



Do you have a complaint about the police in British Columbia?



The Office of the Police Complaint Commissioner

British Columbia



The OPCC can ...

- ▶ Help you understand the complaint process
- ▶ Make sure you are aware of your rights and what they mean
- ▶ Assist you in ensuring you have all the information you need to file your complaint, and
- ▶ Ensure that your complaint is treated fairly, impartially and respectfully

The Police Complaint Commissioner is...

... an independent Officer of the Legislature and is responsible for ensuring complaint investigations are thorough and the decisions are fair.

The OPCC oversees the handling of complaints involving the following police departments/agencies:

Abbotsford	Saanich
BC CFSEU	Stl'at'limx Tribal Police
Central Saanich	Vancouver
Delta	Victoria
New Westminster	West Vancouver
Oak Bay	SCBCTAPS (Transit Police)
Port Moody	
Nelson	

If you have a complaint about any officer who is a member of one of these agencies, or about the agency itself, this pamphlet will help guide you through the complaint process.

How Do You File a Complaint?

You have a choice of how to proceed with your complaint. You may file a formal "registered complaint" that will entitle you to various rights under the *Police Act*, including:

- participating in mediation or other informal resolution sessions
- being kept informed on the progress of the investigation
- receiving a copy of the final investigation report
- given the opportunity to make submissions on the complaint, adequacy of the investigation and what you feel are appropriate disciplinary or corrective measures
- if not satisfied with the outcome, the ability to appeal the decision.

Or, if you simply want the police to know about your concerns but do not wish to participate in a formal process, you may report your concerns as a "non-registered complaint". Depending on the information provided, it may or may not result in an investigation and you will not have the same rights as a formal complainant as set out above. ALL complaints, registered or non-registered, are recorded and reviewed by the OPCC.

Please complete the attached complaint form and make sure you indicate how you want to proceed.

Questions? Please contact the OPCC or visit our website at www.opcc.bc.ca

Complaint Form

Full size forms are available and may be submitted online at the OPCC website www.opcc.bc.ca

How do you wish to proceed? Registered Non-Registered

YOUR DETAILS:

Last Name: _____

First Name: _____ Title (eg. Mr) _____

Address (or where you'd like to be contacted): _____

City: _____ Prov: _____ Postal Code: _____

Tel: _____ Cell: _____

Email: _____

DETAILS OF THE COMPLAINT:

When did the incident happen? _____ (day / month / year)

Time incident occurred? _____

Where did the incident happen? _____

Name of Police Dept Involved: _____

Name or Badge # of Officer(s) (if known): _____

Any witnesses? If so, please list their names and contact information (if known): _____

Describe your injuries (if any): _____

If you received medical treatment, where & when: _____

The information contained in this form relating to your complaint is collected and disclosed to the investigating agency pursuant to Part 11 of the Police Act. If you have any questions or any concerns regarding the complaint process, please contact the OPCC.

DESCRIPTION OF COMPLAINT:

Please describe your complaint and the details of what occurred. Additional pages may be attached if required.

Multiple horizontal lines for writing the complaint description.

Page ___ of ___

I certify that the information given above is true.

Signature of Complainant

Date: _____ (day / month / year)

Office of the Police Complaint Commissioner

Victoria Office:

3rd Floor, 756 Fort Street
PO Box 9895, Stn Prov Govt
Victoria, BC V8W 9T8
Tel: (250) 356-7458
Fax: (250) 356-6503

Vancouver Office:

#320 – 1111 Melville Street
Vancouver, BC V6E 3V6
Tel: (604) 660-2385
Fax: (604) 660-1223

Call us Toll-Free at
1-877-999-8707

OPCC Website at
www.opcc.bc.ca



If you have a complaint involving a member of the RCMP in British Columbia, you should contact the Commission for Public Complaints Against the RCMP:

Suite 102, 7337 – 137th Street
Surrey, BC V3W 1A4
Tel: (604) 501-4080
Toll Free at 1-800-665-6878
Website: www.cpc-cpp.gc.ca

Resolving Complaints Informally or Through Mediation...

Depending on the circumstances of your complaint, there may be an opportunity to resolve your concerns informally or through a professional mediation process. At any informal meeting or mediation, you may have someone attend with you to provide support or to assist with translation. Mediators are completely neutral and are experienced in helping people resolve their differences in a constructive manner. Mediation can be a more satisfying, effective and efficient way of dealing with your concerns.

What Happens to Complaints Not Informally Resolved or Mediated?

If your complaint is not appropriate for informal resolution, or after an attempt no agreement could be reached, the police have a duty to investigate your complaint and provide you with a report. An investigation into a complaint must be completed within 6 months, unless an extension is granted by the Police Complaint Commissioner.

Following their investigation, the Professional Standards investigator will submit a report to the “Discipline Authority”(usually the Chief Constable of the department) for decision and a complete copy is also provided to the OPCC. The Discipline Authority will then provide you with a copy of the investigation, the findings and their decision.

If the allegations against the officer are proven, the officer may be offered a Pre-Hearing Conference at which time the officer either accepts the finding and the proposed corrective and/or disciplinary measures, or the matter will proceed directly to a Discipline Hearing. As the Complainant, you will be invited to make your submissions to the Discipline Authority prior to the pre-hearing conference or hearing – if you wish.

If you disagree with the decision, you may request the Police Complaint Commissioner to review the decision.

Support Groups are Available

A wide variety of support groups are available to assist you with the complaint process. For help finding the right support group for your needs, please call our office at 1 877-999-8707 and ask for our Support Group Co-ordinator. A complete list of support groups is also available on our website

