

Personnel Complaints and Inquiries

1101.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy provides guidelines for the reporting, investigation and disposition of complaints regarding the conduct of members of the Bloomington Police Department (Minn. R. 6700.2200). This policy shall not apply to any questioning, coaching, counseling, instruction, informal verbal admonishment or other routine or unplanned contact of a member in the normal course of duty, by a supervisor or any other member, nor shall this policy apply to a criminal investigation.

1101.2 POLICY

The Bloomington Police Department takes seriously all complaints and inquiries regarding the service provided by the Department and the conduct of its members.

The Department will accept and address all complaints of misconduct and inquiries in accordance with this policy, POST Board Standards of Conduct, and applicable federal, state and local law, municipal and county rules and the requirements of any memorandum of understanding.

It is also the policy of this department to ensure that the community can report misconduct without concern for reprisal or retaliation.

1101.3 PERSONNEL COMPLAINTS

Personnel complaints include any allegation of misconduct or improper job performance that, if true, would constitute a violation of department policy or of federal, state or local law, policy or rule. Personnel complaints may be generated internally or by the public.

Inquiries about conduct or performance that, if true, would not violate department policy or federal, state or local law, policy or rule may be handled informally by a supervisor and shall not be considered a personnel complaint. Such inquiries generally include clarification regarding policy, procedures, demeanor, or the response to specific incidents by the Department.

1101.3.1 SOURCES OF COMPLAINTS AND INQUIRIES

The following applies to the source of complaints and inquiries:

- (a) Individuals from the public may make complaints in any form, including in writing, by email, in person or by telephone.
- (b) Any department member becoming aware of alleged misconduct should complete an inquiry form.
- (c) Supervisors shall initiate a complaint or inquiry based upon observed misconduct or receipt from any source alleging misconduct that, if true, could result in disciplinary action.
- (d) Anonymous and third-party complaints and inquiries should be accepted and reviewed to the extent that sufficient information is provided. Inquiries that are obviously frivolous, spam, automated not by a person, or generated with the purpose of inundating the department's resources and thus delaying the processing of otherwise

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valid inquiries will not be considered. This also applies to repetitive inquiries filed based on the same circumstances, with no new information, by the same person or another, that have been thoroughly reviewed and responded to.

- (e) Tort claims and lawsuits may generate a personnel complaint.
- (f) The Minnesota Board of Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) may refer complaints alleging a violation of a statute or rule that the board is empowered to enforce (Minn. Stat. § 214.10, Subd. 10).
- (g) Any person making a complaint or inquiry may be accompanied by an attorney or other representative, including at the time the complaint is made.
- (h) Any person wishing to file a complaint against the Chief of Police should be referred to the City Manager for investigation by an outside agency.

1101.4 ACCEPTANCE OF COMPLAINTS AND INQUIRIES

1101.4.1 ACCEPTANCE

All complaints and inquiries will be courteously accepted by any department member and submitted to the Core Values Bureau Commander for review. Although written complaints are preferred, a complaint may also be filed orally, either in person or by telephone. Such complaints and inquiries will be reported by the receiving department member and submitted to the Core Values Bureau Commander via an Inquiry Form.

1101.4.2 COMPLAINT COPIES

After a formal complaint is filed, the accepting member should sign the document, keep a copy for the department and provide a copy to the complainant. Electronic documents and signatures are acceptable forms of copies.

1101.5 ADMINISTRATIVE INVESTIGATIONS

Allegations of misconduct will be administratively investigated as follows (Minn. R. 6700.2200).

1101.5.1 EXTERNAL INVESTIGATIONS

The Chief of Police may request that an outside agency conduct an investigation anytime the Chief of Police determines an external investigation is appropriate.

This department should not conduct an investigation when the Chief of Police is the subject of the complaint. An external investigation should be requested through the City Manager.

1101.5.2 DISPOSITIONS

Each personnel complaint that results in an Internal Affairs Investigation, shall be classified with one of the following dispositions:

Unfounded - When the investigation discloses that the alleged acts did not occur or did not involve department members. Complaints that are determined to be frivolous will fall within the classification of unfounded.

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Exonerated - When the investigation discloses that the alleged act occurred but that the act was justified, lawful and/or proper.

Not sustained - When the investigation discloses that there is insufficient evidence to sustain the complaint or fully exonerate the member.

Sustained - When the investigation discloses sufficient evidence to establish that the act occurred and that it constituted misconduct.

Misconduct Noted – Acts of misconduct were discovered during the investigation that were not alleged in the complaint.

If an investigation discloses misconduct or improper job performance that was not alleged in the original complaint, the investigator shall take appropriate action with regard to any additional allegations.

The Chief of Police may authorize that any investigation be re-opened any time substantial new evidence is discovered concerning the complaint.

1101.5.3 NOTICE TO COMPLAINANT OF INVESTIGATION STATUS

The member conducting the investigation shall provide the complainant with periodic updates on the status of the investigation, as appropriate and consistent with the provisions of the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act (MGDP) (Minn. Stat. § 13.43, Subd. 2; Minn. R. 6700.2200).

1101.6 ADMINISTRATIVE SEARCHES

Assigned lockers, storage spaces and other areas, including desks, offices and vehicles, may be searched as part of an administrative investigation upon a reasonable suspicion of misconduct.

Such areas may also be searched any time by a supervisor for non-investigative purposes, such as obtaining a needed report, radio or other document or equipment.

1101.7 ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE

When a complaint of misconduct is of a serious nature, or when circumstances indicate that allowing the accused to continue to work would adversely affect the mission of the Department, the Chief of Police or the authorized designee may temporarily assign an accused employee to administrative leave. Any employee placed on administrative leave:

- (a) May be required to relinquish any department badge, identification, assigned weapons and any other department equipment.
- (b) Shall be required to continue to comply with all policies and lawful orders of a supervisor.
- (c) May be temporarily reassigned to a different shift, generally a normal business-hours shift, during the investigation. The employee may be required to remain available for contact at all times during such shift, and will report as ordered.

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1101.8 CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION

Where a member is accused of potential criminal conduct, a separate supervisor or investigator shall be assigned to investigate the criminal allegations apart from any administrative investigation. Any separate administrative investigation may parallel a criminal investigation.

The Chief of Police shall be notified as soon as practicable when a member is accused of criminal conduct. The Chief of Police may request a criminal investigation by an outside law enforcement agency.

A member accused of criminal conduct shall be provided with all rights afforded to a civilian. The member should not be administratively ordered to provide any information in the criminal investigation.

The Bloomington Police Department may release information concerning the arrest or detention of any member, including an officer, that has not led to a conviction. No disciplinary action should be taken until an independent administrative investigation is conducted.

The Chief of Police may postpone making a decision on an administrative investigation until any related criminal charges are resolved. The complainant and involved member should be informed of this decision.

1101.9 POST-ADMINISTRATIVE INVESTIGATION PROCEDURES

1101.9.1 DISCIPLINE

Disciplinary action may include, but is not limited to (Minn. R. 6700.2200):

- (a) Oral reprimand.
- (b) Written reprimand.
- (c) Suspension.
- (d) Demotion.
- (e) Discharge.

1101.9.2 CHIEF OF POLICE RESPONSIBILITIES

Upon receipt of any report sustaining probable disciplinary action, the Chief of Police shall review the report and all accompanying materials. The Chief of Police may accept the report or may return the file to the Bureau Commander for further investigation or action.

Once the Chief of Police is satisfied that no further investigation or action is required by staff, the Chief of Police shall determine the amount of discipline, if any, that should be imposed. In the event disciplinary action is proposed, the Chief of Police shall provide the member with a written notice.

1101.9.3 MINNESOTA POST INVESTIGATIONS

The Minnesota POST Board may require an administrative investigation based upon a complaint alleging a violation of a statute or rule that the board is empowered to enforce.

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Any such misconduct allegation or complaint assigned to this department shall be completed and a written summary submitted to the POST executive director within 30 days of the order for inquiry (Minn. Stat. § 214.10, Subd. 10).

The Department shall cooperate with POST's investigation and provide requested information unless (Minn. Stat. § 626.8457):

- (a) There is an active criminal investigation or active criminal proceeding regarding the same incident or misconduct that is being investigated by POST.
- (b) An active internal investigation exists regarding the same incident or misconduct that is being investigated by POST during 45 days from the time the request was made by POST. The Chief of Police or the authorized designee shall comply with the request upon completion of the internal investigation or once 45 days has passed, whichever occurs first.

1101.9.4 CIVILIAN OVERSIGHT COUNCIL

When applicable, the Chief of Police or the authorized designee shall cooperate with the designated civilian oversight council, as appropriate (Minn. Stat. § 626.89, Subd. 17).

1101.9.5 NOTICE OF FINAL DISPOSITION TO THE COMPLAINANT

The Chief of Police or the authorized designee shall ensure that the complainant is notified of the disposition (i.e., sustained, not sustained, exonerated, unfounded) of the complaint. Notice must be consistent with the provisions of the MGDG (Minn. Stat. § 13.43, Subd. 2; Minn. R. 6700.2200).

1101.10 PRE-DISCIPLINE EMPLOYEE RESPONSE

The pre-discipline process is intended to provide the accused employee with an opportunity to present a written or oral response to the Chief of Police after having had an opportunity to review the supporting materials and prior to imposition of any recommended discipline. The employee shall consider the following:

- (a) The response is not intended to be an adversarial or formal hearing.
- (b) Although the employee may be represented by an uninvolved representative or legal counsel, the response is not designed to accommodate the presentation of testimony or witnesses.

1101.11 RESIGNATIONS/RETIREMENTS PRIOR TO DISCIPLINE

In the event that a member tenders a written resignation or notice of retirement prior to the imposition of discipline, it shall be noted in the file. The tender of a resignation or retirement by itself shall not serve as grounds for the termination of any pending investigation or discipline.

1101.12 POST-DISCIPLINE APPEAL RIGHTS

Non-probationary employees have the right to appeal a suspension without pay, punitive transfer, demotion, reduction in pay or step, or termination from employment. The employee has the right to appeal using the procedures established by any collective bargaining agreement and/or personnel rules (Minn. R. 6700.2200).

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Employees covered by the Veterans Preference Act are entitled to written notice of the right to request a hearing within 30 days of receipt of the notice of intent to terminate, suspend or demote. Failure to request the hearing in the time specified waives the right to the hearing and all other legal remedies. Any hearing shall be held in compliance with law (Minn. Stat. § 197.46).

1101.13 PROBATIONARY EMPLOYEES AND OTHER MEMBERS

At-will and probationary employees and members other than non-probationary employees may be disciplined and/or released from employment without adherence to any of the procedures set out in this policy, and without notice or cause at any time. These individuals are not entitled to any rights under this policy except for employees covered by the Veterans Preference Act (Minn. Stat. § 197.46). However, any of these individuals released for misconduct should be afforded an opportunity solely to clear their names through a liberty interest hearing, which shall be limited to a single appearance before the Chief of Police or the authorized designee (Minn. R. 6700.2200).

Any probationary period may be extended at the discretion of the Chief of Police in cases where the individual has been absent for more than a week or when additional time to review the individual is considered to be appropriate.

1101.14 RETENTION OF PERSONNEL INVESTIGATION FILES

All personnel complaints shall be maintained in accordance with the established records retention schedule and as described in the Personnel Records Policy.

1101.14.1 CONFIDENTIALITY OF PERSONNEL FILES

All active investigations of alleged misconduct and personnel complaints shall be considered confidential and maintained separately from peace officer personnel files. The contents of such files shall not be revealed to other than the involved member or authorized personnel, except pursuant to lawful process, such as Minn. R. 6700.2500. Data in closed files shall be treated as private or public data depending on whether discipline was imposed upon the member.

1101.14.2 LETTERS OF DISCIPLINE AND REPRIMANDS

Letters of discipline and reprimands may only be placed in a member's personnel file after they are received by the member (see generally Minn. Stat. § 626.89, Subd. 13).

1101.15 REQUIRED REPORTING TO POST

The Chief of Police or the authorized designee shall notify POST of certain officer personnel events, including but not limited to:

- (a) A termination or resignation of an officer who is the subject of an internal or criminal investigation due to alleged misconduct regardless of whether the investigation has been initiated or completed, or whether the officer was criminally charged (Minn. Stat. § 626.8457, Subd. 4).
- (b) The violation of a required POST model policy identified in Minn. R. 6700.1615 (Minn. R. 6700.1615, Subd. 2).