

HOW ARE COMPLAINTS MADE?

When a citizen files a complaint against a member of the Sherman Police Department, it is sent to the Chief of Police for review and assignment.

Citizens wishing to obtain or file a complaint may do so in several different ways:

1. Download a complaint form at: www.ci.sherman.tx.us/index.aspx?nid=204
2. Contact any supervisor; or
3. Contact the Internal Affairs Office (IAO)

The IAO is open during normal business hours and located in the Sherman Police Department at 317 South Travis. If you prefer, you may call the IAO, write a letter, or email to begin the process.

Texas state law requires that all complaints against police officers must be in writing and signed by the person making the complaint. Just as citizens who are arrested must be notified of the charges against them, the police officer must be given a copy of the complaint before any disciplinary action may be taken.

Complaints must be made within 90 days of the incident complained about, except in special cases (such as criminal misconduct or when the person complaining can show good cause). Complaints must be made by the person who claims to be aggrieved, except that in the case of a minor, a guardian may file the complaint. Other persons may give statements as witnesses. After an Internal Affairs Investigation is completed, you will be advised of the results.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A COMPLAINT IS FOUND TO BE TRUE?

When the investigation of a complaint reveals that the charges are true and should be sustained against the officer, the Chief of Police notifies the officer and may take one of the following actions, depending on the nature of the violation:

1. Counsel or reprimand the employee;
2. Suspend the employee without pay;
3. Demote the employee; or
4. Discharge the employee.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A COMPLAINT IS NOT SUSTAINED?

Police Officers must be accorded certain rights, the same as with all citizens, and complaints must be supported by sufficient evidence. If there is not sufficient evidence to sustain the complaint, the officer is notified and continues on duty. The complainant is also notified by mail of the investigation's results.

WHAT IF YOU ARE NOT SATISFIED WITH THE DECISION?

If you are not satisfied with the results of the investigation by the Sherman Police Department you may appeal to:

1. The Office of the Chief of Police located at 317 South Travis;
2. The Office of the City Manager located in City Hall, 220 West Mulberry.

The Sherman Police Department is vitally interested in the welfare of all citizens and in taking action where its employees have proven derelict in their duties or are guilty of wrongdoing. If it becomes necessary for you to make a complaint, you can be assured that it will be given a fair and thorough investigation.

By the same token, if you have an occasion to see a police officer doing outstanding work, tell him or her about it. Your Sherman police officers are individuals who are dedicated to serving you and your community.

OFFICERS CAN APPEAL THE DECISION

Just as a citizen charged with a criminal offense can appeal a court's decision, a police officer can appeal any disciplinary action taken against him. The City of Sherman has established procedures for officers 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.

GENERAL INFORMATION

The Sherman Police Department is dedicated to providing the best police service possible to all citizens. Police officers are carefully selected and given the best training possible in order to provide this service. However, you may have occasion to lodge a complaint about the actions of a member of the Sherman Police Department. In order to be responsive, information is provided about how a complaint is made, how it is investigated, and the result.

Service issues not associated with employee misconduct should be directed to the Office of the Chief of Police for a performance review.

It is the policy of the Sherman Police Department to give equal treatment under the law to all people, regardless of race, color, religion, sex, politics, national origin, lifestyle, or similar characteristics. The officers of the Sherman Police Department will only stop or detain citizens when reasonable suspicion exists to believe they have committed, are committing, or are about to commit a violation of the law, or for other lawful purposes. Officers of the Sherman Police Department are strictly prohibited from initiating any action that constitutes racial or biased-based profiling. Citizens should file any complaints by following the procedure mentioned in this brochure.

Office of Professional Standards
Internal Affairs Office
Lt. John Kennemer
317 S. Travis
903-892-7148
johnk@ci.sherman.tx.us

Citizen Complaint Process

Sherman Police Department
317 S. Travis
PO Box 1173
Sherman, Texas 75091-1173
903-892-7290