

Complaints Procedure

Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Surrey

We want people to be safe and feel safe in the county and for the police to provide you with the best service possible. Everyone has a right to fair and honest treatment by the police. Sometimes, something goes wrong in the Force's day-to-day dealings with the public. When this happens, we want to hear about it and this document has been produced to make it easier for you to make a formal complaint.

We'd also like to hear if you believe any of Surrey Police's staff or officers have exceeded your expectations and gone further to help resolve your query, question or crime.

Do you wish to make a Complaint against the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Surrey?

Whenever you come into contact with the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Surrey (OPCC) you have the right to expect a professional service that meets your needs. Should the level of service fall below expectations you have the right to complain about:

- The Commissioner's Office itself, our policies or practice;
- The Commissioner;
- A Member of Staff of the OPCC, including contractors; and
- A Volunteer working on behalf of the OPCC.

If you wish to make a complaint you must do so in writing to:

The Chief Executive
Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Surrey
PO Box 412
Guildford
Surrey
GU3 1BR

Or by emailing surreypcc@surrey.pnn.police.uk

Complaints against the Commissioner should be made in writing to the Chief Executive of the OPCC as detailed above. Once a complaint is received it will be forwarded to the Surrey Police and Crime Panel (PCP) to consider. However, complaints can also be made directly to the PCP by writing to:

Chairman of the Surrey Police and Crime Panel
Surrey County Council
Democratic Services
County Hall
Kingston-upon-Thames

Surrey
KT1 2DN

Do you wish to make a Complaint against a member of the PCC's staff, contractors or volunteers?

The PCC's staff members agree to follow the policies and procedures of the PCC's office, including data protection.

If you wish to complain about the service you have received from a member of staff at the Office of the PCC or the way in which that member of staff has conducted themselves then you can contact the Chief Executive in writing.

Please state full details of what the complaint is about and we will try to resolve it for you. Either email: surreypcc@surrey.pnn.police.uk

Or write to:

The Chief Executive
Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Surrey
PO Box 412
Guildford
Surrey
GU3 1BR

The Chief Executive will consider your complaint and a response will be provided to you by an appropriate senior staff member. We will try to resolve the complaint within 20 working days of the complaint being received. If we can't do that we will contact you to keep you updated on progress and to advise you when we expect to conclude the complaint.

If you wish to make a complaint against the Chief Executive you may write or email the Police and Crime Commissioner at the above address.

Do you wish to make a Complaint against Surrey Police Force, including its officers and staff?

Complaints against Surrey Police are handled in two ways.

Complaints against the Chief Constable

The Commissioner has a statutory duty to consider complaints against the Chief Constable. If you wish to make a complaint against the Chief Constable please write to:

The Police and Crime Commissioner
Office of the Surrey Police and Crime Commissioner
PO Box 412
Guildford

Sam Meyer – May 2019

Surrey
GU3 1BR

Or by emailing surreypcc@surrey.pnn.police.uk

Please note that the Commissioner's Office cannot investigate complaints made anonymously.

Further information on how to complain against the Chief Constable and how this will be dealt with is included in Annex D.

Other Complaints against Surrey Police

While the OPCC has a role in monitoring how the police respond to complaints, it does not become involved in complaint investigations. If you are dissatisfied with the service you have received from Surrey Police we would recommend that in the first instance you try and take up any issue with the officer concerned and/or their line manager. Often this is the most straightforward way of resolving a matter. However, if this is not possible or appropriate, the Force's Professional Standards Department (PSD) is responsible for handling all complaints against Officers and Staff below Chief Constable as well as general complaints regarding the provision of the policing service in Surrey.

If you wish to make a complaint against Surrey Police please contact its PSD:

By letter:
Professional Standards Department
Surrey Police
PO Box 101
Guildford
GU1 9PE

By telephone:
101 (when dialling from within Surrey)
01483 571212 (when dialling from outside of Surrey)

By email:
PSD@surrey.pnn.police.uk

You also have the right to make a complaint against Surrey Police direct to the Independent Office for Police Conduct (IOPC). Information on the work of the IOPC and the complaints process can be found on the IOPC website (www.policeconduct.gov.uk).

How to make a complaint against Surrey Police

Complaints about the police will either be about police policies and procedures or about the conduct of a specific officer or member of police staff. The two types of complaints are dealt with differently and this document explains how to make either type of complaint against the police in Surrey.

Making a complaint about a Surrey Police officer or member of police staff

You should complain if you have been treated badly by the police or if you have witnessed the police treating someone in an unacceptable manner. There are many ways to make your complaint and you can choose the one that suits you best:

- Contact the police directly (by going to a police station or by telephoning, emailing, faxing or writing);
- Contact one of the following:
 - A solicitor
 - Your local MP
 - Your local councillor
 - A “Gateway” organisation (such as the Citizen’s Advice Bureau)
- Ask a friend or relative to make the complaint on your behalf (they will require your written permission); or
- Contact the IOPC.

Making a complaint about a Surrey Police policy or procedure

For complaints about the overall policies or procedures of the police, you should contact the Force’s PSD (see above).

What happens next

Whatever type of complaint you make, the police will need to know as much as possible about the circumstances so that they can deal with it as quickly and efficiently as possible. They may ask you to fill in a form or make a written account of the issues involved, and someone will be on hand to provide any help you may need to do this. An official record will be made and you will be told how the complaint is going to be dealt with, what action may be taken as a result and how the decision will be made.

Most complaints will be dealt with by Surrey Police, but the more serious complaints are likely to involve the IOPC. The Force will agree with you how often – and by which method – you would like to be kept updated of progress.

The OPCC monitors closely how complaints are handled by the Force, and receives monthly updates on the Force’s performance. Random dip-checks of PSD files are also carried out to ensure that procedures are followed properly. The findings from these are regularly reported to the PCP meetings.

The Force and the OPCC welcome your comments and use the information to improve the service offered to all our communities.

Human Rights and Equality

In implementing this policy, the Commissioner's Office will ensure that its actions are in accordance with the requirements of the Human Rights Act 1998 and the Convention Rights embodied within it, in order to protect the human rights of complainants, other users of the police services and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Surrey.

GDPR Assessment

The OPCC will only forward, hold or retain personal information where it is appropriate for it to do so, in line with the OPCC GDPR Policy, Privacy Statement and Retention Policy.

Freedom of Information Act Assessment

This policy is suitable for access by the General Public.