

ENFIELD POLICE DEPARTMENT
2019 Citizen Complaint and Internal Affairs Investigation
Summary

Sir,

This report summarizes Citizen Complaints and Internal Affairs investigations which were conducted by our department during the time period of January 1, 2019 to December 31st, 2019.

Purpose: This report will summarize the complaint process, complaints and internal affairs investigations received in the 2019 calendar year at the Enfield Police Department. It is important to understand this report will not provide explicit detail of each investigation but rather is designed to provide summary information to the public to maintain transparency, trust and cohesion with the citizens this department serves.

Discussion:

The complaint process

The Enfield Police Department complaint process is designed to provide individuals “with a fair and effective avenue for the redress of their legitimate grievances” regarding their interactions with the Enfield Police Department.¹ This purpose is balanced with the need to provide a measure of protection to police department employees from false allegations that comport with due process under the United States and Connecticut Constitutions.

The department’s complaint process is modeled after the Connecticut Police Officer Standards and Training Council’s model policy.² Complaints against department members may be received in nearly any manner of communication (in person, mail, facsimile, electronic or telephonically) and may be received 24 hours a day. Department members are directed to be helpful in the process and members have a duty to assist citizens during the complaint process. Nothing prohibits supervisors from initiating an investigation when facts indicate there is misconduct, even if the individual complaining does not want to file a formal complaint. In some circumstances, complaints can be resolved or reconciled with providing the public with information on department policy, statutory law or case law; many times the central thrust of the complaint stems from a misunderstanding of law enforcement policies, rules and regulations.

¹ GO 52-1

² See General Notice 15-03 Adoption of a Mandatory Uniform Policy Concerning Complaints That Allege Misconduct by Law Enforcement Agency Personnel, available at: https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/POST/GENERAL_NOTICES/2015/GN1503POLICYCONCERNINGCOMPLAINTSTHATALLEGEMISCONDUCTBYL E

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When a complaint is received and cannot be resolved with an explanation to the individual, the supervisor is directed to gather as much information as possible, document and preserve any evidence, complete the Citizen Complaint form (CC-1) and assign what is known as a control number to the complaint. The control number corresponds with a citizen complaint control log designed to track complaints that come into the department and ultimately the conclusion of the complaint. Important to understand, not all control log entries result in a formal internal affairs investigation or that the department member is culpable of misconduct. The control log is simply designed to record complaints the department receives about personnel and the ultimate outcome.

The disposition column dictates the final resolution of the complaint. The department's complaint process allows for a first line supervisor to resolve the complaint at the onset or submit the complaint for review by the chain of command. Regardless of the supervisor's decision, all reports are forwarded to the Captain or Deputy Chief for review.

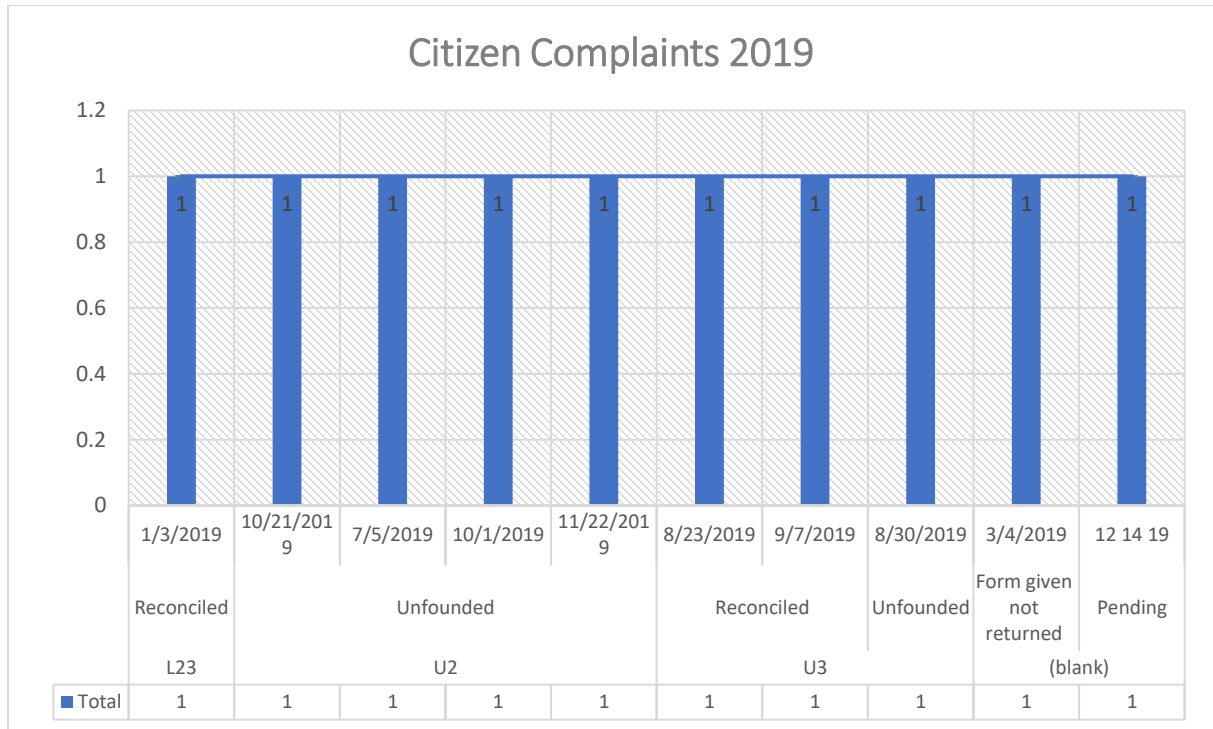
A review of the control log revealed the department had ten (10) entries. Of the 10 complaints, none resulted in action against a department member while nine (9) were closed due to reconciliation, exoneration, unfounded or lack of cooperation from the complainant and action is still pending on the last.

While it is impossible to determine whether this is anomalous or trending, it is worth noting that we appreciated six fewer citizen complaints in 2019 compared to the sixteen received in 2018. This represents an approximate 38% reduction in complaints and may, at least in part, be attributed to increased departmental participation in social media venues which have placed emphasis on positive community interactions.

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Internal Affairs investigations:

There were three Internal Affairs investigations in 2019. All three were initiated by Department Supervisory staff. One (1) investigation resulted in the termination of an Officer while the two (2) remaining are still open.

Summary:

Both Citizen complaints and Internal Investigations remain consistently low. The reporting and review process appear to be timely, open and effective. No changes in policy or procedure are warranted.

Respectfully submitted.

Fred M. Hall