

INFORMATION SHEET
CITIZEN COMMENDATION/COMPLAINT

The Bellingham Police Department in an attempt to be more responsive to the needs and concerns of the community we serve, has developed a system by which any citizen may formally file a complaint against, or pass along a commendation to, individual officers in our department. If you have information concerning a member of our department that you would like brought to the attention of the department administration, please follow these steps.

1. **Contact the Bellingham Police Department in person at 505 Grand Avenue, Monday-Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. or call 778-8800.**
2. **Request a copy of a CITIZEN COMMENDATION/COMPLAINT FORM.**
3. **Fill out all the information contained on the form.**
4. **Return the completed form to the main reception desk of the Bellingham Police Department. (We would request that you personally deliver the form to insure your contact with a representative of our department allowing the transfer of any additional information that might be necessary).**

If you are filing a letter of complaint, your letter will be forwarded to a Lieutenant who will conduct an investigation and make a recommendation to the Deputy Chief of Police as to the necessity of correction action. As part of the investigation, the Lieutenant will contact the officer(s) involved and any other witnesses. You may be contacted by the Lieutenant for more information, or in the case of a more serious matter, a written signed statement. If it is determined that some type of disciplinary action is warranted, the investigation file will be forwarded to the Chief of Police for a final determination as to the type of corrective action to be taken.

NOTE: If you wish to be contacted at a later date concerning your complaint, you must indicate that in the appropriate place on the citizen complaint form by checking one of the boxes that will alert us to the fact that you DO or DO NOT request follow-up contact. If you check the DOES NOT box, or fail to check either box, you will not be re-contacted concerning your complaint. Your complaint will be looked into and corrective measures taken, when appropriate, regardless of your interest in follow-up contact.

It is our wish that the Bellingham Police Department continue to be recognized as a leader that sets the standard for other law enforcement agencies. Without citizen participation, a police agency will quickly lose touch with the needs of the people they serve. With your help and input, Bellingham will continue to enjoy the finest in law enforcement protection.