



## To Make an Inquiry, Complaint or Commendation:

### Address

Office of the Chief of Police  
Burlington Police Department  
1 North Avenue  
Burlington, VT 05401

### Telephone

(802) 658-2704  
(802) 658-2700 T.D.D.  
(802) 865-7579 (fax)

### Website

[www.bpdvt.org](http://www.bpdvt.org)



## About the Burlington Police Department:

*The Burlington Police Department was commissioned in 1865 to provide law enforcement services to the Queen City. Throughout our history, the men and women of the Department have proudly served their community.*

*The Burlington Police Department serves a residential community of over 40,000 people, in addition to thousands of students from local colleges and the University of Vermont.*

*We currently employ approximately 100 full-time police officers and 36 civilian support personnel. The City of Burlington is an affirmative action/equal opportunity employer.*

## Core Values:

### Integrity

We adhere to the highest ethical standards, assuring the community that their public trust is well founded.

### Service

We provide the highest level of service and protection to all people in a competent, courteous manner, tempered with compassion and understanding.

### Respect

We treat all persons with dignity and respect by promoting equality and fairness both inside and outside the Department.

### Creativity

We engage in problem solving as our primary strategy, involving the community in identification of the problems, the best solutions and their implementation.

## CITIZEN'S GUIDE TO MAKING INQUIRIES, COMPLAINTS & COMMENDATIONS



## Mission Statement:

We are committed to policing with the citizens of Burlington to achieve a safe, healthy, and self-reliant community.

We hope this guide will assist you when you wish to commend the efforts of an employee, make a complaint, or seek further information.

*MICHAEL E. SCHIRLING, CHIEF OF POLICE*

## Making an Inquiry or Commendation:

An inquiry or commendation can be made by letter, telephone, fax, or in person. The citizen may choose to identify himself/herself or remain anonymous. All inquiries or commendations should be forwarded to the Office of the Chief of Police.

We encourage positive feedback when one of our employees does an exceptional job. Please feel free to make inquiries regarding individual or Department performance.

## Making a Complaint:

A complaint may be made by letter, telephone, or in person. A formal complaint may be made to any member of the Burlington Police Department who will then immediately refer information to a supervisor.

Serious complaints, such as criminal misconduct or violations of civil rights, will be referred to the Bureau of Internal Affairs, which will complete a thorough investigation. The on-duty supervisor may investigate other complaints, such as allegations of rudeness or improper vehicle operation. In either situation, the complainant will be notified of the disposition.

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The Burlington Police Department welcomes comments and observations about its performance. Your input may help improve the quality of service delivery in the City, or provide valuable insight regarding Department policy or training issues.



## Findings:

The disposition of all serious complaints shall be classified as follows:

**UNFOUNDED** – The investigation indicates that the allegation(s) did not occur.

**EXONERATED** – The investigation shows that the allegation(s) did occur, but was justified, lawful, and appropriate under the circumstances.

**SUSTAINED** – The investigation disclosed sufficient evidence to clearly prove the allegation(s) made in the complaint.

**NON-SUSTAINED** – The investigation failed to discover sufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation(s) made in the complaint.

**NON-INVOLVED** – The investigation established that the individual named in the complaint was not involved in the alleged incident.



## Common Questions & Answers:

*Q. How will I know that my complaint or commendation was received?*

A. If your complaint or commendation was made in writing, you will be notified within 7 business days of its receipt. If you made your complaint or commendation in person or on the phone, the receiving supervisor will provide you with his/her name.

*Q. What happens to an employee if he/she is found to have acted improperly?*

A. Some instances require disciplinary action, which may include warnings, remedial training, suspension, demotion, or dismissal. If a criminal act occurred, the State's Attorneys Office will be brought into the investigative process.

*Q. Will I be advised of what form of discipline, if any, was taken?*

A. The policy of the Burlington Police Department does not allow us to reveal the specific actions taken to discipline employees.

*Q. Is there any guarantee that I will be satisfied?*

A. Although we cannot guarantee that you will be satisfied, we do guarantee that your complaint will be investigated thoroughly and impartially.