

Who are we?

The Independent Police Conduct Authority has been established by Parliament to keep watch over the Police. The Authority has three members, appointed by the Governor General. It is chaired by Justice Lowell Goddard, a High Court Judge.

The Authority is supported by:

- two Investigation Teams made up of highly experienced investigators, who have worked in a range of law enforcement roles in New Zealand and other Commonwealth countries, and have been selected for their experience, ability and integrity
- a Complaints Management Team, which is the first point of contact for enquiries to the Authority, and maintains oversight of complaints and contact with complainants until a complaint is resolved
- reviewing officers, who review Police investigations to ensure they are carried out properly.

What does 'independence' mean?

Being 'independent' means we make findings based on our own judgment of the facts and the law.

In this way, our independence is similar to the independence of a Court.

Independent Police Conduct Authority
www.ipca.govt.nz
Ph 0800 503 728
Ph 04 499 2050
Fax 04 499 2053
enquiries@ipca.govt.nz
PO Box 5025, Wellington 6145

Complaints about Police

Independence
trustworthiness
accountability

vigilance
integrity



IPCA

Independent Police Conduct Authority
Whāia te pono, kia puawai ko te tika

The Independent Police Conduct Authority is an independent body that keeps watch over the Police.

We are not part of the Police – the law requires us to be fully independent. We have our own investigators, and we are headed by a High Court Judge.

If you have a complaint about the Police, you can come to us.

What can you complain about?

We investigate complaints about:

- Police misconduct
- Police neglect of duty
- Police practices, policies and procedures.

We also investigate incidents of death and serious injury involving Police. The Police are required by law to notify us about these incidents and we consider them even if we don't receive a complaint.

What are 'misconduct' and 'neglect of duty'?

Both 'misconduct' and 'neglect of duty' can include a wide range of incidents. Examples of 'misconduct' may include excessive or unreasonable use of force, dishonesty, threats or harassment, unlawful arrest, and a range of other actions.

Neglect of duty includes failure to investigate, prosecute, notify or respond to a crime.

When should you complain?

Many complaints can be resolved quickly and effectively directly with the Police. You may therefore wish to complain directly to the Police. They are required to inform the Authority about all complaints made to them, and how those complaints have been dealt with.

If you complain directly to the Police and are not satisfied that the complaint has been properly resolved, you are entitled to make a complaint to the Authority.

How can you complain?

You can make complaints to the Authority online at www.ipca.govt.nz. You can also download a complaints form from the website.

Other ways to make complaints to the Authority include:

- phoning our Complaints Management Team on 0800 503 728 or emailing on enquiries@ipca.govt.nz
- writing a letter to the Independent Police Conduct Authority, PO Box 5025, Wellington 6145
- visiting a police station or a district court and asking to make a complaint to the Authority
- making a complaint to an Ombudsman.

You can also ask for help from a lawyer or another advisor such as the Citizens Advice Bureau.

What happens to your complaint?

When the Authority receives a complaint, it may carry out its own investigation, or ask the Police to investigate under the Authority's oversight.

The approach taken will depend on how serious the complaint is and how it can best be resolved. The Authority independently investigates the most serious incidents, such as those involving death or allegations of serious misconduct.

If a complaint is referred to the Police for investigation, the Authority will take steps to ensure it is properly resolved. This may include directing or actively overseeing the Police investigation, or reviewing or auditing the Police investigation once it is completed.

The Authority may also decline or take action on a complaint – for example, if the complaint is very minor or outside the Authority's jurisdiction.

How long does it take?

Some complaints are resolved within days or weeks; others that are serious and require investigation can take many months, or longer. The time taken can depend on matters outside our control, such as Court cases.

We'll stay in touch

If you make a complaint, we'll get in touch to confirm we've received it.

We may seek further details, and we will also seek further information from the Police.

Once we've made a decision about whether we are going to proceed, we'll explain what we're doing and why. Then, as long as we are dealing with the complaint, we will make sure you are kept informed.

If you've made a complaint and want information about progress, you can contact our Complaints Management Team by phoning 0800 503 728 or emailing enquiries@ipca.govt.nz.