



## CITIZEN'S COMMENDATION AND COMPLAINT INFORMATION

### CITIZEN'S COMMENDATION AND COMPLAINT POLICY

The San Mateo County Sheriff's Office recognized that providing effective law enforcement for our community requires that a proper relationship, created by confidence and trust, be maintained between the Sheriff's Office and the citizens of San Mateo County. An essential part of this relationship is the responsibility to provide, in written form, a process whereby all citizens may make known their comments, either positive or negative concerning their interaction with our employees and be assured of a prompt and unbiased review. When making a complaint or commendation, please be prepared to provide the date, time and location of the incident; the names of department personnel (if known); the names, addresses and telephone numbers of any possible witnesses. Although we don't require that these be submitted in writing, we recommend the use of the Citizen's Commendation and Complaint form on the following page.

### COMPLAINT INVESTIGATION PROCEDURE

Once your complaint is received, it will be thoroughly and fairly investigated by a person designated by the Sheriff. The investigation will include a review of all applicable reports, policies and procedures, examination of any evidence or medical records and interviews with all parties involved.

After the investigation is complete, the findings of the investigator will be sent to the Sheriff for review. If the Sheriff determined that an employee has violated department policies or procedures, appropriate corrective action will be taken. Review of the incident will also include examining ways to improve our policies, procedures and services to the community.

### FINDINGS OF THE INVESTIGATION

You will receive written notification of the results of the investigation. There are four possible findings:

1. ***Sustained*** – the allegation made in the complaint was proven.
2. ***Not sustained*** – the investigation failed to prove or disprove the allegation.
3. ***Unfounded*** – the investigation shows that the alleged act did not occur.
4. ***Exonerated*** – the investigation shows that the alleged act did occur but was justified, lawful and proper under the circumstances.

Any questions regarding the investigation can be referred to the investigator that was assigned to the case.

**SAN MATEO COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE  
CITIZENS COMMENDATION/COMPLAINT FORM**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ TELEPHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE & TIME OF OCCURRENCE: \_\_\_\_\_ LOCATION: \_\_\_\_\_

NAMES & I.D. NUMBERS OF EMPLOYEE(S) INVOLVED (IF KNOWN):

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**DETAILS:**

*Please describe the incident, including names, witnesses and any other factual supporting information. Attach additional sheets to this form if more space is needed.*

**CITIZENS COMPLAINT - ADMONITION PURSUANT TO 148.6 P.C.**

You have the right to make a complaint against a Police Officer for any improper police conduct. California law requires this agency to have a procedure to investigate citizen's complaints. You have a right to a written description of this procedure. This agency may find after investigation that there is not enough evidence to warrant action on your complaint; even if that is the case, you have the right to make the following complaint and have it investigated if you believe an officer behaved improperly. Citizen's complaints and any reports or findings relating to complaints must be kept by this agency for at least five years.

**IT IS AGAINST THE LAW TO MAKE A COMPLAINT THAT YOU KNOW TO BE FALSE. IF YOU MAKE A COMPLAINT AGAINST AN OFFICER KNOWING THAT IT IS FALSE, YOU CAN BE PROSECUTED ON A MISDEMEANOR CHARGE.**

***I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND THE ABOVE STATEMENT.***

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

*COMPLAINANT*

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

Return this form to: Sheriff Carlos Bolanos  
San Mateo County Sheriff's Office  
400 County Center  
Redwood City, CA 94063