

## **THE POLICE PUBLIC COMPLAINTS AUTHORITY**

The Authority is an independent, **non-police** agency with the power to investigate allegations of misconduct filed by members of the public against members of the Jamaica Constabulary Force and its Auxiliaries. Investigations are conducted in an impartial and objective fashion by the Authority's Investigative Staff which is made up **solely** of civilian employees.

### **Who comprises the Authority?**

The Authority consists of three persons appointed by the Governor General in his discretion by instrument under the Broad Seal (one of whom is appointed Executive Chairman).

### **What are the Legal Functions of the Authority?**

- To monitor the investigation by the Force of any complaint or other matter to which the Act applies with a view to ensuring that such investigation is conducted impartially
- To supervise the investigation of complaints by the Force.
- To undertake direct investigation of complaints.
- To evaluate and report to the Minister of Justice from time to time on the system of handling complaints.

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

Complaints may be made by a member of the public, whether or not that person is affected by the subject of the complaint, or by any person on behalf of a member of the public so affected, **but with his/her written consent.**

### **What happens to a complaint after it is filed?**

The complaint is assigned to a PPCA Investigator, who will commence investigation immediately. The Investigator will gather as much information as possible about the complaint through records of the Police Department, field visits, interviews of witnesses, police officers and other available sources. The Authority will inform you by letter of the status of an ongoing investigation. At the close of the investigation, the case is thoroughly reviewed by the Authority.

Where the Authority considers that a criminal offence may have been committed, the matter is reported to the Director of Public Prosecutions for his ruling, otherwise it is reported to the Commissioner of Police with the Authority's recommendation. The Authority notifies the complainant by letter of the action taken.

If your complaint does not fall within the Authority's jurisdiction the Authority will forward it to the appropriate agency and will notify you of the referral.

### **What are the possible action that the Authority may take?**

The Authority may decide that the complaint is:-

- **Substantiated:** The subject officer has committed the alleged act of misconduct.
- **Unsubstantiated:** There was insufficient evidence to substantiate the complaint.
- **Unfounded:** The subject officer did not commit an act of misconduct. The incident occurred but the officer's actions were lawful.

### **A complaint may also be dispensed with if:**

- the complaint is withdrawn
- the complainant or victim is unavailable
- the complainant or victim is uncooperative
- the constable is unidentified
- it is referred to another Agency
- it is resolved informally

### **What is the role of the Complainant?**

Your help is required in resolving your complaint. You will be asked to meet with an investigator and provide the facts surrounding the incident. You may be asked to provide names, addresses and telephone numbers of witnesses and to sign medical release forms.

### **How long does it take before a complaint is resolved?**

The PPCA strives to resolve all complaints in a timely manner. The exact time frame depends on the complexity of the investigation and the cooperation of the parties. On the average, the investigation of a complaint is completed within three months.

**Is there any other way to resolve the complaint?**

Where the parties voluntarily agree, a complaint which if proven would not attract sanctions may be resolved informally. In this case the assistance of a neutral party assigned by the Authority is utilized.

**How, Where and When may a complaint be lodged to the Authority?**

**How:** In person, and by mail.

**Where:** The 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Office Centre Building,  
12 Ocean Boulevard  
Kingston Mall, Kingston  
Jamaica

Tel: 967-3603, 967-4063  
Fax: 967-2585  
Toll Free: 1-888-367-4357  
Email: chairppca@cwjamaica.com

**For the parishes of Trelawny, St. James, Hanover and Westmoreland**

**Contact:** The 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
42 Market Street,  
Montego Bay,  
St. James, Jamaica

Tel: 940-2310

**When:** Mondays - Thursdays from 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., and Fridays from 9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.