

Donald J. Lee, Jr.

Chief of Police



Key West

POLICE DEPARTMENT

Professional Standards

Explanation of the Complaint and Commendation Process

The Key West Police Department is committed to public confidence. To that end, the Department establishes high standards of performance and conduct expected of its personnel. To ensure the public trust and maintain the Department's integrity, it is the policy of the Key West Police Department to willingly receive, review and resolve all complaints regarding the conduct of its personnel, department procedures and services. It is equally important that members be recognized for their dedicated service to the public. It is essential that all allegations of police misconduct are promptly, thoroughly and objectively investigated to assure the public that misconduct by police officers will not be tolerated and, at the same time, provide a process whereby officers unjustly accused can be vindicated. The responsibility and authority for oversight of this process within the Key West Police Department is vested within the Professional Standards Division, Office of Internal Affairs.

Q. Who can file a complaint against a member of the Key West Police Department?

A. Any person who has direct standing in the matter, or who has either witnessed or who has direct knowledge of an incident in question.

Q. How do I file a complaint?

A. Complaints will be accepted by the Key West Police Department in person, by telephone, letter or e-mail. Although the Department encourages the complainant to provide his/her name and contact information in the event the Department needs to re-establish contact, anonymous complaints will also be received and processed to the extent possible with the information given.

To expedite the handling of your complaint and to provide for more personal attention to the matter, it is preferred that you speak directly to the subject member's immediate supervisor. If that supervisor is unavailable, you should speak directly with the on-duty Watch Supervisor. If your complaint is about the supervisor, you should speak to the next higher-level supervisor in his/her chain of command or directly to the Internal Affairs Inspector. Complaints are often made as a result of a misunderstanding of the law or department procedures. You will be provided a copy of this document, which explains the Department's complaint procedure. If after discussing the matter with the supervisor you wish to continue with the process, your complaint will be documented on a Personnel Complaint Form.

If you have not already provided one, you will also be asked to provide a sworn statement either verbally or in writing.



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Q. What happens to my complaint?

A. After the necessary paperwork is received, your complaint will be reviewed, and if necessary, assigned to an investigator. It may be necessary for the investigator to speak with you. The investigator's completed report will be reviewed and a conclusion of fact will be made based on preponderance of the evidence.

Q. Will I be notified of the results?

A. Yes. You will receive a letter confirming receipt of your complaint. You will likewise be informed of its disposition.

Q. Will I be allowed to see the completed case?

A. Yes. Under the Florida's Public Records Law, all completed cases become public record and are available for inspection at a time that is mutually convenient to you and the Department. To view any completed case, please make contact with the Internal Affairs Inspector during normal business hours.

Q. What are my responsibilities?

A. The greater responsibility falls upon the Department. You basically have only one responsibility: To **provide only factual and truthful information**; willfully providing information that you know or believe to be false is a crime punishable under law.

Q. How can I compliment a member of your Department for a job well done?

A. Police personnel often times are required to make immediate decisions in the face of very difficult circumstances. The Department welcomes your comments and appreciates knowing that you recognize the service our dedicated men and woman provide to their community. You may send your comments to the Office of the Chief of Police or the Commander of Professional Standards.

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