THE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES INCLUDED IN THIS MANUAL ARE NOT A CONTRACT OF EMPLOYMENT AND SHOULD NOT BE RELIED ON AS SUCH. THESE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES ARE SUBJECT TO AND MAY BE CHANGED AT ANY TIME BY THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY, MEDICAL UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA.

A. Policy

The Complaint System is a Department program which provides all members a means of voicing complaints and reporting wrong doings. It is the Department's policy that all personnel have the right to voice legitimate complaints, and to have their complaint considered and resolved in a fair and prompt manner, without any fear of reprisal. In addition, members have a responsibility to report acts of mismanagement, violations of Department directives, injustices, errors, or fraud to their Supervisor.

B. Procedure

RESOLVING COMPLAINTS IS A COMMAND FUNCTION. Each Supervisor must establish a program to consider members complaints and to provide corrective actions, if necessary. People who complain must know they can enter the system, and that proper responsive consideration will result. No member of this Department may interfere with or deny an individual the right to communicate with the Director of Public Safety, as long as the person complies with the proper method established by the Department. Supervisors must insure that personnel have an easy way to air complaints or seek counsel. Of course, members should use the Chain of Command to discuss the issues first with the immediate supervisor. However, in those cases where there is a problem and the member feels uncomfortable in the normal system, he/she can arrange an appointment with a Department's Peer Counselor, who has the authority to bypass the whole system and bring the matter directly to the Director, see Policy # 27.

Supervisors play a crucial role in the Complaint System. They are also in a position to help resolve many complaints. Here are a few suggestions on how you can be effective.

1. KNOW THE SYSTEM
Use the Department Library and become aware of other avenues available to members. You cannot properly advise your subordinates, unless you are familiar with the system yourself. Make sure your people are aware of the Complaint System. You have a responsibility to make sure they know how it works.

2. **BE CREDIBLE**

Your subordinates must be convinced they can bring their complaints to you. You must be accessible, cooperative, responsive, and have integrity. Many complaints can be resolved quickly and simply by Supervisors, but only if they are aware of the problem. Your people have to believe they can get a fair hearing from you - without retribution - and that you will earnestly try to help them solve their problems.

3. **FIX WHAT YOU CAN**

If you can help solve a problem, do so. If you don't have the authority, refer the matter to your Supervisor. Don't attempt to deal with problems beyond your ability, authority or responsibility. This action usually makes the situation worse, and wastes both your time and that of your people. Remember that you must never interfere with a subordinate's right to complain. A subordinate may make a complaint at any level without your approval, and you cannot deny or interfere with this right. However, if you remain available and willing to help your people, you will find that few of them will have need to use the channels outside of their Chain of Command.

4. **INVESTIGATION OF COMPLAINTS**

In some cases, an internal investigation will be required before corrective action can be taken. When an investigation is indicated, the Director will appoint the Internal Affairs Officer, Investigator, or another person to conduct the investigation. When appointed, it will be the responsibility of the Investigating Officer to inquire into all aspects of the complaint, and follow all leads to their logical conclusion. The Investigating Officer must promptly report the results of the investigation to the Director, in writing, in the following format: **Matter Investigated, Investigating Officer, Persons Contacted, Findings and Conclusion.** Appropriate statements and other supporting documents must be attached.