

***What if I do not agree with the complaint's disposition?***

You may discuss the case with the Chief Deputy Sheriff, and/or the Sheriff. If you are still not satisfied with the result, you have the right to discuss the matter with your attorney and seek recourse under the law.

In summary, the Douglas County Sheriff's Office wants to hear from you if you have a complaint or concern about law enforcement service in this community.

We also welcome reports of good or meritorious conduct on behalf of our Deputies/employees. If you would like to praise the conduct and/or actions of an employee, this may be accomplished by calling Sheriff Dunning at (402) 444-6640, or by writing the Sheriff at the Douglas County Law Enforcement Center (address listed below).

**Douglas County Sheriff  
Main Office  
3601 North 156<sup>th</sup> Street  
Omaha, NE 68116-2025**

Phone (402) 444-6641  
Fax (402) 444-7342

Or

**Douglas County Sheriff  
Court Services Bureau  
1616 Leavenworth St  
Omaha, NE 68102  
Phone (402) 599-2600**

***Criminal and Traffic Charges:***

*If you have received a citation or were arrested for a violation of the law, filing of a complaint against an employee will not stop legal proceedings affecting you. Criminal and traffic charges will proceed independent of the outcome of an Internal Affairs Investigation.*

*If you feel that you have been falsely cited or arrested you will need to contact the prosecuting attorney's office regarding your charges. All felony charges and all misdemeanor domestic violence charges are handled by the Douglas County Attorney's Office 444-7040 and all other misdemeanors and all traffic charges are handled by the City Prosecutor, 444-5290.*

**Call (402) 444-3643  
Office of Professional  
Standards  
If you have further  
questions.**

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# **DOUGLAS COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE**

## **CITIZEN COMPLAINTS**



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## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

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*"...Respecting the Rights and  
Dignity of All Individuals."*

# CITIZEN COMPLAINTS

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## ***FREQUENT QUESTIONS***

Law enforcement personnel often face an almost impossible task: They must enforce the law in a fair and impartial manner, and still protect the rights of all parties involved. Our Deputies come in contact with people under the most stressful circumstances, and yet they must remain patient and courteous. They see the worst sides of life, but they are still expected to give only their very best. Being human, our personnel may occasionally make mistakes or may appear to be conducting themselves improperly.

The Douglas County Sheriff's Office has established rules of conduct for its employees and guidelines for appropriate corrective action when those rules are breached. In addition to providing citizens with a procedure to present their legitimate complaints, the system protects employees from false charges and unwarranted criticism.

The purpose of this brochure is to provide citizens with the answers to questions that are frequently asked regarding the complaint process.

### ***Retaliation***

Employees are prohibited from retaliating against a complainant. If you believe this has or is occurring contact the Office of Professional Standards at 402-444-3643.

### ***How do I file a citizen complaint?***

You may file a complaint anonymously or in person. All complaints received are investigated to include third party complaints. Complaints may be filed via, phone, fax, website, in person or by mailing in a complaint form.

#### **Douglas County Law Enforcement Center**

**3601 N. 156<sup>th</sup> Street  
Omaha, NE 68116,**

**or**

#### **Douglas County Sheriff Court Service Bureau Office**

**1616 Leavenworth  
Omaha, NE 68102**

### ***What information is needed when filing a complaint?***

- Date, time and location of incident.
- Name and badge number of involved Deputy (if known), vehicle number (if available), or the Deputy's description.
- Witnesses' names, addresses and phone numbers.
- Citation, case number, medical records, or any other documentation that may be helpful for the investigation.

### ***Who will investigate my complaint?***

Depending upon the severity of the allegation(s), complaints are investigated by either the employee's supervisor or an investigator from the Office of Professional Standards. You will be contacted promptly once the complaint has been assigned for investigation if you have provided contact information.

### ***What if the Deputy is found to be in violation of department policy?***

If there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation(s), the complaint will be given a disposition of "sustained." The Sheriff will impose the appropriate disciplinary action, which may include reprimand, suspension, or, in severe cases, termination. In certain cases, the Deputy may receive counseling, or remedial training in lieu of discipline. In all cases however, the nature or severity of any counseling, remedial training, or discipline is not disclosed to the complainant.

### ***What if there is insufficient evidence to prove or disprove the allegation(s)?***

If there is insufficient evidence to prove or disprove the allegation(s), the complaint will be given a disposition of "not sustained."

### ***What if the incident occurred as reported, but the Deputy is found to have acted within department policy?***

If the Deputy is found to have acted properly and in accordance with department rules and regulations, then he/she will be considered "exonerated" of the allegation(s).

### ***What if the evidence does not coincide with the allegation(s)?***

If the information provided by the complainant does not coincide with the evidence obtained during the investigation, the complaint will be given a disposition of "unfounded."

### ***Will I be contacted when the investigation is over?***

Yes. You will receive a letter from the Chief Deputy Sheriff when the investigation is completed. At that time, the Chief Deputy Sheriff will inform you of the complaint's disposition.