

Highland Park Independent
School District

Police Department

3941 Colgate

Dallas, Texas 75225

(214) 780-3080

*Supporting A Positive
Learning Environment*



The evolution of contemporary law enforcement has brought about many changes. One of those is law enforcement's growing commitment to integrity and excellence. As a law enforcement agency manager, I have come to rely on this commitment as the stronghold in developing quality law enforcement services to the District. As citizens of this community, you rightfully expect the best quality of these services.

This requirement demands that the District Police Department internally regulates itself, as well as responds to citizen charges of impropriety. The contents of this brochure outline the avenues available to all citizens to formally voice a genuine complaint against an employee of this department. Our commitment is to receive and investigate each properly filed complaint. This not only protects the community and District of improper actions of its police, but also protects the police officer from undue and false accusations.

The District Police Department along with the citizens of University Park and Highland Park must work together to achieve the level of integrity and excellence that is required to have quality law enforcement services. I am dedicated to continue to make the District Police Department a model for quality school policing.

Mark D. Rowden,

Chief of Police



HIGHLAND PARK
INDEPENDENT SCHOOL
DISTRICT

***POLICE
DEPARTMENT***

**COMPLAINTS
AGAINST
DEPARTMENT
EMPLOYEES**

The District Police Department is dedicated to providing the best police service possible to all who attend, work for or visit Highland Park ISD schools. Employees, both sworn officers and civilian personnel, are carefully selected and given the best training possible in order to provide this service. However, you may have occasion to lodge a complaint about the actions of a member of the District Police Department. In order to be responsive to you, we are providing the following information about how they are investigated, and their results.

I. HOW ARE COMPLAINTS SUBMITTED

When a citizen lodges a complaint against a member of the District Police Department, the complaint goes to the Chief's office located at 3941 Colgate, Dallas Texas. All complaints are reviewed by the Chief of Police and that office is open from 8:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. each weekday.

If the Chief of Police is not available, you may lodge your a complaint with any supervisor of the Police Department. Your complaint will be forwarded to the Chief's office.

TEXAS STATE LAW (Section 614.022 of the Government Code, V.T.C.A.) requires that all complaints against a police officer must be in writing and signed by a person making the complaint. Just as citizens who are arrested must be notified of the charges against them, the police officer must be given a copy of the complaint before any disciplinary action can be taken. Complaints must be made by the person who claims to be aggrieved. Other persons may give statements as witnesses.

A thorough investigation regarding your complaint will be conducted and you will be notified of the result, and of any action taken.

Traffic tickets issued or differences of opinion between police officers and a citizen over the issuance of a traffic ticket or the guilt or innocence of a person arrested will not be investigated. Issues of guilt or innocence fall only within the jurisdiction of the courts.

II. FALSE COMPLAINTS

Sometimes people make false complaints against police officers. Citizens should be aware that this is a violation of the Texas Penal Code. Section 37.02 provides punishment for an individual adjudged guilty of committing an offense if, with the intent to deceive and with knowledge of the statements meaning:

He makes a false statement under oath or swears to the truth of a false statement previously made; and, the statement is required or authorized by law to be made under oath.

A person convicted under this Section can be punished by:

1. a fine not to exceed \$4,000.00
2. confinement in jail for a term not to exceed one year; or
3. both such fine and confinement.

This information is not intended to intimidate the citizens or prevent valid complaints. It is provided to prevent false complaints against officers.

III. WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A COMPLAINT IS FOUND TO BE TRUE

When the investigation of a complaint reveals that the complaint is true and should be sustained against an employee, the Chief of Police will notify the employee and may take one of the following actions, depending on the nature of the violation.

1. Reprimand the employee
2. Suspend the employee without pay
3. Demote the employee.
4. Discharge the employee

Employees must, by law, be afforded certain rights, the same as with

All citizens. Complaints can be sustained only through evidence. If

there is not sufficient evidence to sustain the complaint, the employee

is notified and continues their duties.

IV. EMPLOYEE CAN APPEAL THE DECISION

Just as a citizen charged with a criminal offense can appeal a court's decision, a police officer can appeal the action against him/her. The HPISD had established procedures for officers to follow in their appeals, just as the Police Department has established procedures for insuring that complaints by citizens against officers are thoroughly and honestly investigated.

V. WHAT IF YOU ARE NOT SATISFIED WITH THE DECISION

If you are not satisfied with the result of the investigation by the District Police Department, you may appeal to:

1. The office of the Chief of Police
2. The office of the Superintendent of Schools, 7015 Westchester, Dallas, Texas 75205.
3. The office of the County Attorney, County Court House, if criminal charges are to be filed.
4. The office of the District Attorney, County Court House, if criminal charges are to be filed
5. The Dallas office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, located in the Federal Building in Dallas, Texas if civil rights charges are to be filed.

The District Police Department is vitally concerned with the welfare of all students, faculty, staff and visitors in taking action where its employees have proven derelict in their duties or are guilty of wrongdoing. If it becomes necessary for you to make a complaint, you can be assured it will be given a fair and thorough investigation.

By the same token, if you have occasion to see a police officer doing outstanding work, tell him/her or us about it. Your District police officers are individuals who are dedicated to serving you and our community.