

# HOW TO FILE A POLICE COMPLAINT IN OREGON

Reporting police misconduct is an important step in the fight for police accountability. However, some people who feel they were mistreated or had their rights violated do not file complaints. Often it is because they don't know how to do it, they think it won't make a difference, or they are afraid of retaliation.

Even though an individual complaint may not result in any changes, over time, complaints can add up and show patterns of problematic behaviors and practices.

While most law enforcement agencies in Oregon have a complaint procedure, it is not always easy to figure out how to file a complaint or where to file it. To help make the complaint process clearer, we have created the "[How to File a Police Complaint in Oregon](#)" resource.

Everyone deserves fair and effective law enforcement. This information is not intended as legal advice but serves as a tool to strengthen the voice of the community and improve police accountability. You may want to consult a lawyer before filing a police complaint.

If your law enforcement agency is not listed or has little information you may:

- Download and submit a [Complaint Form](#) with the [Department of Public Safety Standards and Training](#), a statewide program that develops and regulates professional standards for law enforcement.
- Contact the local law enforcement agency directly and ask to speak with a supervisor. The supervisor should be able to answer your questions and assist you with filing a complaint.

## WHO CAN FILE?

- ANYONE WHO HAS EXPERIENCED OR WITNESSED POLICE MISCONDUCT.

## EXAMPLES OF

## POLICE MISCONDUCT

- ABUSE OF AUTHORITY
- EXCESSIVE FORCE
- HARASSMENT
- DISCRIMINATION
- INAPPROPRIATE SEXUAL CONDUCT
- UNPROFESSIONAL LANGUAGE

## YOU MAY REMAIN

## ANONYMOUS

## POLICE COMPLAINT PROCESS

- 1 EXPERIENCE IT**  
Incident of police misconduct.
- 2 GATHER IT**  
Compile as many facts as possible:  
Date, time, location, officer details (name, physical description, badge number, vehicle number), witness contact information, what was said, what rights were violated. Photograph bruises/injuries. Collect medical record.
- 3 WRITE IT**  
Obtain and complete a complaint form:
  - Online: Download a form from your agency's website
  - In person: Go to your local police or sheriff department and pick up a form.
  - Email, mail, fax, or call and request that a form be sent to you. (see county page for agency contact information and forms)
- 4 FILE IT**  
Deliver your completed complaint form to the agency (by email, mail, fax, or in person). **Please Note:** Going to the agency in person may not always be safe. If you feel unsafe, use another delivery method or ask someone that you trust to pick up and deliver the complaint for you.
- 5 INVESTIGATE IT**  
Many agencies will investigate a complaint. Most agencies do not investigate "customer service" complaints (ex. response time, demeanor).
- 6 DECIDE IT**  
If your complaint is investigated, a decision will be made of either sustained, not sustained, exonerated, or unfounded.  
*\*If you find that any of this information has changed, please email us at [info@aclu-or.org](mailto:info@aclu-or.org). Last updated August 2015.*

