

Mount Vernon Police Department



Your Guide To Filing A Complaint Against An Employee

**City of Mount Vernon
Clinton I. Young, Jr.
Mayor**

**Barbara Duncan
Chief of Police**

**Mount Vernon Police Department
Internal Affairs Unit
2 Roosevelt Square North
Mount Vernon, NY 10550**

**Telephone: (914) 665-2599
Fax: (914) 663-4307
Email: IAB@pd.cmvny.com**

This packet includes:
Citizen Guide To Filing A Complaint Against An Employee
Employee Complaint Form (MV-IA-1)

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.

We will do our best to handle your complaint promptly!

The following pages describe the complaint process. I hope this booklet will help you to understand how serious we are in taking responsibility for the services we provide.

Barbara Duncan
Chief of Police

Employee Complaints

The Mount Vernon 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 Vernon 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.

Note: If your complaint concerns a disagreement over the validity of a traffic or parking citation, please contact the court system. The Police Department does not resolve such disputes.

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 Complaint Hotline at (914) 665-2599 to file your complaint. and leave a detailed message describing the complaint. Be sure to have 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.
1. Visit the Internal Affairs Unit and file the complaint with the Intake Officer. Office hours are Monday through Friday, 9 AM to 5 PM.
1. Telephone the Internal Affairs Unit and make arrangements for an investigator from the Unit to meet you at a convenient location.
1. 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:
 - i. Date, time, and location of the incident.
 - ii. Name, badge number and/or car number of the officers or employees involved.
 - iii. Name, address, and telephone number of any witnesses.
 - b. Detach and complete the Complaint Form (MV-IA-1) thoroughly.
 - c. Deliver, mail, or fax a copy of your letter or the Complaint Form to the Internal Affairs Unit.

**Mount Vernon Police Department
Internal Affairs Unit
2 Roosevelt Square North
Mount Vernon, NY 10550**

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

Internal Affairs Unit

Telephone: (914) 665-2599

Fax: (914) 663-4307

Email: IAB@pd.cmvny.com

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 Vernon Police Department Internal Affairs Unit at **(914) 665-2599**. After normal business hours the complaint may be made by calling (914) 665-2521 and contacting a supervisor. The Internal Affairs Unit will also receive phone messages 24 hours a day at (914) 665-2599.

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.

Occasionally, the problem actually is with an agency other than the police, or it may be possible that 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.

The assigned investigator will contact you within 2 business days of your 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.

An internal investigation normally takes between 30 and 90 days to complete. 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 Unit for clarification at (914) 665-2599.

What is Mediation?

An alternative to the traditional complaint and disciplinary process. Committing to mediation represents the final step in the complaint process. If the complainant offers to mediate and the officer agrees, upon completion of the mediation the complaint will be considered resolved and closed.

Mediation is a voluntary and confidential process in which a professional mediator helps community members and officers talk and listen to each other. Mediation offers a chance for officers to hear how their actions affected community members and vice versa.

If your complaint is eligible for mediation, the assigned investigator will discuss this process with you.