

City of Forest Lake Police Officer Recognition or Citizen Complaint Form



MISSION STATEMENT

The primary goal of the Forest Lake Police Department is, as closely as possible, to approach the ideal condition of the City becoming free from crime, disorder and unrest. Although this ideal remains unachieved, the department's purpose is to enforce the laws in a fair and impartial manner while recognizing the statutory and judicial limitations of our authority as police officers and by always respecting and honoring the constitutional rights of all persons. The Department also recognizes that it is not our role to legislate, to render legal judgements or to punish.

Name & Date of Birth: _____

Phone Number: _____

Address: _____

Description: (Attach & use additional sheets if needed)

Signature: _____ Date: _____

RECOGNIZING AN OFFICER

We recognize that conflicts between citizens and police officers can arise; we also realize that there are times when officers go above and beyond their call of duty. Police Officers, like everyone else, appreciate it when their good deeds are noticed. Too often they are remembered for the citations they issued or the arrests they make and not for the thousands of helping hands they extend.

If an officer or employee of the Forest Lake Police Department provides services that you believe they should be commended for, please fill out the back of this form or call the Chief of Police and we will see that the officer or employee is recognized. This boosts their morale and encourages them and all officers and employees of the department to be more positive about the services they provide. We are proud of the relationship we have with the residents of Forest Lake.

THE IMPORTANCE OF YOUR COMPLAINT

The Forest Lake Police Department recognizes that its employees are responsible for their conduct where the public is concerned. It is essential to the safety of our community that the relationship between police and citizens is built on confidence and trust. We cannot be effective without its vital relationship.

Police Officers must be free to exercise their best judgement and initiate proper action in a reasonable, lawful, impartial manner without fear of reprisal. At the same time, they must observe the rights of all people. The complaint process and appropriate disciplinary procedures not only subject officers to corrective action when they conduct themselves improperly; the guidelines also protect them from unwarranted criticism when they discharge their duties properly.

A disagreement over the validity of a traffic citation is not a complaint. Such disagreements should be directed to the court that has the jurisdiction in the matter.

COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

The complaint process is designed to deal with each case factually and fairly. Citizens who file complaints are treated respectfully and their accusations are taken seriously. All complaints are investigated thoroughly and all findings are based on impartial evidence gained during the investigation. However, many complaints can be explained satisfactorily by a visit or telephone call to the employee's supervisor. The supervisor will talk with you about your complaint and try to resolve it.

There are two classes of complaints. The first and most serious is a violation of law. The second level is a violation of Department General Orders. Both may be reported formally or informally. The formal complaint process includes an interview with a trained supervisor assigned to investigate the complaints. It also requires a signed statement by either the complainant or a supervisor. The informal process usually can be done by phone or with a conversation with a supervisor. Both classes of complaints will be investigated thoroughly. Formal complaints will be responded to in writing once the investigation is complete. You may use this form to start the investigative process.

DISPOSITIONS

After an investigation is complete, the facts will be given to the Chief. The Chief will review the file and give one of the following dispositions: Not Sustained-Insufficient evidence exists to prove the allegation or it never occurred. Sustained-Evidence is sufficient to prove the allegation against the employee. Depending on the disposition, the employee could be subject to discipline. Complainants who have current criminal or traffic charges pending should be aware that the internal investigation deals solely with the department matters and the conduct of the employees. Regardless of the outcome of the internal investigation, existing criminal or traffic charges must be dealt with through the court system. It is against the law to file a false report of misconduct against an officer and such action may be subject to criminal prosecution.