



VAN WERT COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

SHERIFF THOMAS M. RIGGENBACH

Van Wert County Sheriff's Office
Office: 419-238-3866
Fax: 419-238-3866
113 N. Market Street
Van Wert, Ohio 45891
www.vanwertcountysheriff.com

Van Wert County Sheriff's Office Citizen Complaint Brochure/Form

The Van Wert County Sheriff's Office is committed to providing the best law enforcement services possible. Citizen cooperation and input are essential if the Sheriff's Office is to succeed in reaching this goal. If you have questions about any specific action taken by the Sheriff's Office or have questions about how the Sheriff's Office operates, you can contact our Office at any time.

If you have further questions or would like more information or assistance, contact us at:

Van Wert County Sheriff's Office
113 N. Market Street
Van Wert, Ohio, 45891
419-238-3866
media@vanwertcountysheriff.com

How do I initiate a complaint against an officer?

A complaint must be initiated in person. Complaints can be filed 24 hours a day with a Sheriff's Office supervisor. If a supervisor is unavailable, any officer may take your initial complaint. If you cannot physically file the complaint in person, email the complaint form to media@vanwertcountysheriff.com or drop it off for the Office of the Sheriff at the "Communications Window" located in the front lobby.

If I am under 18 years old, do I have the right to file a complaint?

Yes, but you must have a parent, legal guardian, or responsible adult with you.

Must I give my name to file a complaint?

No. Anonymous complaints, or complaints from citizens who expressly request their names to be held in confidence, shall be accepted. However, when an anonymous complaint is made against an employee, and there is no corroborative evidence of any kind, the complaint shall be classified as unfounded. Also, if the complaint results in criminal or civil action against the officer, you may be subpoenaed into court, and a name will be required at that time.

Will the officer know that I have made a complaint?

Yes. The officer(s) will be advised of the allegations made against him or her as well as the name of the person registering the complaint. The officer will be required to write out a detailed statement outlining the details of the incident from his/her point of view.



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Who is responsible for the investigation of the complaint?

The Chief Deputy or Major is responsible for the administration of internal investigations. The actual investigative work may be performed by a Detective or a Sheriff's Office Supervisor in the chain of command. When necessary, the Sheriff's Office also utilizes other agencies to investigate criminal allegations against officers.

What will happen to the officer?

If the investigation reveals misconduct, the officer will be disciplined according to the seriousness of the rule violation. Disciplinary actions range from oral reprimand to suspension and, in extreme cases, termination. If the allegation is criminal in nature, the case will be presented for prosecution. Other appropriate remedies include policy training and remedial training.

Need I be concerned about possible retaliation for making a complaint against an officer?

No. It is essential that public confidence be maintained. Retaliation is strictly prohibited.

How long will the investigation take?

Minor complaints are often handled immediately. As a general rule, the investigation of serious charges should be concluded within 30 days (unless circumstances necessitate additional time).

Will I be notified of the results of the investigation?

Once the investigation has concluded, the Chief Deputy or Major will inform you in writing of the outcome of the complaint.

What if I am not satisfied with the results of the Sheriff's Office investigation?

Any person who believes that his or her allegations have not been taken seriously, investigated thoroughly, or resolved satisfactorily by the Sheriff's Office may submit a letter stating those concerns to the Van Wert County Prosecutor's Office, who, after investigation, shall review the investigation.

What if I file a false complaint?

If you believe the complaint to be valid and the officer is ultimately exonerated, the case will be ended. However, if it is determined that the complaint was intentionally false and malicious, you may be subject to criminal charges.



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It is the policy of the Van Wert County Sheriff's Office to promptly investigate allegations of wrongdoing by department members and to take appropriate action as to discipline, policy change, or exoneration.

A complaint means that someone is dissatisfied with our performance. If we are doing something wrong, the complainant will help the Sheriff's Office recognize and ultimately rectify the wrongdoing.

It is the intent of the Van Wert County Sheriff's Office to provide its residents with only the highest quality law enforcement services.



VAN WERT COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE COMPLAINT REPORT



CASE	DATE OF REPORT
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LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	MI	DATE OF BIRTH	EMAIL
ADDRESS			BUSINESS PHONE	PHONE
DATE AND TIME INCIDENT OCCURRED		LOCATION WHERE INCIDENT OCCURRED		
NAME OF EMPLOYEE/S YOU ARE COMPLAINING ABOUT (If known)				

WITNESS TO INCIDENT

NAME	ADDRESS	HOME PHONE	BUSINESS PHONE

SUMMARY OF OCCURRENCE – (PLEASE PRINT)

I understand by signing this document that the statement is true and accurate. I also understand that if I have not provided factual information or if the information is intentionally false or malicious, I may be subject to criminal charges.

SIGNATURE OF COMPLAINANT	DATE	TIME
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SUPERVISOR TAKING REPORT	LOCATION TAKEN	DATE & TIME
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TO CONTINUE, USE A CONTINUATION PAGE



VAN WERT COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE COMPLAINT REPORT



CONTINUATION PAGE #

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SIGNATURE OF COMPLAINANT	DATE	TIME
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SUPERVISOR TAKING REPORT	LOCATION TAKEN	DATE & TIME
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