

CITIZEN COMPLAINT INFORMATION



Aberdeen Township Police Department

**Aberdeen Township
Police Department
1 Aberdeen Square
Aberdeen, New Jersey 07747
Non- Emergency Phone
732-566-2054**

MESSAGE FROM CHIEF JOHN T. POWERS

The members of the Aberdeen Township Police Department are committed to providing the best possible law enforcement services that are fair, effective, and impartial. It is important that if any citizen has a complaint or concern regarding anyone in law enforcement that it be promptly reported. It is in the best interests of everyone that any complaint about a police officer be resolved fairly and expeditiously. The Aberdeen Police Department has formal procedures for investigating citizen complaints. These procedures ensure fairness and protect the rights of both citizens and law enforcement officers. Our goal is to insure that the integrity of law enforcement in Aberdeen is maintained through a system of internal discipline where fairness and justice are assured by objective and impartial investigations.

The Goal of the Internal Affairs Unit:

- The goal of the Aberdeen Police Department Internal Affairs Unit is to ensure that the integrity of law enforcement is maintained through a system of internal discipline where fairness and justice are assured by both objective impartial investigation and review. The Aberdeen Police Department is committed to maintaining the public's trust, ensuring fairness, and protecting the rights of both citizens and law enforcement personnel.

How to Register a Complaint:

- Complaints may be filed 24 hours a day, seven days a week. You may either visit or call the Aberdeen Police Department, 24 hours a day. Located at 1 Aberdeen Square, Aberdeen, N.J. 07747 or call (732) 566-2054.
- A member of the public has the right to make his/her complaint anonymously. He/she does not need to be an American citizen to do so and cannot be required to produce identification or be accompanied by a citizen before a complaint will be accepted. The police or Police Department cannot report a person to federal immigration officials in retaliation for the filing of an internal affairs complaint.
- A juvenile has the right to file an internal affairs complaint, with or without the presence of a parent or guardian.

How Complaints are investigated:

- To ensure an extremely thorough investigation, your complaint will be referred to the Aberdeen Police Department, Internal Affairs Unit where a specially trained Internal Affairs Investigator will conduct a thorough and objective investigation.
- The Internal Affairs investigator might ask you to assist with the investigation by giving a detailed statement about what happened or providing other important information. All available witnesses will be contacted ascertain pertinent information relating to your complaint.
- The length of time to conduct an internal investigation will vary, depending upon the complexity of the incident. If there is an extended delay in the investigation, for any reason, you will be notified. Please feel free to contact the Internal Affairs investigator at any time during the course of the investigation with any questions you may have.

The Results:

- When an internal investigation is completed, the Aberdeen Township Police Department Internal Affairs investigator will notify you, in writing, of the outcome of the investigation. There are four possible findings:
 1. Sustained- The investigation disclosed sufficient evidence to prove the allegation(s).

- a. If our investigation shows that a crime may have been committed, you may be asked to testify before a grand jury and in court.
- b. If our investigation results in a police officer, being charged with a violation of departmental rules and regulations, you might be asked to testify in an administrative disciplinary hearing. All administrative disciplinary hearings shall be closed to the public unless the law enforcement officer who is the subject of the inquiry requests an open hearing.
- c. **Exonerated-** The actions of the officer were justified, legal and proper.
- d. **Not Sustained-** The investigation failed to disclose sufficient evidence to clearly prove or disprove the allegation. The case will be closed, pending further information.
- e. **Unfounded-** The alleged incident did not occur; or there is insufficient information to conduct a meaningful investigation. The case will be closed, and no further action will be taken.

The Law:

It is unlawful to provide a false statement under oath (N.J.S.A. 2C:28-2)

- a. False Swearing. A person who makes a false statement under oath or equivalent affirmation, or swears or affirms the truth of such a statement previously made, when he does not believe the statement to be true, is guilty of a crime of the fourth degree.

It is unlawful to provide a false report to law enforcement authorities (N.J.S.A. 2C: 28-4)

1. Falsely incriminating another. A person who knowingly gives or causes to be given false information to any law enforcement officer with purposes to implicate another commits crime of the fourth degree.
2. Fictitious reports. A person commits disorderly persons offense if he:
 - a. Reports or causes to be reported to law enforcement authorities an offense or other incident within their concern knowing that it did not occur; or
 - b. Pretends to furnish or causes to be furnished such authorities with information relating to an offense or incident when he knows he has no information relating to such offense or incident.

