

Department of  
Police Services  
Three Main Street  
Newtown, CT 06470



James M. Viadero  
Chief of Police  
Tel. (203) 270-4256  
Fax (203) 270-4247

## TOWN OF NEWTOWN

# CITIZEN COMPLAINT INSTRUCTIONS

This package consisting of this document and a CITIZEN COMPLAINT AGAINST POLICE EMPLOYEE'S FORM, is being made available to you in effort to inform, educate and guide citizens in the citizen complaint procedures as adopted by the Newtown Department of Police Services and the Town of Newtown Police Commission. The documents within this package we believe will help you understand the procedures, reasons and protocols that are followed within this organization.

It is the policy of this department that all complaints against personnel be investigated promptly, accurately, fairly and thoroughly. Establishment of procedures for investigating complaints and allegations of employee misconduct is crucial to demonstrate and to protect this agency's integrity. This agency will accept, investigate and process, fairly and impartially all complaints of employee conduct to determine the validity of allegations and to impose any disciplinary actions that may be justified in a timely, consistent, and fair manner, inclusive of anonymous or third party complaints.

All members and employees of this Department are required to cooperate in the reporting and investigating of any citizen complaint. Police managers, commanders and supervisors must determine whether just cause exists to discipline any employee. Therefore, all investigations of employee misconduct will be conducted in an impartial and detailed manner.

All employees of the agency are required to make available Citizen Complaint packages to the public. In addition, Citizen Complaint Packages are available at the Newtown Municipal Center, First Selectman's Office. Employees of this agency are also required to provide assistance to those who express a desire to lodge complaints against any employee of this agency. This may include but is not limited to:

- A. explaining the agencies complaint procedure
- B. providing referrals to individuals who wish to make complaints in person
- C. explaining alternative means for lodging complaints such as by phone or by mail
- D. calling a supervisor to a scene to document the complaint

Supervisory officers are typically charged with receiving citizen's complaints. A citizen making a complaint against any employee can expect that the investigation will be conducted by an officer or person of at least a rank higher than the employee complained about (i.e. a complaint against an officer will be investigated by a Sergeant or above etc.).

Citizens making a complaint may use department approved citizens complaint forms. Supervisors and investigators of citizen's complaints will endeavor to receive information by interviewing aggrieved citizens and witnesses. Therefore all individuals wishing to give information into an allegation of misconduct by an employee can expect to be interviewed by an investigator. The interview and formulation of statement should take place where the information giver is most relaxed and comfortable. To that extent the citizen can expect the following to be adhered to by all employees of this agency:

- A. that citizens will be treated with dignity and respect **and**
- B. no member of this department shall do anything, perform any act, or take any steps which:
  - 1. Dissuades any person or citizen from filing or making a complaint
  - 2. Discourages a complaint based upon comments or opinions given to the complainant regarding the impropriety or propriety of any action of an employee, or the likely or probable result of any investigation
  - 3. Directly or indirectly interferes or obstructs with the filing, investigation, processing, or resolution of a complaint.

Department employees will be held to the highest possible standards of integrity because it is essential that citizens and employees are confident in the ability of this department to objectively evaluate its practices, procedures and the conduct of its employees.

Citizens can expect conformance to these ideological statements because it demonstrates a willingness and commitment to fairly and properly enforce the laws of the State of Connecticut and demonstrates a commitment to the highest ideals of this agency.

All investigations of citizen's complaints shall be completed within a reasonable period of time as designated by the Chief of Police. If any circumstances cause a delay beyond the time parameter established, a written report will be submitted from the investigator explaining the reasons for the delay and requesting a time extension. Reasonable extensions will be provided if warranted. Citizens making complaints will receive verification of receipt that the complaint has been received for processing and will receive periodic status reports. In addition they will be notified of the results of the investigation upon conclusion.

Complaints shall be taken and investigated when made by any person regardless of age, affiliation, gender etc., regardless of the seriousness of the alleged matter so long as the activity complained of directly or indirectly concerns the actions of a member of the Police Department or any employee thereof, whether on or off-duty or connected with police work or not. All citizen and media requests for copies of citizen's statements must go through records personnel to ensure that all applicable laws are followed.

It our hope that a citizen never has to make a complaint against an employee of the Newtown Department of Police Services, but if warranted, this organization is committed to maintaining a professional atmosphere and we will endeavor to preserve the ideals and goals of this agency.