

A Guide to the Citizen Complaint Process

The City of Portage Department of Public Safety strives to provide the highest quality service. Toward this end, we have established a process to review concerns that you, our public, express.

Citizen Complaint Process

The complaint process is designed to deal with each complaint fairly and in a timely manner. Anyone who files a complaint is treated with respect. All accusations and allegations will be thoroughly investigated. It is the policy of this department that all findings are based on impartial evidence discovered during the investigation.

It is the responsibility of each employee to assist in the prompt resolution to issues of concern between the public and the City of Portage Department of Public Safety.

This department also recognizes there may be issues which arise from time to time which may not lend themselves to immediate resolution. Conflict of this type may concern various issues, including but not limited to, policies of the agency, enforcement requirements of the agency, generally accepted public safety practices, delivery of service and/or employee conduct.

The resolution of all of these issues are important to the department and to the citizens of Portage in order to maintain the highest professional standards.

STEP 1

If your complaint has not been resolved by the employee you first contacted, you may do the following:

- » Request to speak to the on-duty supervisor. This may be done either face-to-face or over the telephone.
- » If a supervisor is not immediately available, you should be informed as to when you should either expect a return telephone call or how to schedule an appointment.

STEP 2

The on-duty supervisor will attempt to resolve your issue. If you are not satisfied, they will record your information and complete an "Administrative Review Form." This form will then be used to look further into your complaint and then be forwarded to the Director of Public Safety for further review and assignment for investigation.

STEP 3

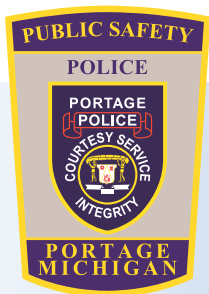
The Director of Public Safety or designee will inform you of the final disposition of your complaint.

The final disposition will be one of the following :

- » **Sustained:** Evidence sufficient to prove your allegations.
- » **Not Sustained:** Insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove your allegations.
- » **Exonerated:** Incident occurred but was lawful and/or proper.
- » **Unfounded:** Your allegation is false or not factual.

How are the People Involved Notified?

The complainant will be notified by letter with the results and findings of the investigation, and is also notified of how to appeal the decision to the Director. The employee involved can also appeal the disciplinary action.



Commonly Asked Questions

Will my complaint be taken seriously?

Yes, without question. The department recognizes that your faith in the agency is necessary in order to pursue our goals and objectives.

Do I have reason to be concerned about expressing my concerns about the department?

No. The department clearly identifies the responsibility of its members in dealing with these types of complaints.

Will it take a lot of my time to file a complaint?

No. Your complaint may very well be resolved immediately and informally by speaking with a department employee or supervisor. If informal resolution cannot be accomplished, a formal complaint should be filed which will take about 10 to 15 minutes to complete. The actual amount of time it takes to resolve a formal complaint depends on the complexity of the issue.

Why do you go to all this effort?

We know that the public expects the highest in professional standards from Public Safety personnel. It is this expectation that allows us the right to serve you. Conversely, you need to know that your trust in law enforcement is not misplaced and that problems will be resolved to the best of our ability.

The Portage Department of Public Safety is accredited in both the Police and Fire Divisions.



Rev. 3/2021



Citizen Complaint Process

Portage Department of Public Safety

7810 Shaver Road • Portage, Michigan 49024
(269) 329-4560