



**PROBATION AND PAROLE BUREAU
STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES**

Procedure No.: P & P 20-9	Subject: COMPLAINTS
Chapter 20: PERSONNEL	Page 1 of 2
Signature: /s/ Ron Alsbury	Revision Date: 03/14/03; 08/01/05
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I. BUREAU DIRECTIVE: Probation and Parole Bureau employees will respond to all complaints from staff, crime victims, and the public in a timely and objective manner.

II. AUTHORITY:
53-1-203, MCA. Power and Duties of Department of Corrections
DOC 1.3.1 (Attachment A) DOC Personnel Manual
DOC 1.3.2 Guidelines for Employee Performance and Conduct

III. DEFINITIONS:
Complaint means an inquiry by telephone, in person, or in writing from employees, crime victims, or the public about Bureau staff and/or programs, procedures, policies and actions.

Bureau Administrator means Community Corrections Division Administrator, Probation and Parole Bureau Chief, Regional Administrators and Probation and Parole Officer II's.

IV. PROCEDURES:
A. Telephone or in-person complaints are normally handled by the person answering the phone or the employee the complainant is addressing in person. If the employee lacks the knowledge to address the complaint, the employee answering the phone shall forward the caller to an employee who can best address the complaint. Normally a complaint at this level does not require the complaint or the response to be documented. The caller can be informed of the opportunity to submit the complaint in writing for a more formal response. If a caller identifies himself or herself as a crime victim, the call will be forwarded to the employee who can best address the complaint or to the Regional Administrator or the Department of Corrections Public/Victim Information Specialist for a response.

B. Written complaints normally require a timely written response.

1. If the complaint is **received at the Department level** and involves policy, program or miscellaneous concerns:
 - a. Support Staff for the Director will log the complaint and forward it to the appropriate Division Administrator, Warden or Program Administrator for an investigation and draft response.
 - b. The response will be returned to the Department of Corrections Public/Victim Information Specialist who will be responsible for preparing the final draft for the signature of the Director or the Governor.

Procedure No: P & P 20-9	Chapter: Personnel	Page 2 of 2
Subject: COMPLAINTS		

2. If the complaint relates to a legal or personnel issue, copies of those complaints will be forwarded to the appropriate unit for a collaborative response.
3. If the complaint involves a 'charge' involving the Director, the complaint will be addressed with the immediate supervisor and Bureau Chief.
4. If the complaint relates to a “charge” against a particular employee that may involve an ethics issue or possible policy violation, the Director’s support staff will forward the complaint to the Department of Corrections Public/Victim Information Specialist who will consult with the Director to decide who should investigate and respond to avoid any possible conflict of interest.
5. If the written complaint is **received at the Probation and Parole Bureau level** and involves an explanation of policy, procedure, program or miscellaneous concern:
 - a. The P&P Bureau Chief can respond to the complaint with a copy to the Department of Corrections Public/Victim Information Specialist.
 - b. If the complaint involves a “charge” against a particular employee that may involve either an ethics issue or a possible policy or procedure violation, the Regional Administrator will discuss the complaint with the Probation & Parole Bureau Chief for a decision on who should investigate and respond.

C. Offender Complaints

Offenders must use the offender grievance procedure for complaints. Any offender complaint received at the Director’s Office or the Probation & Parole Bureau Chief’s office shall be referred to the Legal Unit for screening, further referral, and/or response. A copy of the response will be sent to the Department of Corrections Public/Victim Information Specialist.

- V. CLOSING:** Questions concerning this procedure shall be directed to the Probation and Parole Bureau Chief or Regional Administrator.