

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 work.

A commendation for a member of the Sonoma County Sheriff's Office is most often sent to the Sheriff. You may also advise the member's supervisor or manager. Your comments can be made in person, by telephone, or by using the form in this brochure.

A commendation may address any event that you deem noteworthy on the part of a member whom you believe should be recognized. This may range from the display of unusual courtesy or compassion to significant life-saving measures or heroic acts. We are interested in hearing about your observations of any commendable act or behavior.

All commendations are documented and the member(s) will be notified.

A commendation takes only a few minutes to write or communicate. It can go a long way to let the members of the Sonoma County Sheriff's Office know how you feel about them and their service.

Use this form or send your letter to:

Sheriff Steve Freitas
Sonoma County Sheriff's Office
2796 Ventura Avenue
Santa Rosa, CA 95403

From:

SONOMA COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE



COMMENDATION AND COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

Steve Freitas
Sheriff-Coroner

STAMP

Complaints

All Sheriff's Offices in the State of California are required by law to have a process by which a citizen may make a complaint against Sheriff's members. Here are some of the questions we frequently encounter regarding our complaint procedures and processes:

Types of Complaints

There are two types of complaints. The first is an informal complaint, that is normally handled by the member's supervisor for minor transgressions. The second type of complaint is a formal complaint. This is for more serious types of transgressions, and is lodged with the member's supervisor or a manager.

Who Can Make a Complaint?

A complaint may be made by anyone. However, if the complainant is under the age of 18, we ask that the complainant be accompanied by a parent or an adult if made in person or the complaint form signed by a parent or adult if submitted in writing.

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 witnesses, may 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. Members of the Sonoma County Sheriff's Office have the right to appeal any discipline recommended or imposed. In some cases these appeals may be heard by the Sonoma County Civil Service Commission. You may be asked to testify at such a hearing.

How Can A Complaint Be Made?

A complaint can be made by telephone, by mail, or in person. The complaint can be made at the Sonoma County Sheriff's Office, or another mutually convenient location. The Sheriff's Office is primarily interested in learning of your concerns about law enforcement conduct or a need for improvement in our delivery of services.

When Can A Complaint Be Made?

A complaint can be made 24 hours a day. After normal business hours, a complaint may be registered with any supervisor or the on-duty Watch Commander, or by calling (707) 565-2650.

What Happens After I File A Complaint?

The complaint is received, reviewed, and assigned to a supervisor for further investigation. If the supervisor 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 the Administration Division Captain for a formal recommendation and then to the affected Division's Assistant Sheriff for a final determination. You will be notified in writing of the disposition of the complaint.

What Happens If I File A False Criminal Complaint?

We invite citizens to bring their concerns regarding law enforcement practices and services to our attention, however, anyone who alleges that a crime was committed and reports that to a peace officer, knowing the report to be false, could be charged with a misdemeanor. If you have a complaint and are not sure how to proceed, call the on-duty Watch Commander at (707) 565-2650.

Sonoma County Sheriff's Office Citizen's Report Form
Commendation or Complaint

Your Name: _____

Your Address: _____

Home Telephone: _____ Business Telephone: _____

Sex: _____ Age: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Where did this incident occur? _____

Date of incident: _____ Time of incident: _____

Name of member/s involved: _____

Please provide the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of any persons who may have observed or have direct knowledge of this incident.

Name: _____

Address & Telephone #: _____

Name: _____

Address & Telephone #: _____

You have the right to make a complaint against a peace officer for any improper 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. We 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 a member of the Sheriff's Office behaved improperly. Citizen complaints and any reports or findings relating to complaints must be retained by this agency for at least five years.

I have read and understand the above statement.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Statement:

(Include a description of the incident. Continue on additional pages as necessary)

Signature: _____

Date: _____