



BERGEN COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Citizen Complaint Information Sheet

The members of the Bergen County Sheriff's Office are committed to providing law enforcement services that are fair, effective, and impartially applied. It is in the best interests of everyone that your complaint about the performance of an individual officer or other employee is resolved fairly and promptly. The Bergen County Sheriff's Office has formal procedures for investigating your complaint. These procedures are designed to ensure fairness and protect the rights of both citizens and law enforcement officers:

1. Reports or Complaints of officer/employee misconduct must be accepted from any person, including anonymous sources, at anytime.
2. Complaints shall be accepted regardless of age, race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability, or immigration status of the complaining party.
3. Your complaint will be sent to a superior officer or a specially trained internal affairs officer who will conduct a thorough and objective investigation.
4. You might be asked to help in the investigation by giving a detailed statement about what happened or providing other important information or documents.
5. All complaints against law enforcement officers and other staff are thoroughly investigated. You will be kept informed of the status of the investigation and its ultimate outcome, if requested, and if you provide contact information. The exact discipline imposed is confidential, but you will be advised of the ultimate finding, namely :
 - a. Sustained: A preponderance of the evidence shows personnel violated any law; regulation; directive, guideline, policy, or procedure issued by the Attorney General or County Prosecutor; agency protocol; standing operating procedure; rule; or training.
 - b. Unfounded: A preponderance of the evidence shows that the alleged conduct did not occur.
 - c. Exonerated: A preponderance of the evidence shows the alleged conduct did occur, but did not violate any law; regulation; directive, guideline, policy, or procedure issued by the Attorney General or County Prosecutor; agency protocol; standing operating procedure; rule; or training.
 - d. Not Sustained: The investigation failed to disclose sufficient evidence to clearly prove or disprove the allegation.
6. If our investigation shows that a crime might have been committed, the Attorney General's Office might be notified, and you might be asked to testify in court.
7. If our investigation results in an employee being charged with a violation of department rules, you might be asked to testify in a departmental hearing.
8. If our investigation shows that the complaint is unfounded or that the employee acted properly, the matter will be closed.
9. Internal affairs investigations are confidential and all disciplinary hearings shall be closed to the public unless the defendant employee requests an open hearing.
10. You may call the Office of Professional Standards at (201) 336-3500 ext. 4540 with any additional information or any questions about the case.

How to return the Internal Affairs Report Form to the Office of Professional Standards:

Mail or Drop-Off: 160 S River St, BCI Building, Hackensack, NJ 07601

Fillable Online Form: www.bcsd.us