

## "Hotline Tips" for filing a complaint with the Command Inspector General

The pointers listed below will help you understand the system and what the Inspector General (IG) can do for you.

1. **BE SURE THERE IS A PROBLEM.** Personal peeves loom large in the minds of some Marines, but there is little the IG can do about a peeve. If the cooks consistently turn out lousy chow, that's a problem. If someone doesn't like the menu for one particular meal, that's a peeve.
2. **GIVE THE CHAIN OF COMMAND A CHANCE TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM.** The chain of command consists of the people who can solve problems. Your chaplain, congressman, or the IG can help on occasion, but they must ultimately work with the chain of command.
3. **TRY ALL OTHER APPROPRIATE REMEDIES.** The IG is a sort of "court of last resort." If other remedies are available, they must be used first.
4. **BE TOTALLY HONEST WITH THE IG; ONCE THE IG STARTS INVESTIGATING, HE OR SHE WILL KNOW SOON ENOUGH IF THE TRUTH IS TWISTED.** A lot of time and effort will be wasted if you are not honest in your complaint.
5. **KEEP IN MIND THE IG'S REGULATORY AND STATUTORY LIMITS.** The IG cannot change a regulation just because it does not suit you. The IG, however, can recommend changes to regulations that are determined to be inappropriate or unfair.
6. **THE IG IS NOT A COMMANDER; HE OR SHE CAN ONLY RECOMMEND, NOT ORDER.** You may get upset because nothing seems to happen as a result of your complaint. Keep in mind that the IG can advise a commander, but cannot order him or her. There may be good reasons why the recommendation was not acted upon.
7. **THE IG CAN ONLY RESOLVE A CASE ON THE BASIS OF PROVABLE FACT.** If the IG cannot find concrete proof, he cannot resolve the case in your favor. Just because you say your supervisor violated the rules does not make it a proven fact.
8. **DO NOT EXPECT IMMEDIATE RESULTS FROM AN ONGOING INVESTIGATION OR EVEN A COMPLETED ONE.** It is human nature to tend to look at things from a very personal point of view. Some people assume that the commander has intervened and muzzled the IG if they do not hear the results of the investigation immediately. Heavy workloads require time.
9. **BE PREPARED TO TAKE "NO" FOR AN ANSWER.** Do not assume that a negative answer from the IG is wrong just because it seems impalpable. If you are absolutely certain the answer is wrong, and if you have some additional evidence to support that certainty, the case may be reconsidered. If, on the other hand, you are merely unhappy because the report does not go in your favor, it is pointless to continue presenting the IG with the same complaint and the same evidence.

After careful consideration of these pointers, you will be able to determine whether you have a problem appropriate for the IG. You will also save yourself and others a lot of time and avoid unnecessary frustration.