

Rule 6: Handling of complaints

Purpose

This rule guides how the Police Review Commission (PRC) handles multiple complaints about the same incident, and submissions that involve more than one complaint. It allows the CEO to consolidate complaints that relate to the same incident or similar issues and to separate multiple allegations within a single submission into distinct complaints when needed, while preserving complainants' rights and procedural fairness under the *Police Act*.

Legislation

- **S.(6)(2)(c)(i) of the Police Conduct and Oversight Regulation**
 - The chief executive officer may establish rules governing the complaints procedure, including the management of complaints by the Police Review Commission.

Procedure

A) Consolidation of complaints

- The CEO may consolidate two or more complaints if, in their opinion, it is appropriate to do so.
- When a complainant files two or more complaints that concern the same allegation, the CEO may combine the complaints and deal with them as one complaint. This duplicate complaint consolidation results in one primary complaint moving forward while the other complaints are closed. A subsequent investigation would produce one report or response.
- When multiple complainants file a complaint about the same incident which raises similar allegations, the CEO may direct that the complaint be consolidated. Unlike the duplicate complaint consolidation, this type of multiple complaint consolidation will not result in complaints being closed.
- For multiple consolidated complaints, the CEO will only require one investigative report to be prepared.
- Each complainant will receive status updates and disposition letters specific to the facts and issues raised in their respective complaints.
- The decision to consolidate complaints will not interfere with the ability of complainants to exercise their rights under the *Police Act*.

B) Separation of complaints

- The PRC will assess submissions made by complainants based on the substance of each allegation rather than the form.
- When a single submission contains multiple allegations, each allegation may be assessed individually and categorized according to the applicable level of complaint under the *Police Act*.
- The separation of the complaints ensures that each complaint is resolved accurately and transparently.

- Where a submission with multiple allegations is separated into discrete complaints and complaint levels, consideration will be given to the most appropriate means of issuing status updates, investigative reports, and disposition letters.