

What if I have a Complaint?

A relationship of trust and confidence between members of the Sheriff's Department and the community we serve is essential to effective law enforcement. Law Enforcement officers must be free to exercise their best judgment and to initiate law enforcement action in a reasonable, lawful and impartial manner and without fear of reprisal. Enforcers of the law also have a special obligation to respect the rights of all persons. The Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Department acknowledges its responsibility to establish a system of complaint and disciplinary procedures which not only subject employees to corrective action when they conduct themselves improperly, but that will protect them from unwarranted criticism when they discharge their duties properly. It is the purpose of these procedures to provide a prompt, just, open and expeditious disposition of complaints regarding the conduct of members and employees of the Department.

To this end, the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Department welcomes constructive criticism and valid complaints against its members or procedures.

BILL BROWN, Sheriff-Coroner
Santa Barbara County

HOW DO I MAKE A COMPLAINT?

In order for a formal complaint to be processed, this completed form should be mailed or brought to the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Department.

WILL I BE CONTACTED BY AN INVESTIGATOR?

Once a written complaint is submitted, you will be contacted by an investigator to obtain a verbal statement.

HOW MUCH TIME DO I HAVE TO FILE A COMPLAINT?

A complaint should be made as soon as possible after the incident as practical. Facts are better ascertained when the incident is reported promptly.

WILL MY COMPLAINT BE INVESTIGATED?

An Internal Affairs Investigator or a supervisor will review your complaint. You may be contacted if more information is needed regarding your complaint. Each complaint is reviewed by Executive Staff at the Sheriff's Department.

CAN I MAKE AN ANONYMOUS COMPLAINT?

Anonymous complaints may be accepted if there is sufficient information to warrant an investigation without the aid of the person complaining.

WHAT IF I AM UNDER THE AGE OF 18?

A person under 18 years of age may make a complaint with the knowledge and signature of a legal parent or guardian.

