

Police Complaints – Connecticut

Categories : [Legal and Protective Services](#)

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If you believe that a police officer's behavior was wrong or that the officer used excessive force, you have the right to make a complaint. To make a complaint, you must follow the procedure set up by the local police department. Although each department has its own procedure, in general there are some common elements:

- **LOCAL POLICE**

If the officer is with a municipal police department, contact the police department for that town or city.

- **STATE POLICE**

If this concerns a State Police officer, contact the Connecticut State Police Headquarters.

- **RESIDENT STATE TROOPERS**

For Connecticut towns that have a Resident State Trooper instead of a municipal police department, you may submit your complaint to the First Selectman/Selectwoman, or directly to the State Police. Call the First Selectman/ Selectwoman's office for information on how best to submit your complaint.

GENERAL INFORMATION

- Contact the appropriate police department to make a complaint. This contact may be by phone or in person, and some police departments allow you to submit a complaint by mail or through the internet.
- The police department will have a person or division designated to receive the complaints. Call the police department's non-emergency phone number to find out where to submit a complaint. (DO NOT CALL 911 TO MAKE A COMPLAINT OR GET INFORMATION. 911 IS FOR EMERGENCIES ONLY)
- You must submit a written complaint. This may be by using a form provided by the police department, or by writing your own original letter. The information required in a complaint varies from one department to another, but it may include your name, address, phone number, date of birth, date and time of the incident, the officer's name and shield number, and a description of the incident. If the police department uses a standard form, you may need to go to police headquarters to get the form, depending on the police department's policy.
- When you submit a written complaint, be certain to keep a copy for your records.
- The police department will investigate the complaint, and make a determination whether or not the complaint is valid, and if it is determined valid, what disciplinary measures will be taken.
- If you are not satisfied with the actions taken by the police department, you have the right to hire an attorney and pursue the complaint in court. However, you do not have to wait until the police department finishes its investigation to hire an attorney. You may hire an attorney at any point in the process, even before you submit your complaint.
- If you believe that your civil rights were violated, you can file a complaint. For violations of Connecticut Civil Rights laws, you should file a complaint with the [Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities](#). For violations of Federal Civil Rights laws, you should file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division.
- If you believe that the officer(s) involved broke the law, you can seek criminal prosecution of the officer(s). For violations of Connecticut laws, the State's Attorney, under the [State of Connecticut Division of Criminal Justice](#), prosecutes all state criminal cases. For violations of federal laws, the US Attorney's Office for the District of Connecticut prosecutes all federal criminal cases. To request a federal investigation, you can



contact the US Attorney's Office, or you can also contact the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).

- The [American Civil Liberties Union](#) has written a "[Bust Card](#)" that can be downloaded and printed, and carried in your wallet or kept in your car for quick reference on what your rights and obligations are if you are stopped by the police, immigration agents or the FBI.

TO FIND PROVIDERS IN CONNECTICUT'S COMMUNITY RESOURCES DATABASE:

Search by service name: [Law Enforcement Complaints](#)

SOURCES: State of Connecticut Division of Criminal Justice

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