

MARION POLICE DEPARTMENT
PROCEDURES FOR REGISTERING COMPLAINTS BY CITIZENS

The Marion Police Department takes seriously all complaints regarding the service provided by the Department and the conduct of its members. The Department will accept and address all complaints of misconduct in accordance with policy and applicable federal, state and local law, municipal rules and the requirements of any collective bargaining agreements.

It is also the policy of this department to ensure that the community can report misconduct without concern for reprisal or retaliation.

If you wish to file a complaint against a member of the Marion Police Department and the complaint is of a minor nature, the supervisor will ask some questions about the conduct or demeanor that led to the complaint. In many instances, a complaint can be handled informally. A complaint may originate because of a misunderstanding about our department's function, its policies and procedures, or the duties and responsibilities of its members. Quite often, if a potential complainant asks some questions about our procedures or inquiries about the reason some particular action was taken, it is possible for a supervisor to provide a very adequate explanation. If your questions or concerns cannot be resolved in an informal manner, you have the right to make a formal complaint.

Formal complaint forms will be made available to anyone making a request. Forms are available online or from any supervisor. Only department supervisors may accept complaint forms; non-supervisory personnel cannot take complaints nor accept completed complaint forms.

A formal complaint will be investigated by a supervisor who will also personally talk to the member in question. Complaints will be fully investigated, allowing both sides to represent their view of the circumstances.

If the formal complaint may be of a major nature, such as a complaint which could lead to suspension, reduction of rank, or termination of a member or particularly if the complaint is of a criminal nature, you will be asked to leave your name, address, and phone number in order for the Major in charge of Internal Affairs to become involved in the investigation. This procedure is required to protect your rights and the rights of the employee and to ensure that a thorough investigation is conducted. If serious charges are brought against a member or against the Marion Police Department, we want to ensure that the investigation is handled in such a manner that all rules of evidence are followed, that interviews and/or interrogations are handled correctly, and that no shred of evidence is lost due to improper handling of the case.

Anonymous and third-party complaints are accepted and investigated to the extent that sufficient information is provided. While we cannot demand that you provide your information, it is very difficult for to fully investigate a complaint against a member if we cannot contact you later to confirm details and to keep you informed of the status or outcome of the investigation. When any anonymous complaint is made against an employee and if after an investigation there is no corroborative evidence of any kind, the complaint will be classified as unfounded.

Attached to this form is a copy of our agency's complaint form. Again, if a complaint potentially involves a criminal activity, we will investigate the actions of the member at the level of a criminal investigation and will document these actions on forms that are used for the reporting of criminal offenses.

Your patience in dealing with the investigation of complaints is appreciated. Certain contractual issues limit the amount of time that we can spend on any phase of the complaint process or the investigation. We will try to resolve the complaint as soon as possible, while trying to safeguard your rights and the rights of the member.

If you have questions about other policies and procedures that affect the handling of complaints or the investigation procedure, do not hesitate to ask.

Note: Knowingly making false allegations of misconduct by a Peace Officer is a violation of Ohio Revised Code 2921.15 and is a misdemeanor of the first degree.

