

## **Commending Exceptional Performance**

The best way to commend the actions of an East Hartford Police Officer is to write a brief letter describing the incident and the actions you think were exceptional. Information such as the date, time and locations will help identify the employee if you do not know his or her name. If you chose not to write, you may ask to speak with the individual's supervisor and make a verbal commendation.

Commendations received by the Chief of Police are forwarded to the employee with a copy placed in his/her personnel file. Although our employees do not expect to be thanked for everything they do, recognition of exceptional service is always appreciated. This kind of feedback helps us to know if we are doing a good job.

The East Hartford Police Department is committed to providing the best service possible. Citizen comments are essential.

## **Contact Information**

If you have questions about any specific action taken by us, or how we operate, or if you have a recommendation on how we can improve, you may contact any of the following:

Watch Commander  
East Hartford Police Department  
31 School Street  
East Hartford, CT 06108-2638

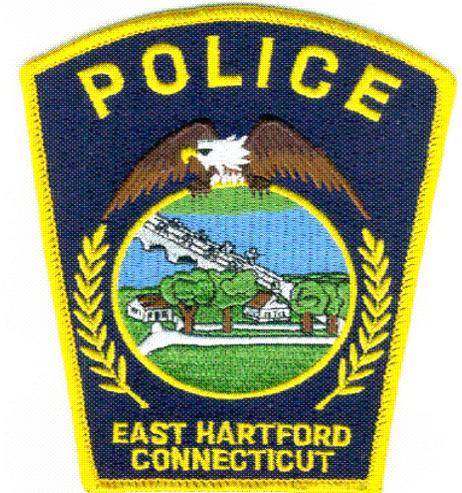
or

Office of Professional Standards  
East Hartford Police Department  
31 School Street  
East Hartford, CT 06108-2638  
(860) 528-4401, Ext. 7552  
*For Internal Affairs/Misconduct Cases*

or

Office of the Chief of Police  
East Hartford Police Department  
31 School Street  
East Hartford, CT 06108-2638  
(860) 528-4401 Ext. 7561

# ***East Hartford Police Department***



## **Citizen's Guide to Making Complaints, Inquiries and Commendations**

## **Making an Inquiry or Complaint**

An inquiry or complaint can be made by letter, telephone, or in person. Any East Hartford Police Supervisor or Officer may accept an initial inquiry or complaint against personnel, procedure or policies. If the inquiry or complaint is against a police department employee, we recommend that you contact that employee's Commanding Officer. If the Commanding Officer is not available, you may contact the on-duty supervisor. The supervisor will ensure that your inquiry or complaint is directed to the proper authority.

If the inquiry or complaint appears to be based on a misunderstanding or a lack of knowledge of acceptable or desired conduct, procedures or practices, the East Hartford Police Department Officer may offer an explanation. If you are not satisfied with their explanation, you may insist on speaking with the officer's supervisor.

Please be prepared to provide the date, time and location of the event; the names of the East Hartford officers involved (if known) and the name, address, and telephone number of any possible witnesses.

## **Investigation Procedure**

Once your inquiry or complaint is received, it will be thoroughly investigated by a person designated by the Chief of Police. The investigation will usually include a review of any applicable reports, policies and procedures, examination of any evidence or medical records, and interviews with all parties and witnesses. A simple inquiry might take only a day to complete, while a complex complaint might take various months to investigate and review. East Hartford internal investigations and administrative inquiries must be completed within 90 days unless extended by the Chief of Police because of extenuating circumstances. The Chief of Police reviews

every inquiry and complaint, to include any investigative findings. If the Chief determines that an employee violated department policy or procedures, appropriate corrective action is taken. The Chief's review will also include looking for ways to improve policies, procedures and training.

## **Who May File A Complaint?**

Any individual who was a witness to, or a victim of what he/she feels was a wrongdoing by any member of the East Hartford Police Department. We encourage open dialogue and involvement to help maintain the high standards of quality that the department demands and the community deserves.

## **Findings**

You will receive written notification of the Chief's findings. There are:

**UNFOUNDED:** There was sufficient evidence to prove the complaint or incident is false or not factual.

**EXONERATED:** There is evidence that indicates that the act or incident did occur, but the officer's actions were justified, lawful and proper.

**NOT SUSTAINED:** There is insufficient evidence to clearly prove or disprove the complaint or incident.

**SUSTAINED/NO DISCIPLINE:** There is sufficient evidence to establish that the incident did occur, but the facts and circumstances are of such a nature that formal discipline is not warranted.

**SUSTAINED/DISCIPLINE:** There is sufficient evidence to establish that the incident did occur and the facts and circumstances support the determination that officer's actions constituted misconduct.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

**Q:** What happens to an employee if he or she is found to have acted improperly?

**A:** Some instances require disciplinary action such as reprimand, suspension, or even termination. Sometimes training or counseling is appropriate. If a crime is alleged, a separate criminal investigation is conducted.

**Q:** Why can't I get a copy of the investigation?

**A:** Internal misconduct investigations become part of the employee's personnel file and may contain medical, juvenile or other restricted information. Disclosure is done as allowed by State and Federal stature.

**Q:** Do I have a guarantee that I will be satisfied?

**A:** Although we cannot guarantee that you will be satisfied, we do guarantee that your inquiry will be investigated thoroughly. You may discuss the results with the Chief of Police or his designated representative.

**Q:** I am concerned that the police will retaliate in some way because I filed a complaint.

**A:** The Police Department wants your involvement and will not condone, in any way, any retaliation. Any person doing so would be subjecting themselves to civil, criminal and departmental action.