



8%
of complaints
received
annually are
investigated*.

The police ethics investigation

Your police ethics complaint was submitted to the Commissaire à la déontologie policière. On the basis of public interest and of all the circumstances, the latter has decided to conduct an investigation on the situation described in your complaint.



What is the purpose of a police ethics investigation?

The purpose of the investigation is to **gather all the relevant elements** regarding your complaint (for example, testimonies, documents, videos, etc.).

A report will be produced after the investigation. The analysis of this report will enable the Commissaire to take one of the two following decisions:

- **To cite one or more police officers** to appear before the Comité de déontologie policière, a specialized administrative tribunal. The Commissaire will then present the evidence gathered during the investigation so that the Comité may decide whether or not the Code of ethics of Québec police officers was respected and, where applicable, impose the appropriate penalty;
- **To dismiss your complaint.** In this case, you will receive a written decision explaining why the complaint was dismissed. You will have the right to have this decision reviewed.

How do I prepare for the police ethics investigation?

The Commissaire will assign an investigator to your case.

The investigator will contact you shortly. If you were directly involved in the event that is the subject of your complaint, the investigator will probably request to meet with you.

To adequately prepare yourself for this meeting:

1. **Carefully reread your complaint** and note all the details that you wish to add.
2. **Gather all the pieces of evidence** that can support your complaint (such as, statement of offence, photograph, video, document, etc.) and to prepare a copy for the investigator (on a USB flash drive or CD for photographs and videos).
3. **Make a list** of your witnesses with their updated contact information (telephone number and email).
4. **Inform your witnesses** of your complaint to ensure that they are ready to provide a statement. If one of the witnesses is a minor, a person having parental authority must provide consent.

When you meet the investigator, **you have the right to be accompanied by a person of your choice.** However, this person should not be one of the people involved in the events of your complaint since the latter may be met as a witness.



1 out of 3 complaints
lead to a citation before
the Comité de déontologie policière
after investigation*.

What happens next?

The investigator will complete the investigation and draft a report. **You will receive a letter** informing you of the completion of the investigation.

The investigative report must usually be submitted to the Commissaire à la déontologie policière **within six months**. There may be exceptions to this principle, such as, if it is necessary to wait for the result of a judicial proceeding, a criminal investigation or an independent investigation to complete the police ethics investigation.

Afterwards, **counsel for the Commissaire will examine the investigative report and provide recommendations** to the Commissaire regarding the appropriate actions. Counsel may also ask the investigator to obtain additional information or an expert opinion. Additional time is therefore required between the moment the investigative report is completed and that when the Commissaire makes a decision regarding your complaint.

Will the police officers participate in the police ethics investigation?

Not necessarily. Police officers may decide to do so. However, section 192 of the Police Act gives police officers the right to refuse to cooperate in the Commissaire's investigation. They are therefore not required to meet with the Commissaire's investigator and to provide a statement. Police officers may however be required to testify before the Comité de déontologie policière, after the Commissaire's investigation, if they receive a citation.

In contrast, the other police officers who witnessed the event but are not involved by the complaint, must meet with the Commissaire's investigator, if the latter requests it.

The Commissaire's investigator also has access to all of the operational police documents that are related to the complaint (occurrence reports, recordings of 911 calls, administrative forms, detention videos, etc.).

Do I have the right to... have access to the investigative report or to other elements gathered by the investigator?

A lot of information obtained during the investigation must be protected. **This information is not accessible.**

In order to have access to information included in an investigative report, you must submit a written access request, specifying the information you wish to obtain. The person in charge of access to information at the Commissaire's office will analyze your request and provide a written response, taking all the applicable regulations into consideration.

You need to know that the investigative **report may not be used as evidence as such before the tribunal**. It first allows the Commissaire to make a decision regarding your complaint.

Any questions?

The best person to give you further information about the investigation is your investigator. The latter shall provide his or her contact information when contacting you for the first time. Do not hesitate to contact your investigator if you have questions or need assistance.

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while respecting everyone's rights

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