

FAQ – Anonymous Complaints

Can I file an anonymous complaint?

Yes. Anonymous complaint filing is reserved for citizens who believe that they may face retaliation or harassment for filing a complaint against an officer. You must have first-hand knowledge of the incident, which means an incident that you witnessed or were involved.

How do I file an anonymous complaint?

You must speak with an investigator. Call the ACRB office at 404-865-8622 and ask for an investigator. Tell the investigator that you would like to file an anonymous complaint. The investigator will ask for details and advise you if you are providing enough information to initiate an investigation.

Are there any limitations to filing an anonymous complaint?

Generally, investigating anonymous complaints are more challenging to investigate because, without a name and contact information for follow up contact, the investigator is limited to the information provided during the citizen's initial reporting of the complaint incident.

What information should I provide when filing an anonymous complaint?

You should provide as much detail about incident as you can. The details that you may believe as minor or not important may be critical to a successful investigation. You should always try to provide the following information:

Relevant facts and details:

Date

Time

Location

Witness name and contact information

Officer names

Officer actions and words

Your actions and words

Physical description and clothing description of the victim of the officer misconduct

The anonymous complaint allegations must be able to allow the agency to independently obtain records, documents, and other evidentiary material.

What if I don't know the name of the officer?

Without the name of the officer, the citizen will need to provide the physical description of the officer, police car number (if present), location, date and time. Without the name of the officer, it is critical that the agency receives as many details as possible to allow us to be able to locate the officer.

Will my anonymous complaint receive a full investigation?

If you provide enough detailed information and facts, the investigator should be able to initiate an investigation.

When can I not file anonymously?

In certain situations, where the victim of the police action wishes to file anonymously, it may be difficult to remain anonymous because of the circumstances of the allegation. This may generally occur in a one on one citizen/officer encounter.

If the citizen is the victim of the police action and claims medical injuries, the citizen will be required to sign an authorization for release of medical records, which may lead one to infer (conclude) that the victim filed the complaint.

How long do I have to file a complaint against an officer?

You have 180 days from the day of the incident to file a complaint. We strongly encourage citizens with concerns about an officer's actions to file a complaint as soon as possible. This is really important for anonymous complaints in order to give the ACRB the best opportunity to investigate the complaint.

How will I know the outcome of my complaint?

ACRB complaints are discussed in the monthly meetings, anonymous complaint filers can learn the outcome of their complaints on the ACRB website (acrbgov.org) by reviewing the Complaints Reviewed and the ACRB minutes.