Complaints Against Police Office

A Guide for Complainants

Expression of Dissatisfaction Mechanism ("EDM")

The Complaints Against Police Office (CAPO) views complaints as feedbacks on police service and seeks area of improvement to enhance customer satisfaction. In dealing with complaints, we adopt proportionality in resources allocation and aim at resolving grievances and enhancing professionalism of members of the police force.

If you are directly affected by the conduct of a member of the police force, or any practice or procedure adopted by the police force, and feel aggrieved about it, you have the right to make a formal complaint.

Is there any alternative to formal complaint?

An alternative option in lieu of formal complaint may be particularly useful if you do not wish to make a formal complaint for a grievance you hold, but to seek an explanation or to express dissatisfaction relating to the conduct of a member of the police force, or any practice or procedure adopted by the police force.

Taking this alternative option does not deprive you of the right to make a formal complaint. It would allow you to express your dissatisfaction and/or apprise a senior police officer of an issue so that the senior police officer could clear up a misunderstanding, or resolve the matter and identify room for improvement in service delivery or professional standards.

You still retain the right to lodge a formal complaint and will be able to change your mind after taking the option to have your grievance resolved by means of "Expression of Dissatisfaction Mechanism" ("EDM").

What are the benefits of taking the alternative option?

The alternative option is meant to introduce a proportionate, timely and effective way for members of the public, who wish to express their dissatisfaction, to have their grievances addressed without the need to go through the formal complaints process. It also offers a good opportunity for Police to clear up any misunderstanding and/or make service quality improvements.

How does “Expression of Dissatisfaction Mechanism” ("EDM") work?

The CAPO officer who is looking into your complaint will contact you and explain to you the option for EDM as an alternative to going through the formal complaints process if the nature of your complaint is suitable for EDM.

If you decide to make a formal complaint, CAPO will invoke the formal complaints procedure under the Independent Police Complaints Council Ordinance, Cap. 604.
Before opting to have your complaint dealt with by means of EDM, you should be informed fully what to expect in response to your expression of dissatisfaction. You should also have been advised that you retain the right at all times to lodge a formal complaint on the same matter.

If you confirm to take the alternative option instead of lodging a formal complaint, your dissatisfaction will be dealt with by means of EDM and CAPO will:
(a) Make a record of the substance of your dissatisfaction;
(b) Explain to you the relevant procedures and possible resolution to follow up or handle your dissatisfaction;
(c) Apprise the formation commander of the police formation concerned of your dissatisfaction; and
(d) Provide an acknowledgement to you.

**Frequently asked questions**

**Is the alternative option introduced with intent to deter or hinder me from lodging a formal complaint?**

No. The introduction of an alternative way to deal with your complaint is meant to provide an additional option for you. It does not deprive you of the right to make a formal complaint. Your complaint can only be referred to as an EDM case if you opt to have it dealt with in this way instead of making a formal complaint and the nature of your complaint is suitable for EDM. You should not feel under pressure to take the alternative option to have your complaint dealt with by means of EDM.

You still retain the right to lodge a formal complaint after taking the option to have your dissatisfaction resolved by EDM.

**Will my EDM case be taken seriously and dealt with promptly?**

Whether you have opted to lodge a formal complaint or to have your dissatisfaction dealt with by means of EDM, the police will take it seriously as it is feedback on the police service offering a good opportunity for us to see service quality improvements made.

**How will my EDM case be dealt with?**

To deal with your EDM case, the CAPO officer who is looking into your complaint will attempt to explain to you the relevant procedures, and where appropriate, possible resolution to follow up or handle your dissatisfaction. In any case, the formation commander of the police formation concerned will be apprised of your dissatisfaction.

**Once I have opted to have my complaint referred to as an EDM case, can I change my mind?**

Even if you opt to have your complaint dealt with as an EDM case, you will be able to change your mind because you still retain the right to lodge a formal complaint on the same matter within two years from the date of the incident giving rise to the complaint.

Once you choose to make a formal complaint, the police will handle it under the Independent Police Complaints Council Ordinance, Cap. 604.
What if I have made a formal complaint but change my mind and decide to have my complaint dealt with by means of EDM instead?

If your complaint has been categorized as a reportable complaint under the Independent Police Complaints Council Ordinance but you change your mind and decide that you only want to voice dissatisfaction instead, CAPO will treat it as a case where you wish to withdraw your complaint and follow the established procedures governing withdrawal of reportable complaints.

Once you have confirmed your withdrawal, your grievance will then be referred to as a “Reflection Of Opinion”.

Will the handling of my EDM case be subject to monitoring by the Independent Police Complaints Council?

EDM is also monitored by the Independent Police Complaints Council (IPCC) and CAPO will regularly submit the summary of EDM case to IPCC for overseeing.

What should I do if my EDM case has not been resolved to my satisfaction?

If you consider that your EDM case has not been resolved in a satisfactory manner, you can make a formal complaint on the same matter within two years from the date of the incident giving rise to the complaint.

How to find out more

If you want to know more, please contact CAPO:

**Complaints Against Police Reporting Centre**

**Opening Hours**
Mon-Fri: 7:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.
Closed on Saturdays, Sundays and Public Holidays

**Address**
Ground Floor, Annex Block,
Caine House, No. 3 Arsenal Street, Wanchai, Hong Kong

**Fax**
2200 4460
2200 4461
2200 4462

**Complaints Hotline**
2866 7700 (24 hours)