

HOW TO MAKE A COMPLAINT INFORMATION BOOKLET



Springfield Township Police

1510 Paper Mill Rd

Wyndmoor, PA 19038

(215) 836-1601

REPORTING POLICE MISCONDUCT

The Springfield Township Police Department is responsible for protecting citizens, preventing and detecting crime, regulating traffic, and providing related services.

To insure that we function efficiently while maintaining the rights of the citizens we protect, Springfield Township Police officers are required to follow a series of department policies, procedures, and work within the requirements of local, state, and federal law. Because of the nature of law enforcement, we also understand that citizens, on occasion, may object to the actions of the police, or may feel that their conduct is inappropriate. Therefore, we have established procedures for citizens to report their concerns to the Chief of Police. Upon receipt of citizen complaint, every effort is made to ensure a thorough, fair, and timely investigation of the allegation(s) contained in the complaint.

PURPOSE OF THE COMPLAINT INVESTIGATION PROCESS

The purpose of the complaint investigation process is to protect the public, employee, and the department through fair, thorough, and proactive investigations of alleged misconduct. This process is intended to accomplish three objectives:

- **PROTECTION OF THE PUBLIC** by identifying and, as needed, effecting corrective action of the police department personnel and/or changing policies or procedures that negatively affect the quality of police service delivered by the Springfield Township Police Department
- **PROTECTION OF THE DEPARTMENT** by taking appropriate action so that misconduct of a few will not detract from the overall reputation of the Springfield Township Police Department.
- **PROTECTION OF THE EMPLOYEE** against false or malicious allegations of misconduct by ensuring fairness and accuracy in all investigations.

FALSE OR MALICIOUS COMPLAINTS

Although we encourage citizens to report police misconduct, complaints must be made in good faith. False or exaggerated complaints serve no good purpose for either the citizens or the officer, and only tend to thwart our complaint taking process. Anyone who willfully makes any false accusation or provides false information for the purpose of discrediting a police officer will be prosecuted under Pennsylvania Crimes Code Section 4904 and 4906.

The complaint process will have NO impact upon pending court action or traffic violations in which you may be involved. No complaint will be considered that solely addresses your guilt or innocence of any charges that may be pending against you. The disposition of the charge will be determined in a court of law.

HOW TO FILE A COMPLAINT

- **VERBAL COMPLAINTS:** Complaints may be initiated by appearing at the Springfield Township Police Station. You will initially meet with the ranking officer on duty who will verbally review the details of your complaint with you. If your complaint does not involve serious misconduct, he will attempt to reach a possible resolution. If the complaint involves criminal conduct, misconduct, neglect of duty, corrupt activity or violations of department rules and regulations, you will be asked to file the complaint in writing.
- **WRITTEN COMPLAINTS:** All complaints or allegations of criminal conduct, misconduct, neglect of duty, corrupt activity or violations of department rules and regulations will be received as written complaints. You will be asked to provide a statement of your complaint with as much detail as possible, including date, time and location of the incident, the identities of the officers involved (if known), and a statement of the circumstances surrounding your complaint. Also indicate why you believe the officer's conduct was inappropriate. You must also include your name and phone number so an investigator may contact you for further information, or clarification as needed.

If criminal charges are lodged against an officer as a result of your complaint, you may be required to testify as one or more criminal hearings. If your allegation results in disciplinary action against an officer, you may be required to appear at any disciplinary hearings or appeals that are pertinent to your complaint.

The Springfield Township Police Department will investigate anonymous complaints alleging criminal conduct or other serious misconduct, however, an anonymous complaint will not be the sole basis for taking disciplinary action against an officer. If you do not identify yourself, you will not be informed of the disposition of your complaint.

THE INVESTIGATION PROCESS

The Chief of Police reviews all written complaints against officers. He will then assign one or more supervisory officers to conduct an in-depth investigation. If the allegations involve violations of the of crimes code, the District Attorney's office may be notified with the option of the County Detectives either assisting with, or assuming full responsibility for the investigation.

At the conclusion of the investigation, the assigned investigators will forward the details of the investigation and one of four outcomes to the Chief of Police. These outcomes are:

- **UNFOUNDED:** The investigation indicates the acts complained of did not occurred or did not involve Springfield Township police personnel.
- **EXONERATED:** The investigation indicates that the alleged acts did occur but were within the policies, procedures, and guidelines as set forth by the department.
- **NOT SUSTAINED:** The investigation failed to disclose sufficient evidence to clearly prove or disprove the allegations made.
- **SUSTAINED:** The investigation discloses sufficient evidence to clearly prove the allegation made in the complaint.

If you so request, you will be notified of the outcome of the investigation. If your complaint is sustained, you will be advised of the disciplinary action taken only if criminal charges have been filed against the officer or if the officer has been discharged from the police department. You will not be advised of any lesser disciplinary action.

SOME FINAL THOUGHTS

The Springfield Township Police Department is interested in the welfare of all citizens and in taking action when employees have proven derelict in their duties or are guilty of wrongdoing. If it becomes necessary for you to file a complaint, you can be assured that it will be given a fair and thorough investigation.

By the same token, many times officers perform their duties in an outstanding manner that in most instance is not mentioned or reported. If you have occasion to observe an outstanding act or service by a Springfield Township Police officer, and feel that the action should be noted, feel free to tell the officer or his/her supervisor. You are also encouraged to send a letter to the Chief of Police expressing your feelings.



SPRINGFIELD TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT COMPLAINT AGAINST DEPARTMENT MEMBER

1510 Papermill Road
Wyndmoor, Pa. 19038
Phone: (215) 836-1601
Fax: (215) 233-5018

CITIZEN COMPLAINT #:

DATE OF REPORT:

Form #:	P-45
Rev:	12/05

Name of Complainant (Please Print):	Date of Birth:	Social Security #:
Address:	Home Phone:	2 nd Phone:
Location Where Incident Occurred:	Incident Report #:	Incident Date / Time:
Names of Person(s) You Are Complaining About, If Known:		
1.	2.	
3.	4.	
Have You Reported This To Anyone Previously? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	If so, Whom:	Date:

PERSONS WHO ACTUALLY SAW EVENT

Name	Address	Phone Number
	Home:	
	Home:	
	Home:	
	Home:	
	Home:	

PRINT SUMMARY OF OCCURANCE

(Summary Continued on Reverse Side)

Person Receiving Complaint:	Badge #:	Person Completing Summary:	Date:	Time:
Assigned To: Professional Standards Investigation Use Only:			Date:	Time:

