



INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BLACK PROFESSIONAL FIREFIGHTERS INVESTIGATION PROCESS INTERNAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE INFORMATION

1. Adhere to the IABPFF overview Concept
2. Regional Director identify (1) one member from their Region to sit on the IA Committee

Before Conducting an Investigation

- Define what is to be investigated (**This will come through the Regional Directors to the Internal Affairs Committee Chair**).
- **(14 days after the offense to file a complaint)**
- Identify the resolution the complainant is seeking, whether the complainant's expectations are realistic or need to be managed, and other possible remedies. Explain what the IABPFF can and cannot do.
- Note any special considerations that apply to the complaint—for example, if the complainant has asked for their identity to be withheld from others or if there is sensitive or confidential information that needs to be safeguarded
- **Turn over to the proper authorities if necessary.**

Investigation

3. The purpose of an investigation if to:

- a. Resolve the complaint by reaching a fair and independent view on the issues raised by a complainant
- b. Provide an appropriate remedy as needed.

The three principles of fair investigation are:

- * **Impartiality** - Each complaint should be approached with an open mind, and the facts and contentions in support of a complaint should be weighed objectively.
- * **Confidentiality** - A complaint should be investigated in private, and care should be taken when disclosing to others any identifying details of a complaint.
- * **Transparency** - A complainant should be told about the steps in the complaint process and be given an opportunity to comment on adverse information before a complaint is dismissed.

The following are among the requirements that are relevant to complaint investigation:

- A finding on a disputed factual matter must be based on evidence that is relevant and logically capable of supporting the finding—not on guesswork, preconceptions, suspicion or questionable assumptions
- A written record should be kept of evidence that is provided orally
- A complainant is not obliged to substantiate each fact or element in their complaint, although it is reasonable for the investigator to ask them to assist the investigation by providing documents they have or explaining things they know
- The rules of evidence that apply in court proceedings do not apply to administrative investigation, and an investigator can use reliable information obtained from any source
- To accord natural justice, a complainant should be given an opportunity to comment on contrary information or claims from another source before a decision is made to dismiss the complaint

It is not always possible to resolve each disputed matter. The evidence available to the investigator might be scant, inconclusive or evenly balanced, and this should be explained to the complainant. Thought should also be given to resolving the complaint differently, by exploring the options for reaching an understanding between the complainant and those being complained about.

INVESTIGATION PROCESS:

- A. File a complaint on the appropriate form and submit to your Regional Directors
- B. Regional Director will forward the complaint to the Internal Affairs Committee Chair.
- C. Committee Chair will notify the individuals involved that a complaint was received and an investigation will ensue. This letter will identify committee members as well.
- D. Create an Investigation Plan; this is a flexible document fit for purpose including time frames for completion.
- E. Prepare a chronology of facts known and allegations made.
- F. Assess - what are the issues? Who may have relevant information/documents? Who should be interviewed and in what order?
- G. The Interview Questions:
 - Where and when did the action take place
 - Is it ongoing
 - Who committed the alleged behavior
 - What exactly happened

- Who else was present
 - Did anyone witness the event
 - Did you indicate that you were offended or displeased by the act or situation
 - How did you react
 - What did you do
 - Have you discussed the incident with anyone
 - Do you know of others that may have been affected by the same actions
 - Did anyone else report the incident
 - Prior relationship with alleged
 - Relevant documents, notes, or physical evidence
 - What facts support the allegation of misconduct
 - What actions do you want the iabpff to take
- H. **30-Days** to gather information, conducts interviews, and evaluate information from various sources.
- I. IA Committee will convene to evaluate the evidence and make a recommendation to the IABPFF in accordance with the Overview Concept.
- J. A formal letter will be submitted to the President outlining the investigation, action taken, documentation of the process, evidence collected, recommendation rendered and why along with recommended follow-up.
- K. Information regarding the decision will be submitted in accordance with the Overview Concept Internal Affairs Committee.