPLAINT BE REPORTED?

Complaints may be filed in person with the Watch Commander or the employee's supervisor at the Novato Police Department. If you do not wish to file your complaint in person, you may telephone or mail your complaint to the following:

**Novato Police Department
Office of the Chief of Police
909 Machin Avenue
Novato, CA 94945-3242
(415) 897-4361**

**MESSAGE FROM THE
CHIEF OF POLICE**

As your Chief of Police, I wish to emphasize that a relationship of trust and confidence between members of the Police Department and the community we serve is essential to effective law enforcement. Police officers must be free to exercise their best judgment and to conduct themselves in a reasonable, lawful and impartial manner without fear of reprisal. So, too, enforcers of the law have a special obligation to respect the rights of all persons.

The Novato Police Department acknowledges its responsibility to establish a system of complaints and disciplinary procedures which not only will subject personnel to corrective action when appropriate, but also will protect personnel from unwarranted allegations during the proper discharge of their duties.

I invite your suggestions of improving police services, through constructive criticism of the Department's procedures, comments indicating dissatisfaction with manner of performance, or information concerning commendable actions by Police Department employees. It is the purpose of these procedures to provide a prompt, just, open and expeditious disposition of the complaints regarding the conduct of members and employees of the Department. To this end, people are encouraged to bring complaints about Department operations and conduct of its members to the attention of the Novato Police Department, whenever a person believes that an improper act has taken place.

People are also encouraged to compliment our procedures and members of our Department when their actions warrant commendations. Any commendation of the actions of our personnel will result in appropriate recognition. Please note that it is not necessary to be a Citizen of the United States, nor a legal resident, in order to make a complaint or comment about Police Department personnel.

Complaints against Department personnel will be handled in a prompt and unbiased manner. Every complaint will be investigated. It will include a conclusion and a recommendation concerning appropriate action to be taken. All completed investigations are sent to the Chief of Police, who reviews the complaints and makes a final decision.

If, after being notified of the results of the investigation, you are not satisfied, the matter may be appealed to the City Manager. The City Manager, after reviewing the complaint, may forward the complaint to the Police Advisory and Review Board for further review or investigation. (Novato City Resolution 43-00).

Complaints or compliments can be submitted using this form or by other means such as in person, by mail, email: police@novato.org or by phone: (415) 897-4361

It is my experience that citizens usually have a number of questions concerning the filing of a Complaint. Some of the most commonly asked questions regarding these procedures are addressed on the reverse side of this letter. Should you have any concerns or desire additional information, please contact my office.

Sincerely,



Adam McGill
Chief of Police

COMPLAINTS OR COMPLIMENTS

NAME _____

ADDRESS: _____

Details of Incident _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Review by Chief of Police _____ Date _____

Assigned to: _____ Date _____