

TOMS RIVER POLICE DEPARTMENT POLICY & PROCEDURE			
VOLUME: 1	CHAPTER: 19	# OF PAGES: 32	
SUBJECT: PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS			
EFFECTIVE DATE: July 24, 2012		ACCREDITATION STANDARDS: 52.1.1, 52.1.2	SUPERSEDES ORDER #: Professional Standards V1C19 (eff. 6/15/98) w/ all revisions
BY THE ORDER OF: Chief Michael G. Mastronardy			

PURPOSE: The purpose of this directive is to maintain a high quality of law enforcement services. Improving the relationship between employees and the public facilitates cooperation vital to the department's ability to achieve its goals. This department is committed to providing law enforcement services that are fair, effective, and impartially delivered. Employees are held to the highest standards of conduct and are expected to respect the rights of all citizens. This department must be responsive to the community by providing formal procedures for the processing of complaints regarding individual employee performance. An effective disciplinary framework permits department personnel to monitor employee compliance with department directives, assist employees in meeting department objectives, enhance performance, and permit managers to identify problem areas which require increased training or direction. Finally, this directive shall ensure fundamental fairness and due process protection to citizens and employees alike.

POLICY: It is the policy of the Toms River Police Department to accept and investigate all complaints of agency and employee's alleged misconduct or wrongdoing from any citizen, department employee or any other sources, including anonymous sources. Following a thorough and impartial examination of the available factual information, a conclusion will be determined and the employee shall be either exonerated or held responsible for the alleged misconduct. Discipline shall be administered according to the degree of misconduct. All employees, regardless of rank/title, shall be subject to disciplinary action for violating their oath and trust. Committing an offense punishable under the laws of the United States, the State of New Jersey, or municipality constitutes a violation of that oath and trust. Employees are also subject to disciplinary action for the willful or negligent failure to perform the duties of their rank or assignment. In addition, employees may be disciplined for violation of any rule or regulation of the department or for failure to obey any lawful instruction, order, or command of a superior officer or supervisor. Disciplinary/corrective action in all matters will be determined based upon the merits of each case. Investigators conducting the investigation of any allegation of misconduct shall strive to conduct a thorough and objective investigation respecting the rights of the principal, any other law enforcement officer, and all members of the public. Accordingly, any supervisor and any officer who may be called upon to conduct a Professional Standards investigation must be thoroughly familiar with the department's Professional Standards policy.

This policy has been developed in accordance with the revised New Jersey Attorney General Guidelines on Internal Affairs. This policy may require additional procedures as directed by the Ocean Prosecutor's Office.

PROCEDURE:

I. DEFINITION OF TERMS/FORMS

- A. The following forms/reports shall be used in accordance with this directive:
1. **Request for Extension of Investigation - (IA-1):** This form shall be used to seek approval from the Chief of Police or designee when additional time, beyond the sixty (60 day period, is needed to complete the Professional Standards investigations.
 2. **Investigation Plan - (IA-2):** This form shall be used to develop an investigative plan prior to conducting Professional Standards investigations.
 3. **Investigation Report - (IA-3):** This report shall be used to memorialize the investigation of any Professional Standards matter or performance deficiency.
 4. **Continuation Page of Investigation Report - (IA-4):** This report shall be used if additional pages are needed to memorialize the investigation of any Professional Standards matter or performance deficiency.
 5. **Supplemental Professional Standards Investigation Report - (IA-5):** This report shall be used to supplement the initial investigation report.
 6. **Attachment Log - (IA-6):** This form shall be used to account for all attachments accumulated during the investigation.
 7. **Professional Standards Investigation Allegations and Conclusions Form - (IA-7):** This form shall be used to establish a narrative of the alleged misconduct, and the relationship to the specific provision of the Rules and Regulations and/or written directive allegedly violated.
 8. **Professional Standards Investigation Review Sheet - (IA-8):** This form shall be used when a Professional Standards investigation is reviewed through the chain of command.
 9. **New Principal/Allegation Identification Form - (IA-9):** This form shall be used when an employee shifts from a witness to a principal. This form shall also be used to document perceived violations of policy and procedure not relevant to the complaint or the alleged misconduct being investigated.
 10. **Administrative Advisement Form - (IA-10):** This form shall be used during Professional Standards investigation interviews when interviewing the principal in a Professional Standards investigation.
 11. **Miranda and Waiver Form - (IA-11):** This form shall be used in a Professional Standards investigation when interviewing an employee accused of committing a crime after consultation with the Ocean County Prosecutor's Office.
 12. **Witness Acknowledgment Form - (IA-12):** The form shall be used during Professional Standards investigation interviews when interviewing a witness in a Professional Standards investigation.

13. **Weingarten Representative Acknowledgement Form - (IA-13):** This form shall be provided to the Weingarten representative present during a Professional Standards interview.
 14. **Reportable Incident Form - (IA-14):** This form shall be utilized by department employees to document a reportable incident on any department employee.
 15. **Internal Affairs Investigation Manual - (IA-15):** This is an investigative manual detailing the process and procedures for conducting a Professional Standards investigation, and the forms required in accordance with this directive.
 16. **Complaint Form - (IA-16):** This form shall be offered to any citizen who wants to complain about an employee of the department. The employee receiving the complaint form shall complete the reportable incident form and submit it along with the citizen's complaint to Professional Standards.
 17. **Performance Notice - (IA-17):** This form shall be completed by a supervisor to memorialize the corrective action taken to address an employee's performance deficiency. This form shall also be used to commend an employee for positive performance.
 18. **Annual Report - (IA-18):** This report shall be submitted to the Ocean County Prosecutor's Office annually, detailing all internal affairs investigations investigated by the department during the previous year.
 19. **Professional Standards Information Sheet - (IA-19):** This form, which explains the department's Professional Standards procedures, shall be provided to all citizen complainants.
 20. **Notice of Disciplinary Action Form - (IA-20):** This form shall be used to notify formally, the principal of charges approved by the Chief of Police in connection with the completed Professional Standards investigation. This disciplinary form shall only be used for charges that exceed a written reprimand.
 21. **Reprimand Notice - (IA-21):** This form shall be used to notify formally, the principal of discipline approved by the Chief of Police in connection with the completed Professional Standards investigation. This disciplinary form shall be used for discipline that does not exceed a written reprimand.
- B. **Reportable Incident:** is any behavior, performance, or non-performance that may violate department rules, regulations, procedures, applicable criminal and civil laws, and the United States or New Jersey Constitutions. All reportable incidents shall be carefully and thoroughly reviewed by the Chief of Police/Professional Standards Commander to determine the manner of response that best serves the public, the department, and the employee. Reportable Incidents classified as misconduct will result in a Professional Standards investigation conducted in accordance with the New Jersey Attorney General's Internal Affairs Guidelines and this directive. Reportable incidents include, but are not limited to the following:
1. A complaint that an employee has engaged in any form of misconduct, as defined in this directive, whether on or off-duty;

2. An alleged violation of any of the Department Rules and Regulations;
3. An alleged violation of any written directive issued by this department or appropriate authority as defined by ordinance;
4. A refusal to or a failure to comply with a lawful written or verbal order, directive, or instruction;
5. The filing of a civil suit by a civilian alleging any misconduct by an employee while on duty or acting in an official capacity;
6. The filing of a civil suit against an employee for off-duty conduct while not acting in an official capacity that alleges racial bias, physical violence, or threat of physical violence;
7. Criminal arrest of or filing of a criminal charge against an employee;
8. Whenever an employee is involved in a domestic violence incident, either as an alleged perpetrator or as a victim.

C. **Classification:** There are three classifications of a reportable incident. All reportable incidents shall be forwarded to the Professional Standards Commander to screen, record and classify the incident as one of the following (**See Figure #1**):

NOTE: All allegations of **misconduct** regardless of the source of the allegation shall result in a Professional Standards investigation.

1. Criminal Misconduct - Reportable Incidents classified as criminal misconduct will result in immediate notification to the Ocean County Prosecutor of the receipt of the complaint by the Professional Standards unit. No further action shall be taken, including the filing of charges against an employee, until directed by the Prosecutor.
 - a. Criminal Misconduct is defined as a reportable incident where there is an allegation of a crime or an offense.
2. Administrative Misconduct - An incident may be classified as administrative misconduct, in which case an investigation shall be conducted in accordance with this directive.
 - a. Administrative Misconduct is defined as a reportable incident where there is a serious violation of department rules and regulations, written directive; or, conduct which adversely reflects upon the employee or the department.
 - b. Repeat performance deficiencies may be classified as administrative misconduct.
3. Performance Deficiency - An incident which is classified as a performance deficiency shall be referred to the supervisor for addressing through non-disciplinary corrective actions, (corrective action shall be training or counseling only).
 - a. A performance deficiency is defined as a reportable incident of any minor rule infraction that can be addressed at the supervisory level of an employee. This department recognizes that not all reportable

incidents constitute misconduct and certain reportable incidents are more effectively handled outside of the disciplinary process. Examples of performance deficiencies include but are not limited to:

- 1) Being unfit for duty for reasons other than those that justify a professional standards investigation.
- 2) Absence without permission.
- 3) Tardiness in reporting for duty or court.
- 4) Failure to appear in court or to notify the court and superiors of the inability.
- 5) Failure to comply with department uniform standards.
- 6) Failure to maintain department equipment.
- 7) Failure to wear the department portable radio, or to have it on while out of the patrol vehicle.
- 8) Failure to report back in service immediately upon completion of an assignment or to notify the dispatcher when leaving the assignment for any reason.
- 9) Taking excessive time for meals or personal reasons.
- 10) Failure to provide prompt, correct and courteous service.
- 11) Failure, while on duty, to give full attention to the prevention of crimes.
- 12) Congregating in an eating establishment with two or more other officers while on duty without the prior approval of an immediate supervisor.
- 13) Being absent from or leaving an assigned post or assignment without proper authorization or before the prescribed time at the end of the tour of duty.
- 14) Failure to perform assigned tasks.
- 15) Misuse of department equipment or supplies.
- 16) Inattention to duty.
- 17) Failure to acknowledge or respond promptly to a dispatched call.
- 18) Failure of a supervisory officer to take appropriate action upon observing a less serious transgression.

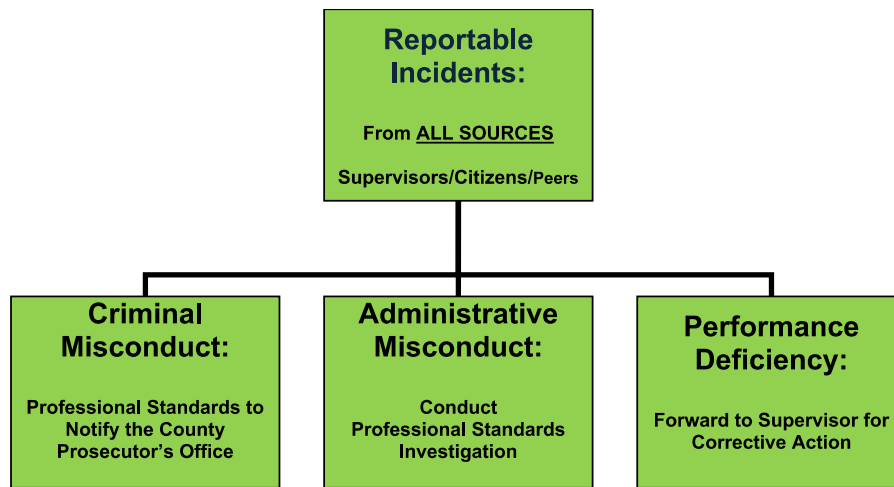


Figure #1 (Classification Process)

II. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- A. The investigative process should seek to locate and identify all evidence available to either prove or disprove allegations made against an employee.
- B. With the exception of Professional Standards investigations that are part of an ongoing or potential criminal investigation, the majority of Professional Standards investigations are administrative in nature. Unlike criminal investigations where the burden of proof is beyond a reasonable doubt, the standard for administrative cases is a preponderance of the evidence.
- C. Also important is that strict rules of evidence and certain constitutional protections that apply in criminal cases do not attach to these investigations. In accordance with established case law, the investigator, reviewing authority and the Chief of Police can rely on types of evidence that would be inadmissible in a criminal proceeding providing, there is some indication of reliability.
- D. Furthermore, unlike criminal investigations, certain specific legal protections that arise in employment & labor matters and in police discipline matters apply to employees subject to a Professional Standards investigation. These include rights and practices commonly referred to as Weingarten, Loudermill, and Garrity rights, as well as contractual rights or those based on state or federal statutes.
- E. Investigators and reviewers shall scrupulously adhere to the principles that all employees shall be afforded all rights to which they are entitled. At the same time, investigative and review personnel will also be aware of their obligations to determine the facts of each case utilizing investigative methods, which are consistent with acceptable practices in employee discipline cases.
- F. Professional Standards investigations shall not rely solely on the outcome of related criminal matters or traffic matters. The conviction of a citizen complainant shall not be dispositive as to the citizen's complaint regarding the employee's conduct related to the incident. However, the court proceedings will be relevant and should be reviewed. Unless otherwise determined by the investigative plan, most cases involving a court action will require the collection and analysis of court records and transcripts of court appearances by the principal, complainant, or critical witnesses. The investigator should make every attempt to attend court

proceedings, to monitor the progress/outcome of the case. As a monitor, the investigator need not notify the prosecutor, judge, or other court personnel of his/her presence and should not have any input in the proceedings.

- G. If a civilian signs criminal or traffic complaints, in addition to making a Professional Standards complaint against an employee, a not guilty disposition of the court shall not automatically determine the outcome of the Professional Standards complaint. However, it will be relevant and part of the investigation.
- H. The investigator and reviewing authority shall consider that administrative charges have a different threshold of proof as well as less restrictive rules of evidence.
- I. As Professional Standards investigators, a tendency to automatically grant more credibility to statements given by employees of the department and other law enforcement officials than to statements given by civilian complainants and witnesses must be carefully avoided. In certain situations where the credibility and motive of the complainant is reasonably suspected, a credibility determination may be made as provided for in this policy. However, investigators, unless otherwise authorized, will investigate the relevant facts of the allegations and not the background or motive of the complainant, unless relevant to the investigation.
- J. It is the policy of this department that personnel conducting Professional Standards investigations deal with complainants, witnesses, and principals in a professional manner. This includes being prepared for interviews, promptly responding to telephone calls, and handling all related contacts during an investigation to leave citizens and employees alike with the impression that a thorough, fair, and impartial investigation of the allegation(s) will be conducted.
- K. Discovery of additional allegations and identification of additional principals:
 - 1. In conducting investigations, the propriety of all conduct by the employee relating to the subject matter of the investigation shall be reviewed.
 - 2. If during the course of an investigation, the investigator has reason to believe that misconduct occurred, other than that alleged, the investigator shall:
 - a. Document the information on a New Principal/Allegation Identification Form and forward it to the Professional Standards Commander to determine the appropriate response. Upon completion of the review, the form, which shall include all appropriate endorsements, will be returned to the investigator, and maintained as an attachment to the investigation.
 - b. Unless otherwise directed, the investigator shall investigate the additional allegation to its logical conclusion.
 - 3. If during the course of an investigation, the investigator has reason to believe that another employee may have been involved in alleged misconduct and should be interviewed as a principal, the investigator shall:
 - a. Report the information on a New Principal/Allegation Identification Form to the Professional Standards Commander and await further instructions. Other aspects of the investigation should continue.

III. PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS UNIT

- A. The Professional Standards Unit is herein established. Personnel assigned to the Professional Standards Unit shall serve at the pleasure of and be directly responsible to the Chief of Police or designee. The Chief of Police shall not assign any person responsible for the representation of employees of the collective bargaining function to the Professional Standards Unit.
- B. The goal of Professional Standards Unit is to ensure that the integrity of the department is maintained through a system of discipline where fairness and justice are assured by objective, impartial investigation and review.
- C. Professional Standards Unit Commander shall be responsible for:
 - 1. The management of the Professional Standards Unit;
 - 2. The coordination and review of all Professional Standards investigations;
 - 3. The review of all allegations of misconduct by employees of this department;
 - 4. The immediate notification of the Chief of Police or designee of any allegation of wrongdoing on the part of an employee that would constitute a criminal offense or has the potential to have a significant negative impact on the operation or reputation of the department.
 - a. All other notifications shall be made on the next business day.
 - 5. The maintenance of a comprehensive central file and recordkeeping system on all complaints received by the department, whether investigated by Professional Standards Unit personnel or assigned to an employee's supervisor for investigation and disposition.
 - 6. The preparing and mailing of a Complaint Acknowledgement Letter to all civilian complainants.
- D. Professional Standards Unit shall be responsible for:
 - 1. The investigation and review of all allegations of misconduct by employees of this department.
 - 2. In addition to investigations concerning allegations of misconduct, the Professional Standards Unit shall have additional responsibilities, to include the following:
 - a. Professional Standards shall be notified of and document all firearms discharges by department personnel that are not related to training, all use of force incidents that result in injury to a defendant or a third party, all vehicular pursuits undertaken by department personnel and all collisions involving department vehicles. Once notification has been received, Professional Standards will determine whether additional investigation is necessary.
 - 1) Investigations involving the discharge of a firearm shall be coordinated by the department in conjunction with the Ocean County Prosecutor's Office.

- b. Professional Standards shall conduct a manual or computerized audit of its records to determine if an employee has the emergence of a pattern, practices or trend of inappropriate behavior or misconduct.
 - 1) The Professional Standards Commander shall meet with the supervisor responsible for the employee to notify them and gather additional information about the employee. Collectively a report will be submitted to the Chief of Police on whether formal follow up intervention is needed. Upon his/her approval a meeting will be arranged with the employee.
 - 2) The meeting will be conducted to inform the employee that he/she has been identified for follow-up in the early warning program, purpose of the meeting, and that these meeting are to be facilitative and non-disciplinary in nature.
 - 3) The early warning program meeting will result in options or course of actions being determined and established by the Chief of Police with input from the identified employee, Professional Standards Commander and any other superior/supervisory officer involved.
 - c. Professional Standards shall be responsible for any other investigation as directed by the Chief of Police.
- 3. The Professional Standards Unit may conduct a Professional Standards investigation on their own initiative upon notice to, or at the direction of the Chief of Police or Professional Standards Commander.
 - 4. The Professional Standards Unit may refer reportable incidents classified as a performance deficiency to an employee's supervisor for investigation and corrective action.
 - 5. The Professional Standards Unit investigators or personnel temporarily assigned to that function shall have the authority to interview any employee of the department and to review any record or report of the department relative to their assignment. Requests from the Professional Standards Unit personnel, in furtherance of their duties and responsibilities, shall be given full cooperation and compliance as though the requests came directly from the Chief of Police. Employees assigned to the Professional Standards Unit come under the direct authority of the Chief of Police.
 - 6. Notification to the Ocean County Prosecutor's Office
 - a. The Chief of Police or designee shall immediately notify the Ocean County Prosecutor of the receipt of the complaint by the Professional Standards unit of any allegation involving criminal wrongdoing by a principal that may lead to charges of an indictable nature.
 - b. The Internal Affairs Annual Report shall be submitted to the Ocean County Prosecutor's Office as directed by that office.

7. An annual report summarizing the types of complaints received and the dispositions of the complaints should be made available to the public. The names of complainants, witnesses, and principals shall not be published in this report.
8. Copies of the Professional Standards report shall be distributed to all command and supervisory personnel, the County Prosecutor's Office, as well as a designated representative of the Collective Bargaining Unit. Recommendations shall be made for corrective action for any developing pattern of abuse.
9. The Toms River Police Department shall periodically release a brief synopsis of all complaints where a fine or suspension of ten days or more was assessed to a member of the department. The synopsis shall not contain the identities of the principals or complainants.

IV. ACCEPTING COMPLAINTS

A. Duty of Employees to Self Report

1. All employees shall immediately self report using the Reportable Incident Form, in no case more than four hours, the following information to the Professional Standards Unit and the Chief of Police through the chain of command:
 - a. Whenever the employee is arrested or criminally charged for any conduct.
 - 1) The report must be made immediately, and in all cases prior to release or leaving the law enforcement agency. In the case of service of criminal charges, the notification must be made immediately upon the receipt of the charges.
 - b. Whenever the employee is named as a party in any civil suit involving their conduct while on duty or otherwise while acting in an official capacity.
 - c. Whenever the employee is named as a party in any civil suit regarding off-duty conduct while not acting in an official capacity that alleges racial bias, physical violence, or threats of physical violence by the employee.
 - d. Whenever the employee is alleged to have committed an act of domestic violence.
2. When employees report this information to a supervisor, the supervisor shall directly and immediately report the information to the Professional Standards Unit, in no case more than four hours after receipt of the notification. The Chief of Police or designee shall notify the Ocean County Prosecutor's Office of the receipt of this information.

B. Duty of Employees to File a Reportable Incident Form for Actions of Other Employees

1. An employee who receives information defined as a reportable incident shall report such information to the Professional Standards Unit.
2. All employees must report directly to the Professional Standards Unit any conduct by another employee that reasonably appears to constitute any of the following:
 - a. Prohibited discrimination;
 - b. An unreasonable use of force or a threat of force;
 - c. A constitutional violation;
 - d. Failure to follow any of the documentation requirements, including documentation of civilian complaint filing procedures;
 - e. Providing false information in an investigation of an employee for misconduct or in any report, log, or transmittal of information to department communication center.
 - f. Any violations discovered during a supervisory review (staff inspection) of personnel. Supervisors conducting the review shall be held accountable for their referral decisions.
3. Retaliation against any employee for reporting misconduct shall constitute a serious disciplinary offense and may lead to a severe penalty up to and including termination.

C. Complaints from the Public

1. All department personnel are directed to accept reports of agency or employee misconduct from all persons who wish to file a complaint regardless of the hour or day of the week. Citizens are to be encouraged to submit their complaints in person as soon after the incident as possible. If the complainant cannot file the report in person, a representative from the Professional Standards Unit shall visit the individual at their home, place of business, or at another location in order to complete the report, if possible. Telephone, mail, e-mail, web-based reporting, and facsimile complaints shall also be accepted.
2. If a member of the Professional Standards Unit is immediately available, they shall take the complaint.
 - a. If a member of the Professional Standards Unit is not immediately available, the complainant will be referred to the duty supervisor. In the absence of the duty supervisor, any department employee shall accept the report of employee misconduct.

3. Department personnel receiving the complaint shall:
 - a. Provide the person making the complaint with the Professional Standards Information Sheet which explains the department's Professional Standards procedures.
 - b. Advise the complainant that he or she will be kept informed of the status of the complaint and its ultimate disposition.
 - c. Complete as much of the Professional Standards Complaint Form as possible before forwarding it to the Professional Standards Unit.
 - d. Have the complainant sign the completed form. If the complainant will not sign the form, the employee receiving the complaint will so note that fact. However, the failure of a citizen to sign a complaint will in no way preclude the investigation of the allegations.
 - e. The Reportable Incident Form shall be completed by the employee taking the complaint and shall accompany the Professional Standards Complaint Form. Both forms shall be forwarded to the Professional Standards Unit for recording in the master Professional Standards recordkeeping system and classification by the Professional Standards Commander.
4. All department personnel are directed to accept reports of agency or employee misconduct from anonymous sources. If the anonymous complainant is talking to an employee, the employee should encourage them to submit their complaint in person. In any case, the complaint will be accepted.
 - a. An employee of the department who interferes with or delays the reporting or investigation of such complaints may be subjected to disciplinary action.
5. If a complainant wants to make a complaint against an employee of another law enforcement agency, he/she will be referred to that agency. If the complainant expresses fears or concerns about making the report directly, he/she will be referred to the respective county prosecutor's office.
6. If a complaint is received from another law enforcement agency, the complaint will be forwarded to the Professional Standards Commander for classification.
7. In accordance with the Attorney General's Directive No. 2007-3, on immigration issues, no state, county or local law enforcement officer shall inquire about or investigate the immigration status of any victim, witness, potential witness or person requesting or receiving police assistance. An exception to this requirement shall exist if: (a) the County Prosecutor or the Director of the Division of Criminal Justice determines, in writing, that good cause exists to inquire about or investigate the person's immigration status, (b) if the person has been arrested for an indictable offense or for driving while intoxicated, or (c) as may be constitutionally or otherwise legally required during the criminal litigation discovery process.

D. Complaints shall be handled as follows:

1. All complaints will be forwarded to the Professional Standards Commander for classification and entry into the record keeping system.
2. Unless otherwise directed by the Chief of Police or designee, complaints classified as a performance deficiency shall then be forwarded to the supervisor of the employee for investigation and corrective action.
3. All other complaints classified as administrative misconduct shall be retained and investigated by the Professional Standards Unit.
4. The principal shall be notified in writing of the complaint as soon as possible, unless the nature of the investigation requires secrecy.

V. IMMEDIATE SUSPENSIONS

A. Suspension Pending Disposition or Investigation

1. A supervisor or Chief of Police may immediately suspend an employee from duty if it is determined that one of the following conditions exists:
 - a. The employee is unfit for duty; or
 - b. The employee is a hazard to any person if permitted to remain on the job; or
 - c. An immediate suspension is necessary to maintain safety, health, order or effective direction of public services; or
 - d. The employee has been formally charged with a first, second or third degree crime; or
 - e. The employee has been formally charged with a first, second, third or fourth degree crime or a disorderly persons offense while on-duty or the act touches upon his or her employment.
2. The supervisor imposing the immediate suspension must:
 - a. Advise the employee in writing of why an immediate suspension is sought and the charges and general evidence in support of the charges.
 - 1) If the employee refuses to accept the written notification of immediate suspension, it shall be given to a representative of the employee's collective bargaining unit.
 - b. Provide the employee with a sufficient opportunity to review the charges and the evidence and to respond to either verbally or in writing.
 - c. Advise his immediate supervisor in writing of the suspension and the facts and circumstances requiring the suspension.

3. Administrative Reassignment
 - a. Administrative reassignment may be used in cases involving the use of force or actions by the employee that results in death or serious bodily injury, unless the employee is suspended or placed on administrative leave pending the outcome of the investigation.
 - b. The administrative reassignment is subject to change by the Chief of Police or designee upon the outcome of the investigation.
4. Filing formal charges
 - a. Within five days of the suspension, the department must complete and file a **Preliminary Notice of Disciplinary Action** against the suspended employee.

VI. INVESTIGATION AND ADJUDICATION

- A. All Professional Standards investigations shall be conducted in accordance with the department's Internal Affairs Investigation Manual. **When a conflict exists, the agency policy shall supersede the manual.**
- B. Criminal Misconduct Complaints
 1. Where preliminary investigative data indicates the possibility of a criminal act on the part of the employee, or the investigation involves an allegation of the excessive use of force, the Chief of Police shall be notified immediately who will then notify the Ocean County Prosecutor's Office. No further action shall be taken, including the filing of charges against the employee, until directed by the Chief of Police and the Ocean County Prosecutor's Office.
 - a. The Chief of Police shall be immediately notified when an employee is accused of a crime, domestic violence violations, any incident that attracts media attention, and any incident that would affect the efficient and effective operation of the department. In addition, the duty supervisor shall take any immediate action necessary to preserve the integrity of the department until directed otherwise by the Chief of Police or his/her designee.
 - b. All other notifications shall be made on the next business day.
 2. The Professional Standards Unit shall interview the complainant, all witnesses as well as review relevant reports and records, and obtain other relevant information and materials.
 - a. A principal shall not be compelled to answer any questions in the absence of a grant of use immunity as conferred by the Ocean County Prosecutor's Office.
 - b. The Professional Standards Unit investigator shall consult with the Ocean County Prosecutor regarding the advisability of giving a Miranda Warning Form to the principal.

C. Administrative Misconduct Complaints

1. When preliminary investigative data indicates an administrative misconduct offense which may result in disciplinary action:
 - a. A supervisor must notify the Professional Standards Unit, who will conduct a full investigation of the matter; and
 - b. The Professional Standards Unit Commander will notify the Chief of Police of the offense; and
 - c. The Professional Standards Unit will forward copies of the appropriate disciplinary documents and investigation reports to the Chief of Police for review; and
 - d. The Professional Standards Unit will be responsible for the final case disposition and implementation of discipline, as determined by the Chief of Police or designee.

D. Performance Deficiency Complaints

1. When a complaint has been classified as a performance deficiency, the complaint shall be forwarded to the employee's supervisor for investigation. The supervisor shall interview the complainant, all witnesses and the principal, as well as review relevant reports. The supervisor shall then prepare a report summarizing the matter, recommending the appropriate corrective action.
2. The supervisor shall forward the completed investigation report to the Professional Standards Unit for review, and entry of the disposition in the Professional Standards record keeping system.

E. Interview Procedures

1. Preparation
 - a. Principals and witnesses should be interviewed after careful preparation, including the review of the investigative file and all documents, evidence, and interviews conducted up until the interview. The investigator, in consideration of the investigative plan, should have pre-formulated goals to be accomplished with each interview.
2. Memorializing of the Interview
 - a. The interview of the complainant, principal, and any other witness with critical information shall be documented or memorialized in one of the following ways:
 - 1) An audio recorded statement is the preferred method of documenting and memorializing information obtained through an interview. A synopsis of the recorded statement will be included in the narrative of the Professional Standards Investigation Report. All

statements of department personnel will be audio recorded. (When directed by the Professional Standards Commander or Chief of Police, the pertinent portions of this statement will be transcribed.)

- 2) Video recorded.
 - 3) Handwritten statements taken by investigator shall be reduced to writing and signed on each page by the person making the statement.
 - 4) A summary of the substance of the interview will be incorporated in the body of the appropriate Professional Standards investigation report.
- b. Investigators must at all times remain cognizant that civilian witnesses who are not employees of the department cannot be compelled to provide a statement in any manner. However, all reasonable efforts should be made to obtain a statement when warranted from non-police personnel in the order of priority as is listed above.
 - c. All persons submitting to such a recorded or written statement, including the complainant, witnesses, and the principal(s) will, upon request, be provided with a copy of same by the investigator, as authorized by the Chief of Police, unless by doing so, it could compromise the investigation.
 - d. Other than investigators authorized by the department, employees of this department shall not electronically record nor cause any interview to be electronically recorded. The copy of the official statement shall be produced and provided within a reasonable amount of time. The employee receiving the copy of the statement shall be reminded of the absolute requirement that same not be copied, shown, or revealed to anyone other than the employee's attorney, if any. Violation of this provision will result in serious disciplinary action.
 - e. Audio or written statements shall be made attachments within the investigative file, unless the matter is criminal in nature. In that case, evidence shall be handled in accordance with department policy regarding the handling of evidence in a criminal matter.
 - f. All recorded statements will be summarized in the body of the appropriate Professional Standards investigation report. (When directed by the Professional Standards Commander or Chief of Police, the pertinent portions of the statement will be transcribed and the transcript itself also included as an attachment to the case.)
 - g. The interview of any non-department person shall document the following identifiers:

- 1) Full name;
 - 2) Address;
 - 3) Home Telephone;
 - 4) Race;
 - 5) Sex;
 - 6) DOB;
 - 7) Place of Employment;
 - 8) Work Telephone;
 - 9) Names of all persons present during interview; and
 - 10) Date, time, and location of interview.
 - 11) Further identifiers such as social security number or SBI or FBI numbers shall not be requested or utilized unless directly relevant to the investigation.
- h. Upon obtaining an audio recorded statement, investigators will then label the medium, protect against re-record loss, and include it as a case attachment to the report. The statement, if transcribed, will also be included as a case attachment regarding administrative investigations. In cases where the interview concerns a criminal matter, the recorded medium will be secured and handled as evidence.
- i. The investigator will label the recording medium in the following manner:
- 1) Statement of: Officer J. Smith;
 - 2) Signature of Officer Smith and date;
 - 3) Signature of Investigator and badge number;
 - 4) Initials and badge number of witnessing investigator; and
 - 5) Date and time of interview.
 - 6) For criminal investigations, the investigator will label the evidence packaging in the following manner:
 - a) Case number;
 - b) Statement of: Officer J. Smith;
 - c) Signature of Investigator and badge number; and

d) Date and time of interview.

3. Secondary Investigator as a Witness

- a. The utilization of a second investigator as a witness to any interview or written statement is not required; however, it may be authorized in certain circumstances.

4. Legal Representation in Administrative Professional Standards Investigations

- a. During the course of the administrative interview, an employee may be represented by a union representative of their choosing to include an attorney, so long as the availability of the attorney does not in any way hamper or impede the ongoing investigation. There is not a Sixth Amendment right in Administrative Professional Standards Investigations. If the investigation is criminal in nature and it appears that the employee's union representative may become a witness or principal in the investigation, the union representative shall be prohibited from attending the interview.
- b. Complainants and witnesses who are not employees of the department cannot be precluded from having a legal representative present while being interviewed by investigators.

5. Interview of Complainant

- a. After the preparation detailed above, all efforts must be made to interview a complainant in person.
- b. The investigator shall arrange a convenient time and place, including by telephone (or TDD), to interview civilians for misconduct investigations. The investigator shall reasonably accommodate a civilian's circumstances to facilitate the progress of an investigation. This may include holding an interview at a location other than the department or at a time other than regular business hours.
- c. Interviews of civilian complainants which take place over the telephone must be recorded, unless the witness objects to the recording.
- d. Investigators must treat the person being interviewed with dignity and respect, and demonstrate interest and concern in dealing with the complainant. Employees shall not attempt to dissuade any person from making a complaint. Employees shall conduct themselves as to facilitate the citizen's confidence in the Professional Standards investigative process.
- e. Complainants and witnesses shall not be questioned about any matters that are not directly relevant to the allegations of the investigation. Any questioning intended to challenge the credibility of a complainant or witness must be approved beforehand by the Professional Standards Commander. Investigators shall make

every effort not to ask questions that may demean, ridicule, or cause embarrassment to the complainant.

- f. Questions must be carefully thought out and absolutely relevant to the investigation. Any questionable issues should be discussed with and approved by the Professional Standards Commander before conducting the interview.
- g. Group interviews shall not be conducted.
- h. Complainants should be interviewed outside the presence of other complainants and witnesses. A parent, or adult relative or guardian in the absence of a parent, shall be present during the interview of a minor. In the event, a parent cannot be located; the investigator must document the efforts taken to contact same. If a civilian insists that another potential witness be present during an interview, the interview must continue with the potential witness present and the report must note the circumstances.
- i. Structure of Interview
 - 1) Complainants should be initially asked to explain in their own words, in detail, the facts forming the basis of the complaint. The investigator should then clarify any questions or issues regarding the complainant's statement.
 - 2) After the complainant has provided a statement, the narrative of the Reportable Incident Form, Citizen Complaint form, recorded telephone complaint, or correspondence from the complainant should be reviewed with the complainant.
 - 3) The investigator shall seek to rectify or identify any discrepancies as well as identify any further investigative requirements.
 - 4) The complainant should be asked to identify any witnesses and state what they believe the witness may have knowledge of; turn over any evidence in their possession; and identify what other types of evidence they know.
 - 5) Every relevant fact known to the complainant should be identified and explored thoroughly.
 - 6) Issues identified in the Investigation Plan, should be addressed.
 - 7) In addressing the allegations, questions utilized in the basic investigative process, namely: **who, what, when, where, why, and how,** should be precisely addressed.
 - 8) The complainant and or witnesses have no automatic right to view any department video recordings. It shall be up to the discretion of the investigator, whether utilizing any department video recordings during an interview will enhance or clarify the investigative process.

- 9) If a complainant refuses to be interviewed, or cannot be located or contacted, a letter should be immediately forwarded on department letterhead, via certified mail, authorized and signed by the Professional Standards Commander and/or Chief of Police, advising that he/she should respond within ten (10) days or the investigation will proceed without his/her input.

6. Interview of Witness

- a. Every effort should be made to interview all witnesses. The full identity of the witness should be obtained. If the witness refuses to be interviewed, or cannot be contacted after a reasonable attempt to locate, a certified letter should be sent on department letterhead advising that witness should respond within ten calendar (10) days.
- b. Specific and detailed questions should be asked including: **who, what, when, where, why, and how** the incident or event occurred. The investigator should have a clear purpose in identifying relevant witnesses and selecting what questions to ask them. These issues should be established in the Investigative Plan.
- c. The aforementioned techniques outlined in the complainant interview should be applied to the interview of witnesses.
- d. Witness interviews shall be conducted formally resulting in a statement secured in accordance with the provisions enumerated under Interview Procedures.

7. Interview of Employees

- a. Generally, the interview of an employee is accomplished after the complainant and all witnesses are interviewed. However, this is determined by the character of the inquiry and remains a choice of the investigator. Such interviews are a critical step in the investigation and should be carefully planned. Investigators shall not accept a written statement from any employee in lieu of an interview.
- b. Employee as: **WITNESSES**
 - 1) It is required that a formal audio recorded statement be taken from each employee considered a witness. Statements need not be transcribed, but must be summarized in the appropriate Professional Standards investigation report. The key elements of the statement may be transcribed if necessary. A sworn member who is considered a witness is entitled to union representation if he/she reasonably believes that he/she may be subject to disciplinary action as a result of the investigation.
 - 2) Advise the employee that he/she is a witness, explaining the difference between a witness and principal.

- a) A witness is a person reasonably believed to have information concerning the event under investigation, but whose own conduct is not the focus of the investigation.
 - b) A principal is a person whose conduct is the focus of the investigation.
- 3) Before any questioning takes place, the employee shall be apprised of the identity of the investigator conducting the interview, including his/her rank, name, and assignment. This notice shall also include the identity of all persons present during the interview.
 - 4) The investigator may require the employee to submit a report detailing relevant facts in the investigation. If a report is required, the investigator will provide the employee with the background information regarding the nature and timeframe of the complaint. The employee should be encouraged to review any of his or her own reports.
 - 5) A formal statement will be obtained from the witness after he/she has been given their Witness Acknowledgment Form. The investigator shall further verbally confirm the employee's obligation for candor throughout a Professional Standards investigation, pointing out the specific provision of the acknowledgment form denoting such.
 - 6) If, during the interview, the status of an employee shifts from a witness to a principal, the employee shall be advised accordingly. The investigator shall contact the Professional Standards Commander to secure permission to proceed. If approval is granted to proceed, the investigator will execute a Principal Acknowledgment Form. Upon completion of the interview, the investigating officer will complete a New Principal/Allegation Identification Form, and forward same to the Professional Standards Commander for the purpose of updating the case. A copy of the completed form, incorporating all required endorsements must be secured and submitted as an attachment to the investigation.

c. Employee as: **PRINCIPAL**

- 1) No employee shall be designated a principal without the approval of the Professional Standards Commander.
- 2) Each employee of the department is required to answer pertinent questions regarding the matter which is the subject of investigation. All employees of the department are obligated to answer questions and provide full and complete information to the investigator(s) during Professional Standards investigations. Less than complete candor during

any statement may lead to serious disciplinary sanctions, which may include suspension or termination.

- 3) The investigator shall not automatically provide the principal with the Citizen's Complaint Form or the Reportable Incident Form. Principals shall be advised of the specific nature of the complaint, the time period involved, any allegation(s) or violation(s) of rules, regulations, and orders involved, and if applicable, the name or names of the complainant(s) and/or witnesses, in writing. The addresses of the witnesses or complainants need not be disclosed.
- 4) In cases where these documents are shown to the principal, the investigator shall redact from the letter of complaint, Reportable Incident Form, or any other relevant document provided to the principal during the interview, any information that may compromise the investigative process by providing same to the principal. Redacted documents utilized during the investigation for any purpose shall be properly referenced in any interview and included as an attachment to the Investigation Report.
- 5) As an employee of the department, the Weingarten Representative shall be advised of the obligation of confidentiality and the requirement not to discuss any information obtained during an interview with any other person. (Weingarten Rights)
- 6) The principal may produce records of his/her own or suggest names of witnesses he/she requests to be interviewed.
- 7) A formal recorded statement will be obtained from the principal after he/she has been advised of their Administrative Advisement. The investigator shall further verbally confirm the employee's obligation for candor throughout a Professional Standards investigation.
- 8) The following guidelines will be followed when union representation is requested.
 - a) Any employee designated as a principal or witness, who reasonably believes that the investigation may result in disciplinary action against him/her, is entitled, upon request of the interviewee, to have a union representative accompany the interviewee to the interview.
 - b) Any employee who is a potential principal or witness in the investigation may not act as a Weingarten representative.
 - c) The exercise of the interviewee's right to union representation may not interfere with the investigation. However, a reasonable period of time

should be allowed for the representative to appear for the interview.

- d) An interviewee is not entitled to the representative of his/her choosing. Any union officer or representative or other person designated by the union will satisfy the representation requirement.
 - e) The principal and his/her representative shall be informed of the subject matter of the investigation and given a reasonable period of time to confer prior to the interview. The union representative may be present during the interview, and once the interview has begun, they may not leave the room for purposes of further consultation. If the principal refuses to make a statement or answer any questions, he/she will be informed that such refusal may result in discipline/dismissal and the interview shall be terminated.
 - f) The investigator shall not negotiate with the representative. The representative may be permitted to clarify facts or make suggestions (e.g., other potential witnesses) after the investigator's questioning of the principal. The investigator is free to insist that he/she is only interested in hearing the interviewee's own account of the matter under investigation. In other words, the representative shall not be permitted to answer for the principal or conduct their own interview.
- 9) The interview shall be conducted at a reasonable hour in a non-coercive manner, without threat or promise of reward, and preferably when the employee is on duty. No "off the record" questions will be asked and no "off the record" statements will be permitted. If the urgency of the investigation requires that the employee is questioned while off duty, such time will be recorded and treated as hours worked in accordance with the Collective Bargaining Agreements, where applicable.
 - 10) The interview shall be conducted at a location designated by the investigator, usually at headquarters.
 - 11) The questioning shall be of a reasonable duration and rest periods allowed. Time shall be provided for personal necessities, meals, and telephone calls as are reasonably needed.
 - 12) If at any time during the questioning session the employee becomes a suspect in a criminal act, the employee shall be so informed and the questioning shall end. Promptly refer the case to the Ocean County Prosecutor. Should the employee be afforded a grant of use immunity by the Prosecutor, the Professional Standards Unit investigator shall schedule an interview with the employee.

F. Investigative Avenues

1. Physical Evidence

- a. Investigators should obtain all relevant physical evidence. All evidence, such as clothing, hair or fabric fibers, stains and weapons should be handled according to established evidence procedures.
- b. With respect to an audio file, they should be secured at the outset of the investigation. Transcripts or copies of the original recordings can be used as investigative leads. Audio files should be monitored to reveal the totality of the circumstances.
- c. Sworn statements from all parties, when appropriate. It should be noted that sworn statements can only be obtained in relation to a matter involving a violation or an attempted violation of the criminal laws of the State of New Jersey (i.e., not in an administrative investigation).

2. Photographs

- a. In the event of a complaint involving excessive force, the following photographic documentation shall be obtained when appropriate. Whenever possible, color photography shall be used.
 - 1) Photographs of the complainant at the time of arrest or following the alleged incident of excessive force.
 - 2) Photographs of the principal in the event that employee was a victim.
 - 3) A recent photo of the employee in the event a sequential photo display will be used for identification purposes. The photo display must be conducted in accordance with the New Jersey Attorney General's guidelines and retained for possible evidentiary purposes.
 - 4) Photographs of the scene of the alleged incident, if necessary.

3. Physical Tests

- a. Principals may be compelled to submit to various physical tests or procedures to gather evidence. Such evidence may be used against them in a disciplinary proceeding.
- b. No person has a constitutional right or privilege to refuse to submit to an examination to obtain a record of their physical features and other identifying characteristics of their physical or mental condition. Evid. R. 503(a). Evidence that may be obtained or procedures that may be used to obtain evidence under this rule include:
 - 1) Breath samples;
 - 2) Blood samples;

- 3) Buccal Swabs;
 - 4) Requiring employee to speak;
 - 5) Voice recordings;
 - 6) Participation in suspect lineups;
 - 7) Handwriting samples;
 - 8) Hair and saliva samples;
 - 9) Urine analysis;
 - 10) Videotaping;
 - 11) Field sobriety tests.
- c. Generally, a person cannot be physically forced to produce this or other evidence or submit to such tests, although a court order may be obtained to legally compel them to do so. Refusal to comply with the order can result in additional criminal, civil, and/or administrative sanctions.
4. Polygraphs
- a. While an employee who is the subject of an Professional Standards investigation may request a polygraph examination, an employer shall not influence, request or require an employee to take or submit to a polygraph examination as a condition of employment or continued employment (N.J.S.A. 2C:40A-1).
 - b. An employee cannot be required to submit to a polygraph test on pain of dismissal. Engel v Township of Woodbridge, 124 N.J. Super. 307 (App. Div. 1973).
 - c. If a polygraph is used, the test must be administered by a qualified police polygraph operator.
5. Search and Seizure
- a. All department assigned storage space, offices, lockers, desks, vehicles, computers, briefcases, and electronic devices are subject to a search/inspection without notice.
 - b. Personal brief cases shall not be searched without a warrant.

VII. REPORTING

- A. Upon completion of all possible avenues of inquiry, the Professional Standards Unit investigator shall complete the following reports:
1. The Professional Standards investigation will be memorialized on the reports as are hereinafter identified. The reports will be submitted to the

Professional Standards Commander for approval on a regular basis so as to keep the case current at all times.

2. All approved original reports will be maintained by the investigator until the investigation is concluded at which time the complete case file will be submitted to the Chief of Police through the Professional Standards Commander.
3. The completed report will be submitted in a report folder. The folder will contain on the right side, an investigation cover sheet, the professional standards disposition form and the investigation report. The left side of the folder will be attached an exhibits cover sheet, an index of items, the performance notice and subsequent letters, emails, exhibits, etc.
4. The Professional Standards Investigation Allegations and Conclusions Form will be attached to the report folder/envelope. A Professional Standards Investigation Review Sheet will be secured to the left inner cover, on top of the Professional Standards Investigation Allegations and Conclusions Form.
5. All attachments will be marked, unless marking the document in that area would damage or interfere with the content of the attachment.

B. Report Flow

1. The investigation should be completed and all reports prepared within **sixty (60) calendar days** of being assigned. Authorization for additional time to complete investigations must be received from the Chief of Police or designee, in accordance with the investigation extension procedure.
2. The investigator, upon completion of the report, shall forward it directly to the Professional Standards Commander, who will forward it to the Chief of Police.
3. The Professional Standards Commander will review the case and make recommendations to the Chief of Police regarding discipline.
4. The Chief of Police, upon receipt of the recommendation, will review the matter and make the final determination or return the case for further investigation.
5. Once the Chief of Police is provided with "sufficient information" to file a charge, the Chief of Police has forty-five (45) days to do so. **(N.J.S.A 40A:14-147).**
6. Whenever a final determination is reached in a Professional Standards investigation, the employee(s) involved as a principal(s) and the complainant(s) shall be notified in writing by the Chief of Police of that determination.
7. If discipline is imposed, a record of such discipline, not including the investigation report or attachments, shall be placed in the employee's personnel file.
8. It should be recognized that the Professional Standards Investigation Reports and pertinent attachments are subject to discovery and inspection

in accordance with New Jersey Court Rule 3:13-3 and/or any guidelines established by the New Jersey State Attorney General or other applicable New Jersey State or Federal Law.

C. Professional Standards Investigation Plan

1. The case investigator shall meet with the Professional Standards Commander within five (5) business days of being assigned to conduct the Professional Standards investigation, to discuss and formulate an investigative plan.
2. Thereafter the case investigator will complete a Professional Standards Investigative Plan, and submit same for approval prior at the conclusion of the meeting. When approved by the Professional Standards Commander, the plan will be maintained and secured in the case jacket dedicated to that investigation.

D. Professional Standards Investigation Report

1. Within sixty (60) calendar days of being assigned to conduct a Professional Standards investigation, the case investigator must complete a Professional Standards Investigation Report and submit same for approval to the Professional Standards Commander. The report must include:
 - a. Documentation that the complainant has been contacted by the investigator to advise them of their assignment as the case investigator and to arrange a meeting to conduct an interview. If the investigator is unable to contact the complainant, the report must reflect that the appropriate certified ten (10) day letter, endorsed by the Professional Standards Commander has been mailed to the complainant.
 - b. Documentation that the case investigator has contacted the principal(s) and informed them of the nature of the complaint against them.
 - c. An analysis of the allegations to be addressed by the investigation, linked to specific provisions of the Rules and Regulations, and/or any guidelines that govern the behavior of employees of the department.

E. Supplemental Professional Standards Investigation Report

1. A Supplemental Professional Standards Investigation Report will be submitted on a regular basis to document the investigative process on all Professional Standards investigations wherein investigative activity took place during that period.

F. Professional Standards Attachment Log

1. A Professional Standards Investigation Attachment Log will accompany each case when submitted by the investigator.
2. The Attachment Log will account for all attachments accumulated during the investigation. The Reportable Incident Form will always be attachment #1. The Professional Standards Investigation Report will be attachment

#2. Thereafter, each individual Supplemental Professional Standards Investigation Report will be assigned a separate attachment number.

3. A separate log number will be assigned to every attachment, unless the attachment is a multiple page document, at which time it will be secured as a singular attachment.
4. Each attachment accumulated and documented in the investigation report will receive a separate log number and be appropriately cross referenced in chronological order.

G. Professional Standards Investigation Allegations and Conclusion Report

1. At the conclusion of the investigation, the investigator will prepare allegations and conclusions.
2. The allegation will set forth, in narrative form, the alleged misconduct and be linked to the specific provision of the Rules and Regulations and/or directive purportedly violated.
3. The conclusion reached by the investigator, based upon the facts developed in his/her investigation, will fall into one of the following five (5) dispositions.
 - a) Sustained - a preponderance of the evidence shows that an employee violated agency rules, regulations, protocols, standard operating procedures, directives, or training;
 - b) Unfounded - a preponderance of the evidence shows that the alleged misconduct did not occur;
 - c) Exonerated - a preponderance of the evidence shows that the alleged conduct did occur, but did not violate rules, regulations, standard operating procedures, directives, or training;
 - d) Not Sustained - based upon the preponderance of evidence standard, there is insufficient evidence to decide whether the alleged misconduct occurred.
 - e) Administratively Closed - In some cases, the complaint or investigation is closed prior to reaching a disposition. These should be counted as "Administratively Closed."
4. The conclusions should be written in paragraph form wherein each piece of evidence that is relied upon in order to reach the conclusion found is individually numbered.
5. These individual paragraphs should be in sufficient detail that standing alone they provide a concise synopsis of the investigation and its findings.
6. These individual paragraphs should be footnoted to the source attachment used in formulating the paragraph.
7. The final paragraph in the allegations and conclusions should encompass verbiage that reads, in effect; "that based upon the preponderance of evidence accumulated in the investigation it is concluded that:

- a) There is insufficient evidence that <Officer/Employee> did <alleged behavior>.
- b) The allegation that <Officer/Employee> did <alleged behavior> is unfounded.
- c) The allegation that <Officer/Employee> did <alleged behavior> is substantiated.
- d) The investigation exonerates <Officer/Employee> of the allegation of <alleged behavior>
- e) The investigation into <alleged behavior> of <Officer/Employee> is closed administratively closed at this time due to <Officer/Employee> terminating his or her employment prior to disposition of the complaint. The investigation is closed administratively due to the complainant withdrawing the complaint, not supported by any independent information to continue investigation.

H. Professional Standards Investigative Review Sheet

- 1. Each time a superior officer reviews the Professional Standards investigation, he/she will complete the form as the reviewer. Occasions may arise when the reviewer will review the case more than once. For example, the Professional Standards Commander reviews the case and returns it to the investigator. Subsequently, the investigator resubmits the case to the Professional Standards Commander. The Professional Standards Commander will now complete the Professional Standards Investigation Review Sheet as the second reviewer.
- 2. Upon the conclusion of all Professional Standards investigations, the investigator will generate a Professional Standards Investigation Review Sheet, which will accompany the submitted investigation.
- 3. The Professional Standards Investigation Review Sheet will accompany the case as it progresses through the review process and be completed by each supervisor reviewing the case.
- 4. When the supervisory reviews of the case are ultimately concluded, the Professional Standards Investigation Review Sheet will be maintained and secured in the case jacket. This report may be hand-written by the reviewer.

I. New Principal/Allegation Identification Form

- 1. During the interview, if the status of an employee shifts from a witness to a principal, the employee shall be advised accordingly. The investigator shall contact the Professional Standards Commander to secure permission to proceed.
- 2. If approval is granted to proceed, the investigator will complete a New Principal/Allegation Identification Form and forward same to the Professional Standards Commander for the purposes of updating the case. A copy of the completed New Principal/Allegation Identification Form,

incorporating all required endorsements, must be secured and submitted as an attachment to the investigation.

3. This form will also be used to document perceived violations of policy and procedure not relevant to the complaint or the alleged misconduct being investigated.

J. Request for Extension of Investigation

1. Exceptions to the sixty (60) calendar day requirement to complete all Professional Standards investigations may be granted only in the following cases:
 - a. The investigation is pending criminal prosecution.
 - b. The investigation is undergoing a prosecutorial review to determine if the matter will be prosecuted criminally.
2. This form must be submitted to the Chief of Police or designee for approval as soon as any of the foregoing criteria is met.
3. The completed form, including all required endorsements, must be submitted as an attachment to the investigation.

K. Performance Notice: is the form that must be completed by a supervisor to address the corrective action taken as a result of the performance deficiency.

1. A Performance Notice shall be used when the performance deficiency warrants a corrective action of training or counseling.
2. The supervisor recommending the issuance of a Performance Notice form (counseling, or training) shall complete and forward the unsigned copy along with the completed investigation report to the Operations Bureau commander and the Professional Standards Unit Commander for review and approval.
3. Upon approval, the Performance Notice will be returned to the principal's supervisor for signature and service.
4. The employee shall be advised of the corrective action by the issuing supervisor. The employee shall sign the Performance Notice and be given a copy of the document. The original document shall be forwarded to the Professional Standards Commander for filing.

L. Formal Charge:

1. A Notice of Disciplinary Action Form shall be used to formally charge an employee with administrative misconduct, the penalty for which exceeds a written reprimand.
2. If the complaint is sustained after review, and it is determined that formal administrative charges should be pursued, the Chief of Police or his/her designee shall direct the Professional Standards Unit to prepare the **Notice of Disciplinary Action form** and have it served upon the subject employee. The Chief of Police will sign and file these charges.

3. The Notice of Disciplinary Action Form shall direct that the employee charged must enter a plea of guilty or not guilty, in writing, on or before the date set forth in the notice for entry of a plea. The date will be listed on the notice and must provide a reasonable time, at least 5 days after the date of service of the charges to enter a plea and request a hearing, if applicable.
 4. Conclusion of fact and the penalty imposed will be noted in the employee's personnel file after he or she has been given an opportunity to read and sign it. The Professional Standards Unit will cause the penalty to be carried out and complete all required forms.
- M. If the employee charged waives a hearing and enters a plea of guilty, the Chief of Police shall permit the employee to present factors in mitigation prior to assessing a penalty.

VIII. HEARINGS

- A. The hearing shall be held before the appropriate authority or the appropriate authority's designee. In accordance with N.J.S.A. 40A:14-148, except as otherwise provided by law, the officer, board or authority empowered to hear and determine the charge or charges made against an employee of the police department, shall have the power to subpoena witnesses and documentary evidence. The Superior Court shall have jurisdiction to enforce any such subpoena.
- B. All disciplinary hearings shall be closed to the public. However, the employee may request an open hearing. The appropriate authority or the appropriate authority's designee shall conduct a closed hearing unless a legitimate reason exists to grant the employee's request for an open hearing. The hearing date will be set on the **Notice of Disciplinary Action form** in accordance with **N.J.S.A 40A: 14-147**.
- C. The appropriate authority or the appropriate authority's designee will fix punishments that are deemed appropriate under the circumstances in accordance with the Rules and Regulations. **(Reference N.J.S.A. 40A: 14-147)**.
- D. The appropriate authority or the appropriate authority's designee is empowered to enter a finding of sustained or not sustained, or to modify the charges as deemed necessary. The decision of the appropriate authority or the appropriate authority's designee should be in writing and should be accompanied by findings of fact for each issue in the case.
- E. A copy of the decision or order and accompanying findings and conclusions shall be delivered to the employee who was the subject of the hearing.

IX. CONFIDENTIALITY

- A. Professional Standards investigations and records are confidential unless otherwise discoverable under Rule, Regulation, Attorney General Guidelines, State or Federal Law.
- B. All employees of the Toms River Police Department shall be mindful at all times of the confidentiality of the matter and shall only disclose information regarding the complaint and investigation as may be required by this policy or when necessary to further the investigation.

- C. No disclosure of the complaint or investigation shall be made to anyone (except the complainant) outside of the Toms River Police Department without approval by the Chief of Police or his/her designee.
- D. The contents of Professional Standards investigation case files will be retained in a locked cabinet in the Professional Standards Unit. The files shall be clearly marked as confidential.
- E. Employees of the department who are subjects of a Professional Standards investigation shall be notified in writing of the outcome of the investigation unless exceptional circumstances require otherwise.

X. PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS FILES

- A. A separate Professional Standards file system shall be maintained in a secured file cabinet under strict control of the Professional Standards Commander. Personnel records are separate and distinct from Professional Standards records. Professional Standards investigation reports shall not be placed in an employee's personnel records file.
 - 1. When a complaint has a disposition of exonerated, not sustained, or unfounded, there shall be no indication in the employee's personnel file that a complaint was ever made.
 - 2. When a complaint has been sustained, only the disciplinary action imposed shall be filed in an employee's personnel file.
- B. The file system shall contain all investigative files resulting from Professional Standards complaints and the original copy of the following reports:
 - 1. Vehicular Pursuit Reports;
 - 2. Use of Force Reports;
 - 3. Firearm's Discharge Reports.
- C. Investigative records created during an Professional Standards Investigation are included in the "Records Retention and Disposition Schedule for Local Police Departments" issued by the New Jersey Division of Archives and Records Management and shall be maintained as such.