

FORMAL COMPLAINT PROCESSING

How are complaints investigated?

An investigator is assigned by the Chief of Police to conduct a thorough investigation of the complaint. Witnesses and officers will be contacted and asked to give statements. Records and other evidence will be collected and examined. Unless special circumstances prevent, investigations are normally completed within 30 days from the receipt of the complaint.

What happens when a complaint is found to be true?

When the investigation of a complaint reveals that the allegations are true and should be sustained against the employee, the investigator notifies the Chief of Police. The employee is notified and the department may, depending on the nature of the violation, reprimand, suspend without pay, demote or discharge the employee. Corrective action in the form of advice and instruction, counseling, training and re-training may be incorporated in any disciplinary action. The complainant will be notified in writing of the investigation's results.

What happens if the complaint is found to be not true or yields insufficient information to prove or disprove the allegation of misconduct?

Police officers and employees have the same rights as all citizens. Complaints must be supported by sufficient evidence. If there is not sufficient evidence to sustain the complaint, the employee is notified and continues on duty. The complainant will be notified in writing of the investigation's results.

Can an employee appeal the decision?

Just as a citizen charged with a criminal offense can appeal a court's decision, an employee can appeal the action taken against them. The City of Highland Village has established procedures for employees to follow in their appeals, just as the Police Department has established procedures for insuring that complaints by citizens against officers are thoroughly and honestly investigated.

What if you are not satisfied with the decision?

If you are not satisfied with the results of the investigation you may request an investigation for certain acts by the Federal Bureau of Investigation if civil rights violations are alleged or the Denton County District Attorney's Office if criminal violations are alleged. The Highland Village Police Department is vitally interested in the welfare of all citizens and in taking action where its employees have been proven to have engaged in misconduct.

How are criminal complaint charges made against police employees?

Citizens who wish to make criminal charges against police personnel may file a criminal complaint with the Highland Village Police Department, the Denton County District Attorney's Office or the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Criminal complaints made with the Highland Village Police Department against an employee, may be referred to an outside agency.