



**Not satisfied with
the police?**

**Together, we
can work it out**

« waakzaam en dienstbaar »

You are unhappy about the conduct of a police officer.
You have filed a complaint about it, or intend to do so.
The police have a duty to work with due care and attention. That is why complaints about the police are always taken seriously.

Why file a complaint with the police?

The General Administrative Law Act stipulates that complaints must be submitted to the authority they concern, in this case to the police. This gives you the opportunity to talk to the police officer concerned and for he or she to explain why he or she acted in a certain way. In many cases that discussion will lead to a satisfactory result for both parties.

What can you expect?

Acceptance
When we receive a complaint, we send a confirmation of receipt within five working days. The person handling your complaint is a police employee with the position of complaints handler. This complaints handler will talk to you about what you want to achieve with your complaint and exactly what your complaint is about. The complaints handler takes a neutral stance and considers your interests and those of the police officer you have lodged a complaint about. During this discussion the complaints handler will also tell you whether your complaint can be accepted in accordance with the complaints procedure. In certain cases, the complaints procedure does not apply, in which case the complaints handler will explain which follow-up steps you can take. It is possible

that after your initial contact with the complaints handler you will be satisfied and will decide against pursuing your complaint. In that case, the procedure stops. This will be confirmed to you and the file will be closed.

First complaint handling phase
If you decide to proceed with your complaint, you will be given the opportunity to talk to the police officer or officers concerned. The complaints handler will make a judgment on whether such a meeting may help resolve the complaint. The complaints handler will ask you if you want this mediation interview. If so, he will make an appointment for one with you. The complaints handler will be present at that meeting. This meeting has three possible outcomes:

- 1. You are satisfied and feel that your complaint has been adequately dealt with. This will be confirmed to you in writing and the file will be closed.
- 2. You are not satisfied, but do not feel any need to proceed with the complaint. In this case, too, you will receive a letter confirming this and the file will be closed.
- 3. You are not satisfied and want the chief of police to make a decision. In that case, the handling of your complaint will proceed to the second phase.

Second complaint handling phase
If you are not satisfied with the outcome of your complaint, you can have it referred to the chief of police. He or she is the person ultimately responsible for the police in the district where the incident you have complained about took place. The chief of police is advised by an external complaints committee. The members of this committee have no connection with the police organisation. The chief of police can also take advice from the chief public prosecutor and the mayor. The complaints committee has a working method of its own. It investigates the complaint and will if necessary organise a hearing at which you can explain how you experienced the conduct of the police officers in question. The police officers concerned may respond. Based on the investigation and the outcome of the hearing, the complaints committee draws up a recommendation for the chief of police.

The assessment of your complaint
The chief of police assesses each individual part of the complaint and makes a decision about it. He or she bases this on the advice received from the complaints committee, the chief public prosecutor and the mayor. The complaint may be given the following assessment:

- well-founded: your complaint is justified
- unfounded: your complaint is not justified
- no judgment: a decision is not possible

- inadmissible: your complaint does not meet the formal legal requirements. You will receive a letter explaining what the assessment involves and how it was made. The police officers involved and their superiors are also informed of the outcome.

How long will it take?
The first phase of complaint handling procedure is completed within ten weeks of your complaint being received. If you ask for a recommendation by the complaints committee, this period will be extended by at least four weeks. The total duration of the procedure can be extended by another four weeks to a maximum of eighteen weeks.

Not in agreement with the outcome?
If you do not agree with the decision of the chief of police, you can submit your complaint to the National Ombudsman. See the website www.nationaleombudsman.nl. You can also call the toll free number 0800 - 335 55 55 or send a letter to: National Ombudsman PO Box 93122, 2509 AC The Hague

Use of personal data
The police are legally obliged to handle complaints with due care and attention. This makes it necessary to collect and process data. What personal data is required for this purpose is stated by law. The complaint investigation may involve collecting information from the

internet, social media, police officers and possibly other sources. Once the complaint file has been closed, this data will be kept for five years. We treat this data with care and respect the privacy of all concerned. You will find the police privacy policy on the website www.politie.nl. This policy explains the purposes for which we collect data for, how we use it and what your rights are.

Submitting a complaint
You can submit a complaint in the following ways:

- electronically using the digital complaint form: www.politie.nl > Contact > Klacht indienen
- by sending a letter to the unit's chief of police. The address is also given at politie.nl. You can also request the address by telephone on 0900 - 8844.

Language
When we respond in writing to the complaints procedure, we do this in Dutch. We do this to avoid confusion due to grammatical errors or any other interpretation. If you are not fluent in Dutch, then we advise that you arrange some translation for yourself to avoid any misinterpretation.

More information
More information about the complaints procedure is provided at www.politie.nl. You can also contact the complaints coordinator of the police unit concerned. Call 0900 - 8844.

Contact by telephone

Call:
0900 - 8844 for the police in your area

0900 - 1844 for the text telephone for deaf people

If you are calling from abroad:
0031 - 343 57 88 44

