

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

**A:** Some instances require disciplinary action such as reprimand, suspension, or even termination. Sometimes training is appropriate. If a crime has been alleged, the Attorney General's Office will determine if criminal charges should be filed.

**Q:** What happens if a complaint cannot be proven or is not true?

**A:** State Highway Patrol employees must be provided with certain rights, just as all citizens are. Complaints must be supported by sufficient evidence. If there is insufficient evidence to prove an allegation, the employee will be cleared of the charge.

## Our Mission Statement

The mission of the North Carolina State Highway Patrol is to ensure safe, efficient transportation on our streets and highways, reduce crime, protect against terrorism, and respond to natural and manmade disasters. This mission will be accomplished in partnership with all levels of government and the public, through quality law enforcement services and education based upon high ethical, professional, and legal standards.

## How Are We Doing?

The Highway Patrol is committed to providing the best service possible. Citizen comments are essential if we are to succeed in this goal. If you have questions or comments concerning our operational procedures, or recommendations on how we can improve our service, you may contact your local Highway Patrol headquarters office at the following numbers:

Troop A	Greenville	(252) 758-5300
Troop B	Fayetteville	(910) 486-1058
Troop C	Raleigh	(919) 733-3911
Troop D	Greensboro	(336) 334-5621
Troop E	Salisbury	(704) 639-7595
Troop F	Newton	(828) 466-5504
Troop G	Asheville	(828) 298-4253
Troop H	Monroe	(704) 283-8559

Or send your comments directly to:

North Carolina State Highway Patrol  
Office of the Commander  
4702 Mail Service Center  
Raleigh, NC 27699-4702



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## A Citizen's Guide To:

- Making Commendations
  - Making Inquiries for Information
  - Filing Complaints Against:
    - Patrol Personnel
    - Highway Patrol Procedures
    - Traffic or Highway Matters
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*The North Carolina State Highway Patrol, an internationally accredited agency, is committed to providing professional law enforcement services to the citizens and visitors of our State. In order to be responsive to the needs of our community, we must encourage citizen input. Your constructive comments about our service, good or bad, will help us to improve and achieve our goal of providing the highest quality service possible.*

## **Commending Exceptional Performance**

The best way to commend the performance of a Highway Patrol employee is to write a brief letter describing the incident and the actions the employee demonstrated which you felt were exceptional. Information such as the date, time, and location will help identify the employee if you do not know his/her name. If you choose not to write, you may speak with the individual's supervisor and make a verbal commendation.

Commendations received will be forwarded to the employee with a copy placed in his/her personnel file. Although our employees do not expect to be thanked for everything they do, recognition of exceptional service is always appreciated. This kind of feedback helps us to know if we are doing a good job.

## **Making an Inquiry or Complaint**

An inquiry or complaint can be made by letter, telephone, or in person. Complaints against personnel should be directed to the on-duty supervisor, commander of the employee's troop or district, or the Internal Affairs Section.

If your inquiry or complaint appears to be based on a misunderstanding or a lack of knowledge of acceptable or desired conduct, procedures, or practices, the Highway Patrol employee may offer an explanation. If you are

not satisfied with his/her explanation, you may request to speak with the employee's supervisor.

Please be prepared to provide the date, time, and location of the event; the name of the Highway Patrol employee involved (if known); and the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of any possible witnesses.

## **Responsibility Yours and Ours**

The North Carolina State Highway Patrol views all complaints against its employees very seriously and actively pursues investigations into misconduct. For this reason, you must ensure that your complaint is based on facts. False reporting in an attempt to unjustly subject a Highway Patrol employee to undeserved discipline or slander, or place his/her employment in jeopardy, can result in criminal charges or civil liability.

## **Investigation Procedures**

Once an inquiry or complaint is received, the review/investigation process begins. In keeping with professional standards, a person designated by Highway Patrol policy will perform this function. If your concern is of an operational nature, it will generally be handled at the local level. If however it is a complaint, it may or may not be handled locally depending on the scope of the investigation needed to resolve the matter.

A complaint investigation will usually include a review of all applicable reports, policies and procedures, examination of any evidence or medical records, and interviews with all parties and witnesses involved. This may take several months to investigate/review, where as a simple inquiry may only take a day to complete.

## **Questions and Answers**

- Q:** Is there any risk in making a complaint against an employee?
- A:** No, but if a person deliberately makes a false complaint and statement against a member, that person may be criminally prosecuted or civilly liable.
- Q:** What happens when an investigation is initiated?
- A:** The complainant and the department employee will be notified that the case is under investigation.
- Q:** What happens when an investigation is concluded?
- A:** The Highway Patrol Commander will send a letter to the complainant informing him/her that the investigation has been completed and proper action will be taken. It will also explain that the Commander may not divulge what action has been taken due to North Carolina General Statute 26-24 which prohibits furnishing such information regarding personnel files.