



**Portsmouth Police Department**  
**2270 East Main Road**  
**Portsmouth, RI 02871**

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<b>SUBJECT TITLE</b>		<b>SUBJECT AREA</b>	
<b>COMPLAINT INVESTIGATIONS</b>		<b>INTERNAL DEPARTMENT CONTROLS</b>	
<b>CALEA / RIPAC REFERENCE</b>		<b>PREVIOUSLY ISSUED DATES</b>	
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## **COMPLAINT INVESTIGATIONS**

### **I. POLICY**

The policy of the Portsmouth Police Department is to investigate all complaints, including anonymous complaints, made by citizens and to have those complaints followed up by the appropriate commanding officers. Commanding officers will be defined by the rank of sergeant and above. The Portsmouth Police Department will have forms specifically identified for all formal complaints. Each complaint will be investigated, and appropriate action taken if needed by the Office of the Chief or his or her designee.

### **II. PURPOSE**

The purpose of the citizen complaint procedure is so that all complaints made against police officers are properly documented and investigated fairly and without prejudice.

### **III. PROCEDURE**

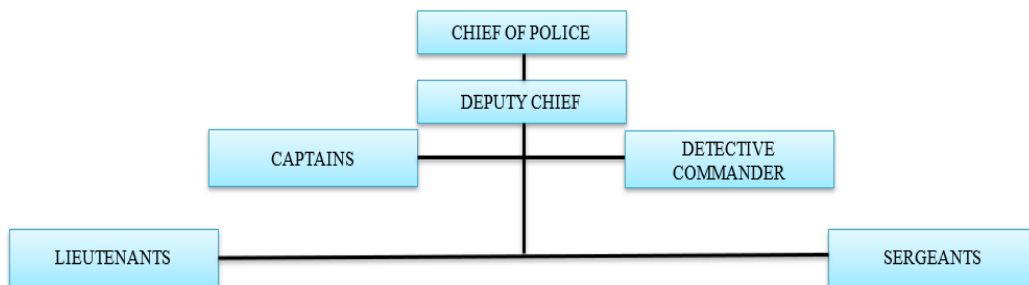
#### **A. GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. All complaints against a police officer of the Portsmouth Police Department or any complaints in reference to the policies or procedures of the Portsmouth Police Department will be directed to the officer in charge at the time the complaint is made.

2. The officer in charge will be responsible for obtaining information on the type of complaint and personal information of the complainant.
  - i. Only a sergeant or above may investigate a complaint.
  - ii. The officer in charge will be responsible for determining if the complaint is of a criminal nature, serious nature, or not of a serious nature.
3. Complaint forms are made available during normal business hours at the Town Administrators Office, via download at [www.portsmouthri.gov](http://www.portsmouthri.gov), and at all hours at police headquarters. Complaints may be emailed to the deputy chief's attention at [policedept@portsmouthri.gov](mailto:policedept@portsmouthri.gov) or may be mailed to the deputy chief at the following address:

Portsmouth Police Department  
 Office of the Deputy Chief  
 2270 East Main Rd.  
 Portsmouth, R.I. 02871-4021

4. The Deputy Chief of Police oversees the Internal Affairs Division which is comprised of Internal Affairs Investigating Officers that are appointed at the discretion of the Chief of Police or his designee.
5. Organizational chart representing the reporting line for complaint investigations.



## B. COMPLAINTS OF A CRIMINAL AND/OR SERIOUS NATURE

1. When the officer in charge determines a complaint is of a criminal or serious nature, the deputy chief will be advised immediately. In the absence of the deputy chief, the administrative captain or patrol captain will be advised immediately (whichever captain is available at the time the complaint is received). In the absence of the deputy chief and captains, the detective commander will be advised immediately.
2. Initial documentation will be accomplished by a complaint form and statement addressing the facts or circumstances surrounding the complaint.

3. The chief of police will then be advised upon all facts and circumstances of the complaint or case.
4. Case numbers will be assigned by the deputy chief for all internal investigations.
5. All follow-up interviews will be conducted by the deputy chief or his/her designee (a trained member of the internal affairs division). A report of the findings and any recommendations will be forwarded to the chief of police.
6. The complainant will be notified in writing of the finding of the investigation:
  - i. Sustained
  - ii. Not Sustained
  - iii. Unfounded
  - iv. Exonerated

#### C. COMPLAINTS NOT OF A CRIMINAL AND/OR SERIOUS NATURE

1. All complaints that are not of a serious nature will be investigated by the officer in charge on duty. A determination will be made by the officer in charge if the complaint can be handled at that time or if the complaint should be forwarded to the deputy chief for further follow-up.
2. Initial documentation can be accomplished by a complaint form and/or statement addressing the facts or circumstances surrounding the complaint.
3. All follow-up interviews will be conducted by the officer in charge.
4. The complainant will be advised by the officer in charge of his/her findings from the investigation.
5. A memorandum outlining the circumstances and the findings of the investigation will be forwarded to the deputy chief of police.
6. If the deputy chief of police determines that the findings from the officer in charge require further review or investigation, the deputy chief may re-assign the investigation to a member of the Internal Affairs Division or direct the officer in charge to continue on with the investigation until all avenues of investigation are exhausted.

#### D. RECORDS

1. Records of complaints of a criminal and/or serious nature against the agency and employees will be securely maintained to safeguard the confidentiality of all parties involved. These records will be stored in a secure cabinet inside the office of the Chief of Police.

2. Records of complaints not of a criminal and/or serious nature against the agency and employees will be securely maintained to safeguard the confidentiality of all parties involved. These records will be stored in a secure cabinet inside the office of the Deputy Chief of Police.

#### E. TIME LIMITS FOR INVESTIGATIONS

1. All internal investigations are to be completed within 90 days of the initial complaint.
2. An extension may be granted to exceed the 90-day deadline based on the circumstances of each individual incident.

By Order of:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'BP Peters', written over a horizontal line.

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Brian P. Peters  
Chief of Police