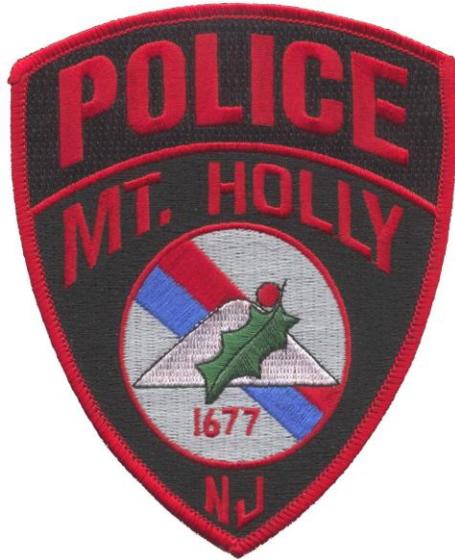


Mount Holly Township Police Department



Your Guide to Filing A Complaint Against An Employee

Richard W. Spitler
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Policing is often difficult and complex. We strive to be courteous, thorough, and impartial in our investigations and fair in our judgments. We also realize that mistakes can occur and our actions at times fall short of your expectations.

We must maintain your trust and confidence in us to provide quality police service to all members of our community. As public servants, we respect the rights of all persons; therefore, your complaints and concerns are important to us.

As a public agency, we are accountable to the community, and our employees are subject to discipline when wrong. Our employees also merit protection from undeserved criticism.

The members of the Mount Holly Township Police Department are committed to providing law enforcement services that are fair, effective, and impartially applied. It is in the best interests of everyone that your complaint about the performance of an individual officer is resolved fairly and promptly. The Mount Holly Township Police Department has formal procedures for investigating your complaint. These procedures ensure fairness and protect the rights of both citizens and law enforcement officers.

We will do our best to handle your complaint promptly. The following pages describe the complaint process. I hope this booklet will help you understand how serious we are in taking responsibility for the services we provide.

Richard W. Spitler
Chief of Police

Employee Complaints

The Mount Holly Police Department has a process by which a citizen may make a complaint against police personnel. This information will assist anyone who has occasion to make a complaint against any Mount Holly Police Department Employee. Here are some of the questions we frequently encounter regarding our complaint procedure and process.

What is a Citizen's Complaint?

An allegation from any source regarding a specific act or omission by a member or employee which would amount to misconduct; or

An allegation from any source regarding an improper policy, procedure, practice, service level, or legal standard of the Department.

Who can make a Complaint?

A personnel complaint may be made by anyone. If the complainant is under the age of 18, we request that the complainant be accompanied by a parent or guardian when coming to the Internal Affairs Unit.

How can a Complaint be made?

You may file a complaint in any of the following ways:

1. Request to speak directly to the supervisor of the officer or employee.
2. Use the 24-hour Police Tip Line (COPS400) or call (609) 267-7400 to file your complaint. Please leave a detailed message describing the complaint. Be sure to include the following information:
 - Date, time, and location of the incident.
 - Name, badge number and/or car number of the officer(s) or employee(s) involved.
 - Name, address, and telephone number of any witnesses.
3. Visit the Mount Holly Police Department Internal Affairs Unit and file the complaint with the Investigator.
4. Telephone the Internal Affairs Investigator at (609) 864-2136 and make arrangements for the Investigator to meet you at a convenient location or return your call.

5. If you elect to describe your complaint in a letter or file a complaint using the Complaint Form:
 - a. By letter, please include the following information:
 1. Date, time, and location of the incident.
 2. Name, badge number and/or car number of the Officer(s) or employee(s) involved.
 3. Name, address, and telephone number of any witnesses.
 - b. Detach and complete the Complaint Form thoroughly.
 - c. Deliver, mail, or fax a copy of your letter or the Complaint Form to the Internal Affairs Unit.

**Mount Holly Police Department
Internal Affairs Unit
23 Washington Street
Mount Holly, NJ 08060
Fax: 609-845-1177**

6. If you have any questions regarding the Complaint Form, contact the:

Internal Affairs Unit

Telephone: (609) 864-2136

Fax: (609) 845-1177

Email: rpietrow@twp.mountholly.nj.us

When can a Complaint be made?

A complaint may be made 24 hours a day. During normal business hours the complaint may be submitted to the Mount Holly Police Department Internal Affairs Unit at (609) 864-2136. After normal business hours the complaint may be made by calling (609) 267-8300 and requesting to have a supervisor contacted. The Internal Affairs Unit will also receive phone messages 24 hours a day at (609) 864-2136.

The Investigation

If you decide to have your complaint investigated by the Police Department, an investigator will contact you to discuss the complaint. The investigation will be conducted by an investigator of the Internal Affairs Unit or by the supervisor of the officer or employee against whom the complaint is made.

In some cases, a complaint is based on a misunderstanding of accepted law enforcement practices or the duties of the officer.

Occasionally, the supervisor or an investigator can explain the officer or employee's actions to your satisfaction. However, if the complaint is not resolved, an Internal Affairs Investigator will contact you.

- Your complaint will be sent to a superior officer or a specially trained internal affairs officer who will conduct a thorough and objective investigation.
- You might be asked to help in the investigation by giving a detailed statement about what happened or providing other important information.
- All complaints against law enforcement officers are thoroughly investigated. You will be advised in writing of the outcome of the investigation.
- If our investigation shows that a crime might have been committed, the county prosecutor will be notified. You might be asked to testify in court.
- If our investigation results in an officer being charged with a violation of department rules, you might be asked to testify in a departmental hearing.
- If our investigation shows that the complaint is unfounded or that the officer acted properly, the matter will be closed.
- All disciplinary hearings shall be closed to the public unless the defendant officer requests an open hearing.
- It is unlawful to provide information in this matter which you do not believe to be true.

The Internal Affairs Investigator will contact you for additional information regarding the complaint. The investigator will then interview witnesses, collect evidence, and complete a written report. You may contact the investigator at any time to determine the status of your investigation.

When the investigation is complete it is reviewed, evaluated and endorsed by the Chief of Police. You will be notified of the finding and whether appropriate corrective action has been taken. You will not be notified of the exact discipline imposed.

If you have any questions regarding the finding, you may call the Internal Affairs Investigator for clarification at (609) 864-2136.