

DIRECTIONS FOR CRIMINAL PROSECUTION OF BAD CHECK COMPLAINTS:

Each year, the Tompkins County Sheriff's Office entertains numerous Bad Check complaints. To ensure that all complaints are handled in a timely manner, the following guidelines should be adhered to by anyone filing a Bad Check complaint with the Sheriff's Office.

Please note: Bad Check complaints will only be received for those uttered within the jurisdiction of Tompkins County, and from areas within the county that do not have their own law enforcement agency.

PRIOR TO ACCEPTING ANY CHECK, all businesses and persons accepting checks, shall obtain proper identification from the person attempting to pass the check. Some examples of valid forms of identification are: driver's license, Sheriff's ID, Military ID, DSS card, passport, or any form of identification containing a photograph. After reviewing the identification, the person accepting the check **shall indicate on the check**, what form of ID was presented to them, along with any other identifiers that were present on the ID (i.e.: client ID # on driver's license).

1. Upon notice that you are holding a Bad Check, a Registered letter with return receipt requested, **MUST** be sent to the maker of the check requesting restitution. (***Somewhere in the letter, it shall be included that if the matter is not resolved, the check will be turned over to the Tompkins County Sheriff's Office for criminal prosecution.***)
2. If the maker of the check fails to contact you within ten (10) days of receipt of your letter or if the letter is returned as undeliverable, **THEN...**
3. Protest the Bad Check at the bank it was drawn on (This is required by law).
4. Bring the following with you to the Sheriff's Office:
 - a. The Bad Check (not a copy).
 - b. A copy of the registered letter sent to the maker with the returned receipt, showing that the letter was signed for, or returned to sender.
 - c. The Bank Protest form (we only take complaints regarding checks that were returned for "Insufficient Funds" or "Account Closed").
5. At this time, a Bad Check complaint will be initiated. The items you bring to the Sheriff's Office are evidence, and will be held by the office as part of the case file.
6. Any contact by the maker of the check with you after the complaint is accepted, should result in their referral to the Tompkins County Sheriff's Office Criminal Investigations Division.
7. During this process, you are not to take ANY restitution from anyone on behalf of the maker, or from the maker, unless so directed by a court.
8. If prior to taking a Bad Check to the Sheriff's Office, you have taken partial restitution, we will not take a criminal complaint from you.

****** The aforementioned information must be adhered to, or a criminal complaint will not be initiated******