

Complaints

How do I make a complaint about the police?

You can complain about police misconduct such as accepting a bribe, interfering in a police investigation or assaulting someone. You can also complain about not being treated with respect or if you think the police have not followed their own procedures.

Where can I go to complain about the police?

You can complain internally to the local police concerned or externally to an Ombudsman or specialist commission. Sometimes the Ombudsman will require you to make a complaint to the police first before you speak with them.

There are Ombudsmen in each of the states and territories. You can contact the Ombudsman in your state or territory to make a complaint about police conduct. However, the Ombudsman can only look at the processes followed and make a decision about whether they were lawful or fair and reasonable.

What do I say in my complaint?

It is important to give the right details (time, place and people involved) so that your complaint can be investigated. Also explain what outcome you would like to resolve your complaint.

Is there anywhere else I can complain?

Yes – but where you go will depend on where you live.

New South Wales

You should first ask for an internal police investigation to be carried out by the relevant Local Area Command.

The next step is to ask the Police Integrity Commission to investigate your complaint about a police officer.

If you are uncomfortable going to the Local Area Command, you can go directly to the Police Integrity Commission with your complaint.

There is a Charter of Rights for Victims in NSW. If you believe there has been a breach of your rights, you can complain by contacting the Victims Access Line – 1800 633 063.

Victoria

In Victoria there is the Independent and Broad-Based Anti-Corruption Commission (IBAC) – 1300 735 135. IBAC investigates corrupt conduct by government employees, which includes police.

Examples of corrupt behaviour include taking a bribe, interfering in a police investigation or assaulting someone.

Australian Capital Territory

You can complain to the Australian Federal Police – www.afp.gov.au/contact-us/feedback-and-complaints or (02) 6131 6789. Complaints are generally dealt with informally and quickly.

Queensland

The Queensland Police Service uses a client service charter to handle complaints.

See www.police.qld.gov.au for more information.

You can also lodge a complaint about police misconduct with the Crime and Corruption Commission.

If you have been the victim of a violent crime, you have certain rights about your treatment by Queensland government agencies that provide services to you, including the police. These rights include being treated with courtesy, compassion and respect and being updated about decisions and investigations. If you believe these rights have not been respected you can complain to Victims Assist Queensland – 1300 546 587.

South Australia

In South Australia, you can lodge your complaint with the Office of the Police Ombudsman – (08) 8226 8677 or email policeombudsman@agd.gov.au.

This Ombudsman can investigate complaints about police. The complaints are resolved either by conciliation or by disciplinary action.

Tasmania

You can complain directly to the Tasmanian Police – tasmania.police@police.tas.gov.au.

The police work under a Code of Conduct set out in the Police Service Act 2003, so any breaches of this code can be investigated.

In Tasmania there is also an Integrity Commission – 1300 720 289. You can go directly to the Integrity Commission to complain about police misconduct. This Commission can conduct its own enquiry into your complaint or it can refer you back to the police service.

Western Australia

In Western Australia you can go to the Corruption and Crime Commission – 1800 809 000. This Commission can investigate misconduct by police officers.

You can also go directly to the Western Australian Police Force to complain about police misconduct – (08) 9223 1000. The Western Australian Police have set up a local complaint resolution process.

Northern Territory

You can complain about police misconduct to the Northern Territory Ombudsman – 1800 806 380.

How to contact knowmore

Visit: www.knowmore.org.au

Free call: 1800 605 762

Email: info@knowmore.org.au

Brisbane

Level 20, 144 Edward Street
Brisbane QLD 4000
t 07 3218 4500

Melbourne

Level 15, 607 Bourke Street
Melbourne VIC 3000
t 03 8663 7400

Sydney

Level 7, 26 College Street
Sydney NSW 2000
t 02 8267 7400

Perth

Level 5, 5 Mill Street
Perth WA 6000
t: 08 6117 7244