

Citizen Complaints

All police departments in the State of California are required by law to have a process by which a citizen may make a complaint against police personnel. The information in this brochure will assist anyone who has occasion to make a complaint against any member of the Santa Rosa Police Department. Here are some of the questions we frequently encounter regarding our complaint procedures and processes.

What is a Citizen's Complaint?

A complaint is an allegation that an employee violated a policy, procedure, rule, regulation or law. Dependent upon the nature of the allegation in the complaint, it may be handled informally by the employee's supervisor. In the case of more serious types of allegations a formal complaint may be lodged with the employee's supervisor, Commander, or Chief of Police.

The Santa Rosa Police Department is committed to providing quality service to the community and welcomes feedback, including critical comments about employee performance. All complaints are given serious consideration and are forwarded to the employee's supervisor for follow-up.

Who Can Make a Complaint?

A citizen complaint may be made by anyone. However, if the complainant is under the age of 18, we require that the complainant be accompanied by a parent or an adult.

Commendations

Everyone enjoys receiving recognition for their efforts. Commendations, either verbal or written, are one of the best ways to let someone know you appreciate their work. A commendation for an employee of the Santa Rosa Police Department is most often sent to the Chief of Police. You may also advise the employee's supervisor or Commander. Your comments can be made in person, by telephone or using the form in 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 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 formally documented and the affected employees will be notified.

A commendation takes only a few minutes to write or communicate. It can go a long way to let the personnel of the Santa Rosa Police Department know how you feel about them and their service. Use this form to send your letter to:

**Chief of Police
Santa Rosa Police Department
965 Sonoma Avenue
Santa Rosa, CA 95404**

**City of Santa Rosa
Police Department**



**Citizen Commendation
And
Complaint Procedure**

**Edwin F. Flint
Chief of Police**

From: _____



BUSINESS REPLY MAIL
FIRST CLASS PERMIT NO. 0958 SANTA ROSA, CA
POSTAGE WILL BE PAID BY ADDRESSEE

CITY OF SANTA ROSA POLICE DEPARTMENT
PO BOX 1678
SANTA ROSA CA 95402-1678



NO POSTAGE
NECESSARY
IF MAILED
IN THE
UNITED STATES

How Can a Citizen Complaint be Made?

A complaint may be made by telephone, 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 conduct or a need for improvement in the delivery of services.

When Can a Complaint be Made?

A complaint may be made 24 hours a day. After normal business hours, a citizen complaint may be registered with any supervisor or the on-duty watch commander, or by calling 543-3600.

We invite citizens to bring their concerns regarding police practices and services to our attention. If you have a complaint and are not sure how to proceed, a telephone call to any on-duty watch commander will provide you the options available.

If you have any further questions, call the Chief's Office at 543-3559.

Santa Rosa Police Department Complaint/Commendation Form	
<input type="checkbox"/> Complaint	<input type="checkbox"/> Commendation
<i>Please Print or Type</i>	
Your Name:	
Home Address (City, State, Zip):	
Home Telephone:	Business Telephone:
Sex:	Age:
Date of Birth:	
Where did this incident occur?	
Date of incident:	Time of incident:
Name/Badge Number of employee/s involved:	
<i>Please provide the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of any persons who may have observed or have direct knowledge of this incident:</i>	
Name:	
Address & Telephone:	
Name:	
Address & Telephone:	
Name:	
Address & Telephone:	
Reports of Police Misconduct	
<p>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 citizens' complaints. You have a right to a written description of this procedure. This agency may find after 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 the complaint and have it investigated if you believe an officer behaved improperly. Citizen complaints and any report or findings relating to complaints must be retained by this agency for at least five years.</p>	
I read and understood the above statement. Complainant Signature: _____	
Statement	
<i>(Start the narrative on additional pages. Include description of incident.)</i>	

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, 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.

Employees of the City of Santa Rosa have the right to appeal any discipline recommended or imposed. In some cases, these appeals may be heard by a personnel board comprised of five citizens from the community. You may be asked to testify at such a hearing.

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 a Division Commander for a formal recommendation and then to the Chief of Police for a final determination. You will be notified in writing concerning the disposition of the complaint.