

## How to complain

If you feel ready to make a complaint, you can do it in the way that works for you:

- Fill in the form on our website. You can access our website by scanning the QR code on the back of this leaflet.
- Call and ask us for a paper form or download and print one yourself. Complete it and post or email it back to us. Our phone number is also on the back of this leaflet.
- We will then send this to the relevant police service to deal with in the first instance.
- If you feel comfortable, you can complain directly to the police service involved. Most police services give you options to complain in different ways, like online, email, letter, calling 101, in person, or through someone acting on your behalf.
- If you need help, someone you trust can help you complain.

## Contact us:

 **030 0020 0096**

 **[policeconduct.gov.uk](https://policeconduct.gov.uk)**

 **[enquiries@policeconduct.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@policeconduct.gov.uk)**



We welcome calls in Welsh.  
*Rydym yn croesawu galwadau ffôn yn y Gymraeg.*

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**YOU**  
have a  
**VOICE**

## If you're unhappy with how the police have treated you, you can make a complaint.

You have the right to speak up and be heard. You should not be made to feel dismissed, uncomfortable, or unsafe by the police.

### Who we are

We're the Independent Office for Police Conduct, the police complaints watchdog. **We are not the police** – we're **completely independent** of them.

We make sure the police investigate complaints about themselves properly. We use evidence from our work to help make policing better.

We understand that people are worried about violence against women and girls, and how the police deal with it. **We want you to know about the police complaints system and how to make a complaint if you need to.**

## What you can complain about

You can make a complaint about something involving the police that happened to you or if you saw it happen. Some examples could be:

- You reported something to the police and you were unhappy with what they did or didn't do.
- Your partner, ex-partner, or family member works or worked for the police and they were abusive to you. Abusive could mean physically, sexually, emotionally, or financially.
- You were in contact with the police, and they did something inappropriate, like adding you on social media, calling or texting you, visiting you, giving gifts, asking you to keep things secret, flirting, touching you, or being sexual.

When you complain, the police service you complained about will look into it first. This is so they have a chance to put things right.

They should also ask you what you would like to happen, because your voice matters.

## What could happen

The police service **must tell you what they did and what the outcome is.**

### Complaints can have different outcomes:

- A member of the police could be given training to do their job better.
- They could be disciplined at work. This could be anything from a warning, through to losing their job and being stopped from ever working for the police again.
- They could face criminal charges. If found guilty, they face the same punishments anyone else might get.
- We also make recommendations to police services to help them learn from what happened and make things better in future.

If you're unhappy with the outcome of your complaint or how it was handled, you may be able to ask to have it reviewed. The police service should explain this when they tell you about the outcome. A different organisation, like us, may be able to look at it to see what they did, how they did it, and whether they got it right.