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For more information, call the
Professional Standards Office :
(717) 735-3413

Spanish version available at the Lancaster
Bureau of Police or by contacting the
Professional Standards Office.



LANCASTER BUREAU OF POLICE

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CIVILIAN COMPLAINT GUIDE



Lancaster Bureau of Police
39 West Chestnut Street
Lancaster, PA 17603

The Police are working for you and your community. However, if you feel that you may have been the subject of police misconduct, here are the twelve steps involved in a **Civilian Complaint Report**.

1. Filing of Complaint

A civilian complaint can be filed by the alleged victim, guardian of a minor on their behalf, or a representative of an incapacitated or deceased victim.

The basis of the complaint must involve police misconduct.

2. Reconciliation Attempt

The complaint must be received by a ranking officer, who will attempt to reconcile the matter with the complainant. If no mutual agreement can be reached, the complainant will be issued a **Civilian Complaint Report**.

3. Representation

The complainant may designate a representative to receive all notices. The complainant, representative or witness will receive a copy of the Citizen Complaint report or a Statement of Witness report.

4. Verification of Complaint

The Civilian Complaint Report or the Statement of Witness Report must be verified by oath or affirmation.

5. Meet with Professional Standards Officer

The Professional Standards Officer will contact or meet with the complainant and attempt to reach a conciliatory understanding. If the complainant is not satisfied, a formal investigation will begin by an officer or person designated by the Chief of Police.

6. Filing Civilian Complaint Report

The Civilian Complaint Report is published in both English and Spanish but must be filled out in English. The filing of a complaint will not necessarily result in a criminal investigation. This will be determined by the internal police bureau investigation.

7. Identify Officer

If the complaint cannot identify the police officer allegedly involved in the incident, the investigating officer will make every attempt to identify him or her.

8. Time of Initial Investigation

The initial investigation can take up to 60 days from the date of receipt of the Complaint. If the complainant has been arrested and charged for actions stemming from the formal complaint, the investigation may be delayed until disposition of those charges. The Chief may also extend the investigation for good cause up to 60 days.

9. Final Disposition Time

The Chief of Police has 15 days from the receipt of the investigator's report to make a final determination and disposition of the complaint.

10. Notification of Disposition

The disposition, including any disciplinary action will be communicated in writing to the officer against whom the Complaint was filed. The complainant will receive a notice of the disposition by certified mail including a summary of the findings and reasons for the disposition.

11. Appeal process

The complainant and or officer(s) may appeal the decision to Lancaster City Council. A committee consisting of the Mayor or their designee, President of Lancaster City Council or their designee, the Chairperson of the Public Safety Committee of the City Council, the Chief of Police or his/her designee, and one member of the Bureau of Police appointed by the Chief of Police shall review the complaint.

12. Statistical Reports

The Lancaster Bureau of Police will publish the number of complaints filed in their annual statistics report, including their disposition and if disciplinary action was taken.

All reported Civilian Complaint Reports are maintained at the Bureau of Police and are available to the complainant, officers involved or attorneys or representatives during normal business hours.