

## **Citizen Complaint Procedures**

The Carthage Police Department has placed great trust in police employees. They have been trained well and normally reflect the best of the best in police work. However, there are times when a citizen is concerned to the level they feel they should complain. There are also times when we as a department make mistakes. If employees are making mistakes or intentionally violating policies we want to know immediately. The following instructions are intended to guide citizens who have a valid complaint through the process of filing that complaint.

### **Who may make a complaint?**

Any citizen or any Department employee may make a complaint. *Normally, the person most directly affected by the alleged conduct should be the person to complain*

### **In what form should complaints be made?**

Complaints may be made in person, in writing, or by telephone. Complaints should *concisely and specifically describe* the conduct of the employee that was found to be improper. Please identify the employee as much as possible.

### **To whom should complaint be submitted?**

All Department employees are required to accept a complaint if no supervisor is immediately available to do so. Normally, a citizen with a complaint shall be referred to the on-duty supervisor who shall assist the citizen in recording pertinent information.

### **When may complaints be made?**

Complaints may be made at any time. Complaints should be made within a reasonable time after the alleged misconduct occurred to help ensure evidence is still available and recollections of the incident are fresh.

### **What things can be complained about?**

*Any alleged misconduct or violation of the law by a department employee can be the source of a complaint.*

### **How does making a complaint affect present or future charges against me?**

*Any charges or legal issues must be decided by the appropriate court.* The investigation of your complaint will focus on the conduct of the employee,

not the charges against you. Therefore, the charges against you are a separate issue which you will have to resolve in court. Employees are prohibited from retaliating against you, either in the present case or in the future, for lodging a complaint against them.

**Can I make an anonymous complaint?**

Anonymous complaints are investigated; however, investigations are less likely to reveal all the facts surrounding an alleged incident when the investigator is deprived of the opportunity to contact the complainant and therefore more likely to be unfounded. Also, an anonymous complainant can not be made aware of the results of the investigation.