

1. ***It is unlawful to provide a false report to law enforcement authorities***
(N.J.S.A. 2C: 28-4)

- a. Falsely incriminating another. A person who knowingly gives or causes to be given false information to any law enforcement officer with purposes to implicate another commits a crime of the fourth degree.
- b. Fictitious reports. A person commits a disorderly persons offense if he:
 - (1) Reports or causes to be reported to law enforcement authorities an offense or other incident within their concern knowing that it did not occur; or
 - (2) Pretends to furnish or causes to be furnished such authorities with information relating to an offense or incident when he knows he has no information relating to such offense or incident.

**SOMERSET COUNTY
PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE**

Message from the Prosecutor

The members of the Somerset County Prosecutor's Office and our county's municipal police departments are committed to providing the best possible law enforcement services that are fair, effective, and impartial. It is important that if any citizen has a complaint or concern regarding anyone in law enforcement that it be promptly reported. It is in the best interests of everyone that any complaint about a municipal police officer, county detective or assistant prosecutor be resolved fairly and expeditiously. The Somerset County Prosecutor's Office has formal procedures for investigating citizen complaints. These procedures ensure fairness and protect the rights of both citizens and law enforcement officers. Our goal is to insure that the integrity of law enforcement in Somerset County is maintained through a system of internal discipline where fairness and justice are assured by objective and impartial investigations.

Somerset County Prosecutor's Office

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TIPS HOTLINE 1-888-577-TIPS (5477)

**Citizen
Complaint
Information**



Somerset County
Prosecutor's Office

CITIZEN COMPLAINT INFORMATION

The Goal of the Internal Affairs Unit:

- The goal of the Somerset County Prosecutor's Office Internal Affairs Unit is to ensure that the integrity of law enforcement is maintained through a system of internal discipline where fairness and justice are assured by both objective impartial investigation and review. The Somerset County Prosecutor's Office is committed to maintaining the public's trust, ensuring fairness, and protecting the rights of both citizens and law enforcement personnel.

How to Register a Complaint:

- Complaints may be filed 24 hours a day, seven days a week. You may either visit or call the Somerset County Prosecutor's Office, Monday through Friday (except holidays) from 8:30 A.M. to 4:30 P.M. at 40 N. Bridge Street, Somerville, N.J. 08876 or call (908) 231-7100.
- After business hours or on weekends and holidays you may reach the Internal Affairs Unit by contacting Somerset County Central Communications at (908) 526-2500.
- A member of the public has the right to make his/her complaint anonymously. He/she does not need to be an American citizen to do so and can not be required to produce identification or be accompanied by a citizen before a complaint will be accepted. The police or Prosecutor's Office can not report a person to federal immigration officials in retaliation for the filing of an internal-affairs complaint.
- A juvenile has the right to file an internal-affairs complaint, with or without the presence of a parent or guardian.

How Complaints are Investigated:

- To ensure an extremely thorough investigation, your complaint will be referred to the Somerset County Prosecutor's Office, Internal Affairs Unit where a specially trained Internal Affairs detective will conduct a thorough and objective investigation.
- The Internal Affairs detective might ask you to assist with the investigation by giving a detailed statement about what happened or providing other important information. All available witnesses will be contacted to ascertain pertinent information relating to your complaint.
- The length of time to conduct an internal investigation will vary, depending upon the complexity of the incident. If there is an extended delay in the investigation, for any reason, you will be notified. Please feel free to contact the Internal Affairs detective at any time during the course of the investigation with any questions you may have.

The Results:

- When an internal investigation is completed, the Somerset County Prosecutor's Office Internal Affairs detective will notify you, in writing, of the outcome of the investigation. There are four possible findings:
 1. **Sustained** – The investigation disclosed sufficient evidence to prove the allegation(s).
 - a. If our investigation shows that a crime may have been committed, you may be asked to testify before a grand jury and in court.

- b. If our investigation results in a police officer, detective or assistant prosecutor being charged with a violation of departmental rules and regulations, you might be asked to testify in an administrative disciplinary hearing. All administrative disciplinary hearings shall be closed to the public unless the law enforcement officer who is the subject of the inquiry requests an open hearing.

2. **Exonerated** – The actions of the officer were justified, legal and proper.
3. **Not Sustained** – The investigation failed to disclose sufficient evidence to clearly prove or disprove the allegation. The case will be closed, pending further information.
4. **Unfounded** - The alleged incident did not occur; or there is insufficient information to conduct a meaningful investigation. The case will be closed, and no further action will be taken.

The Law:

1. **It is unlawful to provide a false statement under oath (N.J.S.A. 2C:28-2)**
 - a. False swearing. A person who makes a false statement under oath or equivalent affirmation, or swears or affirms the truth of such a statement previously made, when he does not believe the statement to be true, is guilty of a crime of the fourth degree.