

## Complaint Investigation Process

Every complaint of misconduct will be processed by the Office of the Deputy Chief of Police.

Upon receipt of a complaint, the Deputy Chief will assign the case for investigation. Generally, complaints will be assigned to the employee's supervisor or commander. More serious or complex matters may be referred to an outside agency, such as the Office of the State's Attorney.

Investigators will:

- Attempt to interview the complainant, the accused employee and all witnesses;
- Examine physical evidence;
- Review reports and records;
- Thoroughly document the facts surrounding the incident and allegation.

The investigator's report will be submitted to the Deputy Chief who will review it for completeness and objectivity and then forward it to the Chief of Police for final resolution..

## Investigative Procedures

The standard of proof in an administrative investigation is a preponderance of the evidence. It is less than the standard in a criminal case, which is guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

Police employees have the right to appeal to the State Board of Mediation and Arbitration. If, during the course of the investigation, it is determined that the employee could face significant discipline we may ask you to submit a sworn statement.

In a criminal investigation police employees have the same rights as any citizen, including the right to remain silent. If officers are ordered to answer question or face discipline, their answers cannot be used against them in a criminal matter.

Under state law, complaint investigations are public records. Once completed the investigation is retained and must be made available for review or release upon request.

## Submitting a Compliment/Complaint

The Cheshire Police Department (CPD) is dedicated to providing the highest quality police services to residents of, and visitors to, Cheshire. Your compliments and complaints are important to the CPD and we appreciate you taking the time to communicate with us.

To e-mail a compliment or complaint, visit the CPD website and follow the instructions therein.

To mail a compliment or complaint, complete a Public Compliment or Complaint Form which is available:

- On CPD's website [www.cheshirect.org/police-services](http://www.cheshirect.org/police-services)
- At Police Headquarters.
- Cheshire Town Hall
- Cheshire Public Library

Your complaint will be accepted even if it is not on our form.

## Disciplinary Action

The CPD's Code of Conduct utilizes the principle of progressive discipline. This allows for cumulative increase in penalty considering prior discipline while also allowing for consideration of mitigating circumstances.

Once management has reached a final disposition, appropriate action will be taken. This may involve documented counseling or re-training. It may also involve the imposition of disciplinary action which includes oral reprimand, written reprimand, suspension or termination. The complainant will be notified, in writing, of the outcome of the investigation.

CHESHIRE POLICE DEPARTMENT  
500 Highland Avenue  
Cheshire, Connecticut 06410

Phone: 203-271-5500  
Fax: 203-271-5515  
[www.cheshirect.org/police-services](http://www.cheshirect.org/police-services)

## Cheshire Police Department



## PUBLIC COMPLIMENT OR COMPLAINT PROCESS

PHONE: 203-271-5500

[WWW.CHESHIRECT.ORG/  
POLICE-SERVICES](http://WWW.CHESHIRECT.ORG/POLICE-SERVICES)

## Responsibilities

### CPD's Responsibilities:

The CPD recognizes its responsibilities to maintain the public confidence and trust, and the need to ensure integrity and accountability both by the agency and by each employee.

### The Public's Responsibilities:

As we recognize the rights of all citizens, the public should recognize that CPD employees must be able to exercise their best judgment in taking necessary and reasonable action in the performance of their duties without fear of reprisal.

### Cheshire Police Policy:

It is the policy of the CPD to respond to compliments or complaints received from the public.

#### Complimentary letters are:

- Reviewed by the employees first line supervisor,
- Forwarded to the employee,
- Placed in the employees' personnel file and forwarded to the Town Council as part of a monthly report.

Complaint letters or forms follow a very specific complaint procedure that:

- Ensures fair and proper action is taken when an employee is accused of misconduct,
- Protects employees from unwarranted or false accusations,
- Ensures a thorough, fair and objective investigation and
- Helps identify and correct deficiencies in policies, procedures and/or training.

### Anyone can submit a complaint.

The person most directly affected by the alleged conduct should be the person to complain. Under most circumstances, this is the person most likely to provide the best information about the incident. However, third party complaints will be accepted and investigated to the best of our ability.

### Complaints can be made at any time.

To help ensure evidence is still available and recollections of the incident are fresh, complaints should be made as soon as possible after the alleged misconduct occurred.

### Complaints may be made:

- By mail to the Office of the Chief at Cheshire Police Department, 500 Highland Ave, Cheshire, CT 06410
- In person at CPD Headquarters, or
- By telephoning CPD at 203-271-5500, 24 hours a day.

All complaints received by the CPD are forwarded to the Office of the Deputy Chief where they are logged in and assigned a tracking number.

### Complaints should be concise and specific.

Describe the conduct of the employee that you believe to be improper. For example, rather than saying the employee was rude, explain how the employee was rude by :

- Providing the specific words or phrases used.
- Describing the employee's tone of voice.
- Citing particular acts of rudeness.

Identify the employee as much as possible by providing the:

- Employee's badge number and patrol vehicle number.
- Date, time and location of the incident.
- If available, include the names, addresses and telephone

number of any witnesses.

(Note: CPD officers are required by policy to properly identify themselves upon request.)

### The subject of the complaint should involve alleged misconduct by an employee.

The focus of the CPD complaint procedure is on alleged misconduct by the CPD employee that encompasses violation of laws or CPD policies and procedures. Dissatisfaction with an arrest or ticket is not considered a "complaint" and you will be referred to the court with the appropriate jurisdiction.

### Anonymous complaints are investigated, but not recommended.

Although anonymous complaints are investigated, the investigations are less likely to reveal all the facts surrounding an incident when the investigator is unable to contact the complainant. CPD encourages individuals with allegations of misconduct by our employees to identify themselves and submit to an interview.

### Making a complaint will not affect actions or charges against the complainant.

Employees are prohibited from retaliating against you for lodging a complaint against them.

Any charges or legal issues (present or future) must be decided by the appropriate court. The investigation of your complaint will focus on the conduct of the employee, not charges against you. Any charges against you are a separate issue that you will have to resolve at court. Therefore, if you were arrested or issued a ticket or summons during the incident that led to your complaint, you must still follow the direction of the appropriate court in resolving the case.