

# Citizen Guide to the Pelham Police Department's Commendation and Complaint Procedures

The Pelham Police Department adheres to a series of formalized, well-defined policies and procedures that have been implemented to ensure the highest level of service to the members of our community. These policies and procedures provide certain guidelines that must be followed by our personnel when members of the community seek to commend or lodge a complaint against an employee. Informal, general feedback about the department can be communicated in person, by telephone, mail, or email.

## The Commendation Process

Employees and/or members of the community who wish to recognize an officer or department employee recommending a Commendation may do so utilizing the department's Commendation form. These forms can be downloaded from the department's website, picked up in the lobby of the police station at dispatch, or email a request for the form to [ADMINISTRATION@PELHAMPOLICE.COM](mailto:ADMINISTRATION@PELHAMPOLICE.COM).

## The Complaint Process

Complaints may be lodged against any employee of the department in person, in writing, or anonymously. All complaints will be carefully investigated, although anonymous complaints are sometimes difficult to substantiate, as the complainant is not available for interview.

The complainant's initial contact will always be with a supervisory officer, who will initiate the complaint process. Some complaints (those that do not involve allegations of criminal activity by the employee) may be resolved at this step of the process.

More serious allegations will generally require the assignment to a specially assigned investigator. In these longer investigations, complainants will be regularly updated on the progress of the investigation, which shall be completed within 30 days (unless an extension is granted by the Chief of Police).

Complainants will receive written notification of the results of the investigation from the Chief of Police. Adjudications shall be classified as one of the following:

1. Sustained - this means that the allegation made in the complaint was proven to be true.

2. Not Sustained - this means that the investigation failed to either prove or disprove the allegation.
3. Unfounded - this means that the investigation indicated, by a preponderance of the evidence, that the alleged act did not occur.
4. Exonerated - this means that the alleged act did occur, but that it was justified, legal and proper under the circumstances.

If your complaint is sustained, you will be advised if disciplinary action was taken. However, because of confidentiality requirement, you will not be advised of the specific action taken. You may be assured that any action taken will be fair and just based upon the allegation and in consideration of the past history of the employee.

Complaints may be filed by utilizing the department's **Complaint form**. This form can be downloaded from the department's website, picked up in the lobby of the police station at dispatch, or email a request for the form to [ADMINISTRATION@PELHAMPOLICE.COM](mailto:ADMINISTRATION@PELHAMPOLICE.COM).