

Follow-up Notification

Upon completion of the investigation, the Chief of Police will notify complainants by letter of the findings. Citizens may review the investigation in its entirety at the Internal Affairs Office located at the Police Department. Copies of any reports are available for 15 cents per page.

Corrective Action

There are several forms of corrective action that may result from sustained cases. These range from simple counseling to termination of a member's employment. The various levels of action include the following:

- Counseling or Re-Training
- Formal Warning
- Formal Reprimand
- Suspension
- Demotion
- Termination

These actions are not intended to be punitive but rather are used to direct the affected member to better understand the importance of customer satisfaction and the priority placed on quality service.

THE MISSION OF THE WINTER HAVEN POLICE DEPARTMENT IS TO WORK IN COOPERATIVE PARTNERSHIP WITH THE COMMUNITY TO REDUCE CRIME AND ENHANCE THE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR ALL THE CITIZENS

WINTER HAVEN POLICE DEPARTMENT



Commendation or Complaint Procedures

**125 North Lake Silver Drive, NW
Winter Haven, Florida 33881
(863) 291-5858**

**E. C. "Buddy" Waters
Chief of Police**

Introduction

The Winter Haven Police Department is committed to providing quality police services to the community. Through continual in-service training and the latest on career development courses, all members of the Department are afforded instruction designed to keep them updated with the latest developments in the profession of law enforcement.

The Department relies on the opinions of the citizens we serve to gauge whether or not we are meeting the needs of the public. The Winter Haven Police Department has established the following procedures so that citizens may commend our employees for their efforts and assistance or report unsatisfactory service or conduct.

Commending Superior Performance

If you wish to commend the actions of any Department officer or employee, you can either (1) ask to speak to the employee's supervisor and verbally communicate your praise or (2) write a letter to the Chief of Police explaining your praise.

Correspondence complimenting the performance of any Department employee will be brought to the employee's attention. In addition, it will be placed in the employee's personnel file.

Your compliments regarding employees of the Department are greatly appreciated and always welcome.

Department Policy on Complaints

The Department has a policy to accept, record and investigate all citizen complaints and to reach a fair and objective conclusion following an impartial investigation.

Furthermore, citizens who desire to file a complaint are to be treated with dignity and respect. You should not feel intimidated when filing a complaint or questioning the actions of a member of the Department.

Registering a Complaint

A complaint may be filed by a citizen, a criminal defendant or a member of the Department. Complaints are generally filed at the police station, though other arrangements can be made depending on the circumstances of each case.

Once received, all complaints are forwarded to the Chief of Police for his review and assignment for investigation. The investigating officer will keep you informed concerning the status of a complaint which has been filed.

From this point, cases that involve serious allegations of misconduct or criminal activity will be assigned to Internal Affairs while less

serious incidents will be handled by a member's supervisor.

Investigative Process

The normal process used to investigate a complaint includes interviews with witnesses and other persons connected to the incident. Depending on the case, the gathering of evidence, such as photographs or tapes of radio transmissions, may also be part of the investigative process.

Upon completion of the investigation, a report is prepared and forwarded to the Chief of Police for his review. He is vested with the authority to render a finding to all complaints. These findings may include any of the following:

- **Sustained** - Allegation did occur.
- **Not Sustained** - Insufficient evidence to prove or disprove the allegation.
- **Exonerated** - Incident occurred, but actions were lawful and proper.
- **Partially Sustained** - At least one of the allegations is sustained.
- **Unfounded** - Allegation is false or the incident as alleged did not occur.
- **Policy Failure** - Allegation is true, but the investigation reveals policy or procedural changes are necessary.
- **Other** - The evidence supports a sustained violation for some other matter discovered during the investigation.