

Complaints about Police

The Independent Police Conduct Authority (IPCA) is an independent body that keeps watch over Police.

We are **not** part of Police – under the law **we are fully independent**.

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

What we do

We handle, investigate, and resolve complaints against the New Zealand Police.

We're headed by a Judge and have a team of case resolution officers, investigators, report writers and support staff.

Our staff are highly experienced people who come from investigations and related backgrounds.

We're independent by law

We're an Independent Crown Entity. This means that, although we receive government funding, neither the government nor Police can influence how we deal with complaints or run our investigations.

We make our own judgements about the facts, based on evidence and the law.

What you can complain about

- **Police misconduct**
- **Police not doing their duty or not doing it properly**
- **Police practices, policies and procedures.**

This can include but is not limited to:

- **unreasonable force**
- **dishonesty**
- **perjury – making false statements under oath**
- **unlawful arrest**
- **failure to respond to or investigate an offence or to prosecute someone**
- **failure to return property seized by Police during an investigation when it's no longer part of a Police exhibit**
- **unprofessional behaviour.**

We also consider incidents resulting in death or serious injury. Police have to tell us about these incidents even if we don't receive a complaint.

How to make a complaint

You can make complaints online at www.ipca.govt.nz

Our complaint form will guide you through the information we need in order to consider your complaint properly.

You can also:

- **download a complaint form from our website**
- **write us a letter or email**
- **visit a police station and ask to make a complaint.**

You may be able to resolve some matters directly with Police, but you're still entitled to make a complaint to us.

What happens to your complaint?

We receive about 2700 complaints each year ranging from very serious matters to minor issues.

Once we've received your complaint we will:

- **write to you within 7 days to confirm we've received it**
- **assess your complaint and obtain any necessary information from Police so we can decide how your complaint will be handled.**

When we have the information we need and depending on the seriousness of the issue, we'll decide whether to:

- **work with Police to resolve your complaint**
- **oversee the Police investigation of your complaint**
- **conduct an independent investigation**
- **decline your complaint – for example if it is very old, very minor, or outside our area of authority.**

Why Police sometimes investigate

Some complaints are referred to Police for investigation. The three main reasons for this are:

- Only Police can lay criminal charges. If you make a complaint alleging that Police have committed a crime, it's appropriate that Police investigate.**
- Our resources are limited.**
- Employment related investigations such as disciplinary matters, are investigated by the Police's internal Professional Conduct group.**

We'll stay in touch

If you make a complaint, we'll write to you to confirm we've received it.

We may seek further details from you.

Once we've assessed your complaint, we'll contact you to explain our decision.

Then, as long as we're dealing with the complaint, we'll stay in regular contact to keep you informed.

If you've made a complaint and want information about progress, you can contact us on **0800 503 728**

How long does it take?

Some complaints are resolved within days or weeks. Very serious complaints that require investigation can take many months.

The time it takes can depend on matters outside our control, such as court cases.

What if I disagree?

If you're unhappy with the outcome of your complaint, write to us and tell us why. Include any information you haven't already given us.

We'll review your complaint and the additional information and write to you with a decision.

Contact us

Independent Police Conduct Authority

www.ipca.govt.nz

p 0800 503 728

p 04 499 2050

f 04 499 2053

info@ipca.govt.nz

PO Box 25221, Wellington 6140



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