



Cottonwood Police Department A Guide To The Citizen Complaint Process

A Message From The Chief of Police

Cottonwood Police Department Mission Statement:

To enhance the safety and well-being of our community through partnerships, professionalism, compassion, and integrity with an unwavering commitment to reduce crime and protect quality of life.

Please expect and hold us to the spirit of these values as they relate to the services we provide to you. Our goal is to exceed your expectations for service. When we do not meet your expectations for service, you may lose confidence in our abilities to provide the level of public safety you desire and we depend on your support. Therefore, it is important that we receive your feedback, both positive and negative, when you are the recipient of our services. If we exceed your expectations, please let us know so we can pass your praise along to personnel. If we do not meet your expectations or if our conduct was inappropriate, please let us know so we can promptly follow-up to make improvements.

We will aggressively pursue any complaint to determine the facts and make corrections where required. Sometimes, people who we contact take advantage of this diligence by providing information that is inaccurate, in an effort to get the officer in trouble. People who make malicious, clearly false complaints against police personnel will be prosecuted for false reporting. We will treat you with fairness and dignity and we only ask to be treated the same.

Thank you for your interest and support in the Cottonwood Police Department. Should you have any concerns or questions, please contact me directly at 928-634-4246. Please visit our website to view our Annual Report at <http://cottonwoodaz.gov/DocumentCenter/View/1881>.

**Steve Gesell
Chief of Police**

Information Regarding Your Complaint

Supervisor receiving your complaint: _____

Date Reported: _____

Supervisor investigating your complaint: Sgt. Chad Sinn #612;
(928) 295-7207 or csinn@cottonwoodaz.gov

Member(s) involved, if known: _____

Complaint Summary/Comments: _____

Expected completion date: 45 days from receipt of complaint

Contact Information:

Cottonwood Police Department
199 S. 6th Street
Cottonwood, AZ 86326
www.cottonwoodaz.gov

Emergency: 9-1-1
Information: (928) 634-4246

Our Policy

It is the policy of the Cottonwood Police Department to investigate all complaints against Department personnel. This ensures the integrity of the Department while protecting the rights and interests of both citizens and Department employees.

Who May Complain?

Any person who witnesses, or has direct knowledge of, police misconduct may file a complaint with the Cottonwood Police Department.

How Do You File a Complaint?

Generally, complaints are filed through the involved employee's immediate supervisor, however if the immediate supervisor is unavailable, any Department supervisor can take the complaint.

Who Investigates the Complaint?

Department supervisors are charged with maintaining discipline and with overseeing the conduct of members assigned to them. In most cases, the supervisor of the employee conducts an investigation and reports the incident through the chain of command for disposition.

What is the complaint procedure?

After the supervisor has interviewed all parties involved, the disposition will fall into one of the following categories:

Sustained – There is substantial evidence to prove the allegation.

Not Sustained – There is insufficient proof to prove or disprove the allegation.

Unfounded – The allegation is false.

Exonerated – The incident occurred but was lawful and proper.

Policy Failure – The allegation is true but the employee followed policy. The policy will be examined and, if necessary, modified.

What will you be told?

After a thorough investigation of the complaint, the employee's supervisor or another supervisor will promptly contact you. You will be advised of the supervisor's findings; however due to employee privacy rights, you will not be informed about specific discipline the employee receives, if any.

Responsibility—Ours and Yours

The Cottonwood Police Department views all citizen complaints against its employees very seriously and actively pursues investigations into alleged misconduct. For this reason, you must ensure that your complaint is based on fact and you have provided us with all of the facts, to the best of your ability. If you intentionally make a false report or false statements to the Department, you could be criminally prosecuted [ARS 13-2907.01].

Our Commitment to You

Members of the Cottonwood Police Department will, at all times, strive to be courteous and professional in all dealings with the citizens we serve. It is the hope of the Cottonwood Police Department that all of your contacts with our officers and other employees be positive. If not, we will endeavor to resolve your complaint in a prompt and objective manner.

**We would appreciate hearing from you when we have provided you
with commendable service too!**