



2020-21 Inaugural Biennial Report

Civilian Oversight of Fort Worth Law Enforcement

The Office of the Police Oversight Monitor
OPOM...Fostering Community Trust Through Collaboration and Law Enforcement





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A MESSAGE FROM THE INDEPENDENT POLICE OVERSIGHT MONITOR



The Office of the Police Oversight Monitor (OPOM) opened its doors in March 2020. From the onset, we dealt with challenges as a new organization due to the unfortunate global pandemic and its underlying effects as well as the united demand in our city and across the

country for equitable policing. OPOM continued to push forward with understanding concerns, laying the groundwork for community members to share their concerns and commendations regarding policing in Fort Worth and building viable relationships with the community, stakeholders and law enforcement.

This Biennial Report is our first comprehensive report, promoting accountability, transparency and inspiration about the path that led up to its production as well as the engaging path forward. It covers from March 2020 to December 2021, summarizing OPOM's activities and relevant data. It further provides a snapshot of onward established goals and objectives.

Recognized by the National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement (NACOLE) as attributes of an effective civilian law enforcement oversight organization, OPOM incorporated the principles of Independence, Authority, Access, Rapport, Community Engagement, and Transparency in its operations. The spirit of these ethical and professional standards guides OPOM's civilian oversight practitioners in adapting to individual circumstances, and in gaining public trust while ensuring its integrity.

OPOM thanks the Fort Worth community for entrusting us to serve as your voice. We continue to build and enhance our organization, so that we can represent you and build on the credibility with which you have placed in us. We extend gratitude to the many community members who said "yes" without hesitation on thought-provoking collaborations

regarding moving forward with community accountability of law enforcement.

OPOM is grateful to have the support of those in City leadership. OPOM thanks former Mayor Betsy Price and reigning Mayor Mattie Parker, City Council members, City Manager David Cooke and former Deputy City Manager Jesus Chapa for the creation of OPOM and the ongoing confidence that they have shown in OPOM. OPOM further enjoys the support of various City departments, who have supported and encouraged us since day one.

The OPOM Team must be applauded. They have done an outstanding job and stepped up to the plate via collaboration and coordination throughout our organization despite any challenges or opposition faced. The Team's determination, objectivity, and pursuit of the protection of civil rights are commendable.

For a civilian oversight agency like OPOM to be successful, there must be a viable, concerted working relationship with the law enforcement agency it monitors. OPOM extends its appreciation to former Chief Ed Kraus and current Chief Neil Noakes, the Command staff, and Fort Worth Police personnel for their continued collaboration with OPOM.

OPOM is fully committed to being accountable, objective, fair and diligent to the Fort Worth community; this is a long-term commitment requiring patience, collaboration, and mutual trust of all stakeholders. Thank you for your support and guidance, ensuring OPOM is a world class civilian oversight body. I hope you find the 2020 -2021 Biennial Report both enlightening and informative, and I encourage you to continue to engage OPOM in the future via your participation in community-police conversations, responding to OPOM questionnaires and surveys, signing up for OPOM's periodic updates as well as following us on social media.

It is our honor to serve you!

Respectfully,
Kim Neal

CREATING CIVILIAN OVERSIGHT IN FORT WORTH

The Fort Worth Task Force on Race and Culture

In the wake of nationally publicized police incidents and resulting protests, the Fort Worth City Council decided in June 2017, to appoint a task force of community leaders who would advise the Council on how to move the city forward in becoming more inclusive, equitable, respectful and compassionate. The Council selected four distinguished community members to lead the task force – Lillie Biggins, Rabbi Andrew Bloom, Rosa Navejar, and Bob Ray Sanders – and asked these four co-chairs to select the other task force members. On August 1, 2017, the Council adopted a resolution appointing the Task Force on Race and Culture with 23 original members.

The City Council's original charge to the task force was limited to advice on the conduct of community conversations about race and culture, on an assessment of disparities in the provision of municipal services, and on leadership training for City officials. After conducting its first citywide town hall meeting in October 2017 and hearing many concerns about the variety and extent of racial discrimination in the community, the task force decided to broaden its scope

substantially to include a wide array of disparities affecting the quality of life in Fort Worth.

Most of these disparities pertained directly or indirectly to six general topics: criminal justice, economic development, education, health, housing, and education. Subcommittees focused on each of these topics were formed to research and provide recommendations to the task force to address disparities. The Task Force made Civilian Oversight of the Fort Worth Police Department their first recommendation to address criminal justice disparities.

The City of Fort Worth's Office of the Police Oversight Monitor (OPOM) was first established in February 2020 pursuant to Fort Worth City Code Art. 2, 2-27 as a mechanism with which to provide oversight and accountability of the Fort Worth Police Department (FWPD). Kim Neal was appointed as the City of Fort Worth's first Police Monitor in March of 2020. Created with the spirit of community collaboration, efforts to build this newly created office first began in early March of that year.

“While the establishment of civilian oversight alone cannot restore law enforcement’s legitimacy, it is difficult, if not impossible, to maintain public trust without it. As such, developing effective and adequately resourced civilian oversight is among the several strategies that must be employed to rebuild community relations with law enforcement.”

Vitoroulis, Michael, Cameron McEllhiney, and Liana Perez. 2021. Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement: Report on the State of the Field and Effective Oversight Practices. Washington, DC: Office of Community Oriented Policing Services.

APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE 24030-02-2020

Section 2-27. Divisions of the City Manager

Independent Police Monitor

The Independent Police Monitor will advise the City Manager and Assistant City Manager on strategic policy matters as it relates to the Police Department, will track the internal investigations and community complaints and produce reports for the City Manager and the Police Chief. The Independent Police Monitor will also lead the long-term operational planning for the Office of the Independent Police Monitor. The duties and responsibilities of the Independent Police Monitor will include:

1. Establishing and implementing the independent investigative process to receive and review formal citizen complaints of the Police Department or its staff separate from Internal Affairs while maintaining communication with the Fort Worth Police Department and the Internal Affairs Division;
2. Providing ongoing assurance that internal investigations by law enforcement are thorough, fair, and unbiased and that police practices in this regard are transparent;
3. Reviewing the strategic planning/long-range policy, practices and training of the Police Department;

4. Demonstrating a proactive approach when interacting with the community, keeping the community informed about the work of the Office of the Independent Police Monitor, the City's role and oversight of the Police Department and Police related activities impacting the community;

5. Increasing communication from geographic locations in the city made up of majority-minority populations to listen to their issues and receive input directly from Fort Worth citizens;

6. Reviewing formal complaints that have been made against officers and monitors or participates in internal investigations which may include an independent investigative component;

7. Examining broad patterns in investigations and recommends policy changes; and

8. Requesting and initiating professional review of individual or systemic issues concerning race, culture, and diversity within the Police Department or of Police Department practices.

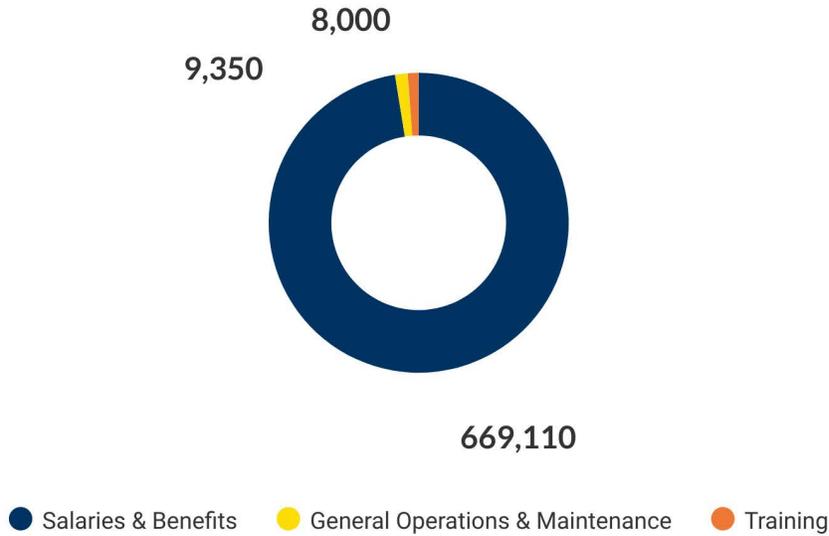
“Community efforts to address the issue of police-community relations increasingly include civilian oversight of law enforcement as a means of building trust. Traditionally, high-profile incidents have spawned the creation of new or strengthened civilian oversight. However, decision makers in jurisdictions throughout the country are increasingly establishing civilian oversight proactively in recognition of its ability to promote public trust in law enforcement and reduce exposure to the risks of misconduct.”

Vitoroulis, Michael, Cameron McElhiney, and Liana Perez. 2021. Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement: Report on the State of the Field and Effective Oversight Practices. Washington, DC: Office of Community Oriented Policing Services.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY & TIMELINE

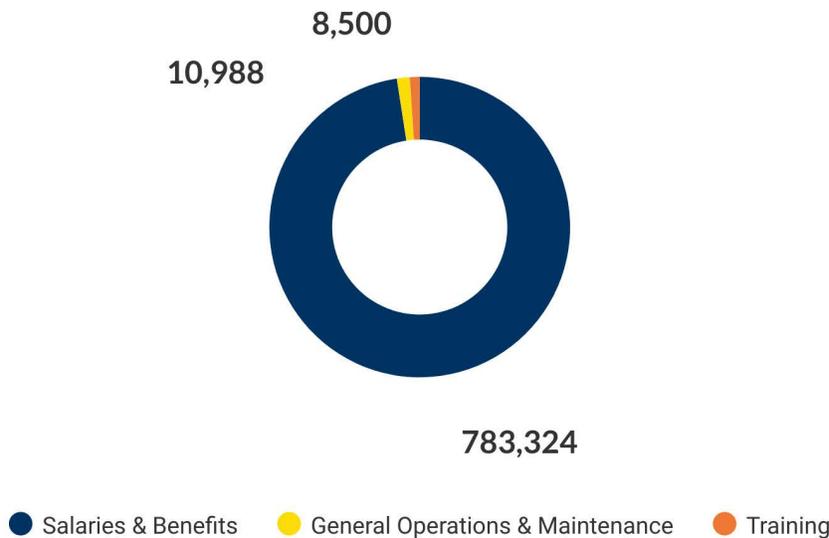
In fiscal year 2020, the Office of the Police Oversight Monitor's budget was established by the City Manager's Office with \$669,110 allocated for Salaries & Benefits, \$8,000 for Training and \$9,350 for General Operations & Maintenance. The total approved budget for 2020 was \$686,460.

2020 Budget



The OPOM budget was increased in fiscal year 2021 to include \$783,324 allocated for Salaries & Benefits, \$8,500 for Training and \$10,988 for General Operations & Maintenance. The total approved budget for 2021 was \$802,812.

2021 Budget



TEAM

FULL-TIME STAFF

The Director/Police Monitor is appointed by and reports directly to the City Manager. The Director is responsible for leading a team of management, policy, and administrative professionals, to serve as the designated civilian oversight agency. The office is empowered to act fairly and impartially, ensuring greater accountability of public trust in the FWPD.

Civilian oversight of law enforcement is a complex and rapidly developing aspect of local government. To enhance their knowledge of current civilian and law enforcement trends, the team must be well-versed in law enforcement procedures, investigative protocols and best practices. Completed professional training included Police Ride-Alongs, Internal Affairs Investigations, Use of Force, Use of Force Analyses and Reporting, De-escalation, Procedural Justice, Implicit/Unconscious Bias, Community Oversight of Law Enforcement, Active Bystandership and internal citywide training.



Kim Neal

Independent Police
Monitor/Director



Catherine Huckaby

Deputy Independent Police
Monitor/Deputy Director



Nathan Benson

Sr. Policy Advisor



Kenneth Smith

Policy Advisor



Erin Ragsdale

Sr. Management Analyst



Branigan Contreras

Sr. Administrative Assistant

*Special thanks to former
Deputy Director Denise Rodriguez
and Administrative Assistant Vanessa
Campos for the time and dedication they
gave toward establishing the office.*

INTERNS

Early on, the office leveraged the robust internship program from Texas A&M University School of Law to enhance its small staff. Their legal skill sets were used to manage projects which included researching and benchmarking promising policing policies and practices such as community police engagement, community problem-oriented policing, use of force, pursuits, stops, searches, body worn cameras and other recording/video systems, recruitment, training, and researching and drafting a state-of-the-art community police restorative justice mediation program and a know your rights campaign for youth and adults.

The OPOM provided opportunities for students to gain a broader understanding of the civilian oversight field. The invaluable legal and benchmarking research they conducted allowed the OPOM staff to focus its efforts on complaint and commendation intake, monitoring investigations, policy recommendations and community engagements.



NORTH TEXAS COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

In 2021, the OPOM was awarded a \$21,600 grant from the Fund to Advance Racial Equity at the North Texas Community Foundation to employ two part-time interns. Throughout 2020-21, up to ten interns volunteers with the OPOM, reviewing public policy and implications and providing research support.

COMPLAINTS & COMMENDATIONS

Accepting Formal Complaints and Commendations

In 2020, OPOM began accepting complaints and commendations about FWPD police officers in these ways:

Online: FortWorthTexas.gov/OPOM

E-mail: PoliceOversight@fortworthtexas.gov

Phone: 817-392-6535

In Person: Monday through Friday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

Mail: Complete the Citizen Complaint Form and mail to:
The Office of the Police Oversight Monitor, 200 Texas Street, Fort Worth, TX 76102

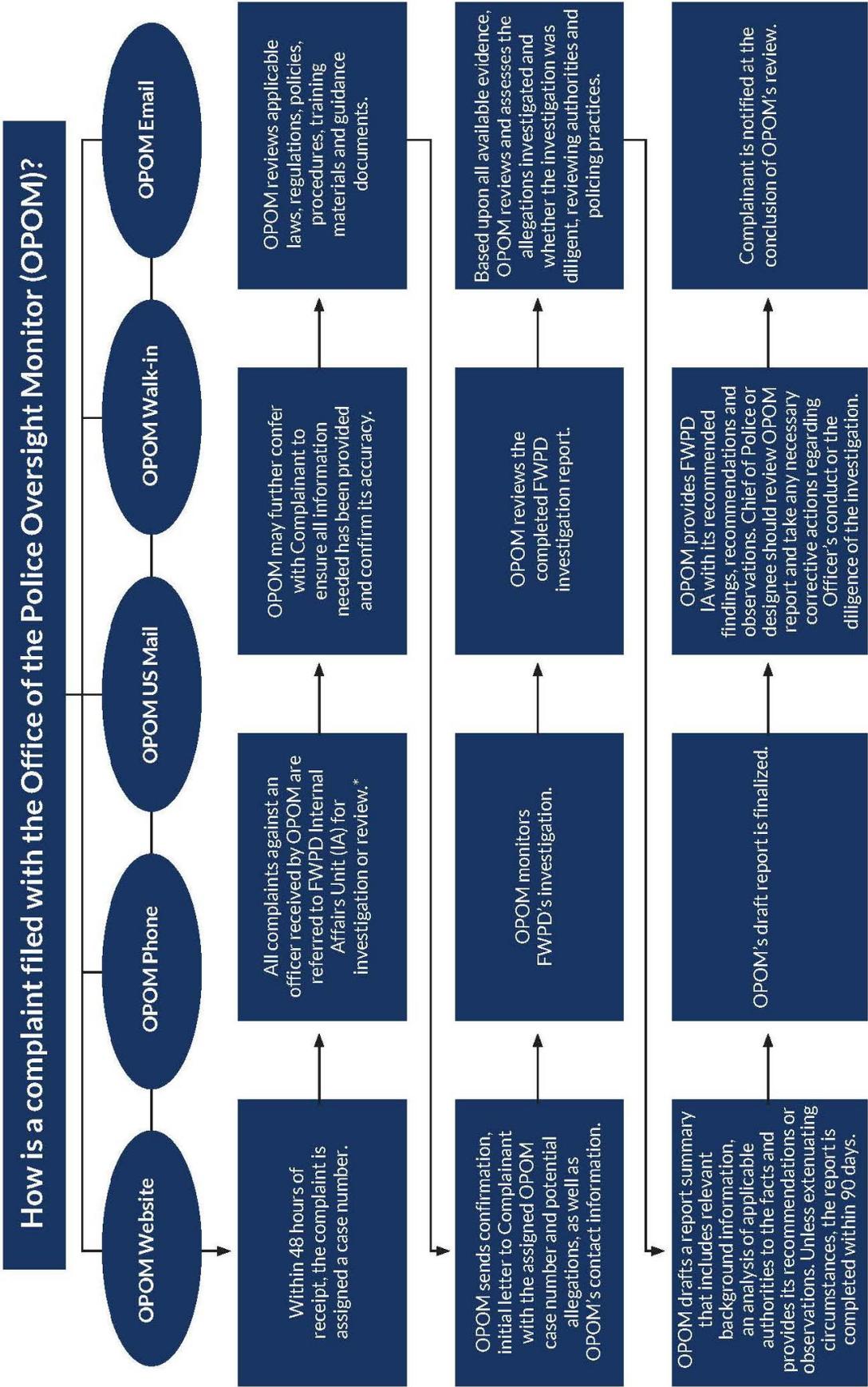
Understanding the Complaint Process

The OPOM created a formal process for individuals to file a formal complaint or commendation with the office and began accepting complaints up to one year from the date of the incident in question. The Police Monitor also assisted in the implementation of a FWPD documentation process of all complaints submitted directly to the Police Department.

Individuals have the option of submitting their complaints or commendations of police officers to OPOM or FWPD. The following outlines the OPOM complaint process after a completed complaint form is received by the OPOM.



Community mural located at 5335 Bonnell Avenue.



ENGAGING THE COMMUNITY

Perception Surveys

To establish a baseline of understanding how the community and police viewed civilian oversight and the value of collaboration, the OPOM conducted two comprehensive surveys about the new office and its responsibilities. Responses included:

Police Perception Survey

- **890** responses
- Over **51%** included sworn FWPDP officers

Community Perception Survey

- **3,991** responses
- Approximately **.5%** of the total population of the city of Fort Worth responded

The results of the surveys were shared with community and City Council and used to create a community engagement plan to listen, educate, and offer support to the community. Additional information about both surveys is available on page 21.

Informational Materials

A collection of bilingual informational materials were created including business cards, brochures and informational flyers depicting the complaint process, which became strategic assets used to increase outreach efforts.

These items were shared with community members, city employees and stakeholders at community engagements. Organizations interested in obtaining printed versions of materials were encouraged to contact the OPOM office.

Materials are also available to view, download or print at www.FortWorthTexas.gov/OPOM.

Our Mission
The City of Fort Worth's Office of the Police Oversight Monitor (OPOM) was first established in February 2020 pursuant to Fort Worth City Code Art. 2, §2-271(a) as a mechanism with which to provide oversight and accountability of Fort Worth law enforcement. Efforts to build this newly created office first began in mid-March 2020. Our vision is for the OPOM to be a proactive leader in law enforcement accountability to Fort Worth law enforcement and the population it serves.

OPOM Functions
In order to achieve its mission, the OPOM engages in the following primary functions:

- Oversight and accountability
- Intake complaints and recommendations
- Monitor contacts, complaint investigations and policing practices
- Review policies and procedures
- Research, benchmark and make recommendations
- Auditing
- Mediation
- Community engagement
- Data collection and analysis
- Periodic reporting

File a Complaint or Complaint
OPOM accepts complaints or compliments about Fort Worth law enforcement via the following methods:

- **Online:** www.fortworthtexas.gov/opom
- **Email:** PoliceOversight@fortworthtexas.gov
- **In-person:** Call 817-392-6535 for appointment. Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- **By Mail:** Download, print and complete the Citizen Complaint Form (CCF).

Mail to: Office of the Police Oversight Monitor
200 Texas St.
Fort Worth, TX 76102

• **Printed Copies:** Printed copies of the complaint form can also be made available.

Nuestra Misión
La Oficina de Observación y Monitoreo de Prácticas Policiales de la Ciudad de Fort Worth (OPOM) se estableció por primera vez en febrero de 2020 de conformidad con el Artículo del Código de la Ciudad de Fort Worth, 2. §2-271(a) como un mecanismo con el que proporcionar supervisión y responsabilidad al Departamento de Policía de Fort Worth. Los esfuerzos para construir esta oficina recién creada comenzaron a mediados de marzo de 2020. Nuestra visión para esta oficina es que sea un líder proactivo en la responsabilidad policial ante el Departamento de Policía de Fort Worth y la población a la que sirve.

FUNCIONES DE OPOM
Para lograr su misión, la OPOM se involucra en las siguientes funciones principales:

- Vigilancia de responsabilidad
- Solución de quejas y reclamos
- Monitoreo de contactos, investigaciones de quejas y las prácticas policíacas
- Revisar políticas y procedimientos
- Investigar, comparar e hacer recomendaciones
- Auditorías
- Participación de la Comunidad
- Recopilación de Datos y Análisis
- Informes Periódicos

Presente una Queja o Cumplido
OPOM acepta quejas o cumplidos sobre la fuerza de la ley de Fort Worth a través de los siguientes métodos:

- **En línea:** www.fortworthtexas.gov/opom
- **Correos:** PoliceOversight@fortworthtexas.gov
- **En persona:** Llame al 817-392-6535 para programar una cita. Lunes - Viernes de 8 a. m. a 5 p. m.
- **Por correo:** Descargue, imprima y complete el Formulario de Queja Ciudadana (CFQ).

Envíe por correo a: Oficina de Monitoreo de Supervisión de la Policía
200 Texas St.
Fort Worth, TX 76102

• **Copias impresas:** Copias impresas del formulario de quejas también pueden ser disponibles.

OPOM...

- es justo e imparcial.
- involucra a los departamentos de Policía de Fort Worth.
- realiza revisiones e investigaciones con diligencia, imparcialidad, objetividad, equidad y de manera oportuna.
- utiliza el modelo de las comunidades que sirven.
- consta de un personal profesional, informado y capacitado.
- comprometido con una supervisión independiente y transparente.

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Fort Worth, TX 76102

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Complaint Process
Complaints should be filed as soon as possible after the incident. According to Tex. Loc. Gov. Code Ann. Chapter 143, any disciplinary action against an officer must be issued within 180 days of the incident. The OPOM complaint process is as follows:

- OPOM receives your complaint and acknowledges its receipt.
- OPOM reviews and forwards your complaint to FWPDP's Internal Affairs Section for review and/or investigation. The FWPDP investigation can take up to 90 days.
- OPOM monitors the FWPDP investigation.
- OPOM reviews the completed FWPDP investigation report, agrees or disagrees with the findings and may provide recommendations to FWPDP as appropriate.
- OPOM notifies you once its review is completed.
- At any time during the FWPDP investigation, feel free to contact OPOM regarding its status.

*Please provide as much information as possible when filing out your complaint to ensure a diligent investigation. Per Tex. Loc. Gov. Code Ann. Chapter 143, in order for your complaint to be fully processed by FWPDP, your signature must be provided and verified under oath by an authorized public official. Furthermore, your complaint must be a true and accurate account of the incident to the best of your knowledge.

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- Community engagement
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- Periodic reporting

ENGAGING THE COMMUNITY

Engagement Strategies



In March 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic interrupted the lives of adults and children throughout much of the world. In Texas, an executive order was established that limited the city's ability to host community meetings to ensure the health and safety of the public. The OPOM quickly pivoted and began meeting with community members virtually to continue engaging with the community, police and other stakeholders.

They sought to raise awareness and understanding of the office through targeted outreach, educational opportunities and active listening. Through 2021, over 250 virtual and in-person meetings and community engagements were facilitated by OPOM, including:

- Real Talk with OPOM – held with city staff
- Collaborative Conversations – held with community members
- City of Fort Worth Summer Open Houses – held with community members and other city departments
- Community-Police Conversations – held in every police division with community members and police officers
- Multiple meetings with community leaders and organizations
- Registered neighborhood associations, alliance and faith-based groups

Thanks in large part to the collaborative assistance of dozens of internal and external partnerships, OPOM was able to move forward despite the challenges faced.

Many of the Community and Collaborative Conversations were recorded and available to view at www.FortWorthTexas.gov/OPOM.

Real Talk
with the Office of the Police Oversight Monitor

Kim Neal
Police Oversight Monitor

OPOM...Fostering Community Trust Through Collaboration and Law Enforcement Accountability and Transparency

Join the Office of the Police Oversight Monitor for part 2 of an employee discussion regarding how to build stronger community-police relationships.

Choose to attend one of these options:

- Mon., May 24 - 12:15-1:15 p.m.
- Tues., May 25 - 12:15-1:15 p.m.
- Wed., May 26 - 12:15-1:15 p.m.

Login into any of the above meetings using this link:
<https://fortworthtexas.webex.com/fortworthtexas/j.php?MTID=me1c0b9384b26013e5b-03a881941162>

Or login to webex.com and enter:
Meeting Number: 182 096 8955
Password: community

For questions regarding OPOM or the Lunch & Learn Series, email PoliceOversight@fortworthtexas.gov or call 817-392-6535.

Construyendo Juntos una Relación Más Fuerte Entre la Comunidad y la Policía

Conversación Colaborativa Virtual del Verano 2020

Únase a la Oficina de Observación y Monitoreo de Prácticas Policiales para conversar con vecinos, líderes comunitarios, profesionales de la justicia penal y defensores para discutir cómo construir relaciones más sólidas entre la comunidad y la policía. Todas las discusiones también incluirán una sesión de grupo bilingüe.

DIVISIÓN NORTE 16 de sept. 2020 6 - 8 p.m.	DIVISIÓN OESTE 28 de sept. 2020 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.
DIVISIÓN SUR 19 de sept. 2020 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.	DIVISIÓN ESTE 29 de sept. 2020 6 - 8 p.m.
DIVISIÓN NOROESTE 22 de sept. 2020 6 - 8 p.m.	DIVISIÓN CENTRAL 30 de sept. 2020 6 - 8 p.m.

Regístrate en línea para este evento virtual visitando www.FortWorthTexas.gov/OPOM

Localice su División de Vecindario por Código Postal en el mapa

TRABAJANDO JUNTOS PARA IMPACTAR UN CAMBIO SOSTENIBLE EN FORT WORTH

Building a Stronger Community-Police Relationship Together

FALL 2021 VIRTUAL OPOM COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS

Discover ways YOU can get involved!

Join the Office of Police Oversight Monitor to learn more about the office, hear about the progress OPOM has made over the past eighteen months, and discover the plans for 2022.

Topics include:

- Update on the Mutual Accountability Working Group Recommendation
- 2020 OPOM Accomplishments
- Texas AGM Law Externship Program
- Restorative Justice Mediation Program
- Know Your Rights Campaign
- 28th Annual NACOLE Conference

Meet the OPOM Team!

Three opportunities to participate:

Thursday, Oct. 14, 2021
6 - 7:30 p.m.

JOIN ONLINE: Login to: www.webex.com Enter Meeting Number: 2559 045 4721 Enter Password: 1234
OR BY PHONE: Dial: 1-469-210-7159 Enter Meeting Number: 2559 045 4721 Enter Password: 1234

Saturday, Oct. 16, 2021
10 - 11:30 a.m.

JOIN ONLINE: Login to: www.webex.com Enter Meeting Number: 2550 364 9070 Enter Password: 1234
OR BY PHONE: Dial: 1-469-210-7159 Enter Meeting Number: 2550 364 9070 Enter Password: 1234

Wednesday, Oct. 20, 2021
11 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

JOIN ONLINE: Login to: www.webex.com Enter Meeting Number: 2554 317 9295 Enter Password: 1234
OR BY PHONE: Dial: 1-469-210-7159 Enter Meeting Number: 2554 317 9295 Enter Password: 1234

For more information, contact the office at: policeoversight@fortworthtexas.gov or 817-392-6535.

Fostering Community Trust Through Collaboration and Law Enforcement Accountability and Transparency

ENGAGING THE COMMUNITY

Newsletters



The first OPOM newsletter educating the community about our mission and progress was published in August 2020. Features included the history of civilian oversight, staffing updates, upcoming community engagements, office accomplishments and future goals. Newsletters were shared via OPOM's webpage, City of Fort Worth City News, posted on the city's Facebook, Twitter and NextDoor pages, shared in the city's Community Engagement Weekly and Faith-Based Bulletins, posted on the OPOM's Facebook and Twitter pages and emailed to subscribers of the OPOM distribution list.

Community members, organizations and media partners were encouraged to subscribe to the OPOM's distribution list to receive future editions. Subsequent newsletters were published on a periodic basis.

Media

OPOM participated in over three dozen interviews with print, digital, television and podcast media affiliates, including CBS 11, City of Fort Worth City News, Fort Worth Magazine, Fox 4, KERA, KRLD, NBC 5, NBC Universal, PoliceOne.com, Star Telegram, Texas Monthly, The Texan, WBAP and WFAA.

Fort Worth's Police Oversight Office to Host Online Community Conversations

Online community conversations begin Thursday, Oct. 14 and will also be held Oct. 16 and Oct. 20.
By Lili Zhang • Published October 14, 2021 • Updated on October 14, 2021 at 6:43 pm

Giving Citizens a Voice

Despite reservations from some city councilmembers, Fort Worth is closer than ever to holding Fort Worth police accountable through a citizen oversight committee.
By Static - March 24, 2021

Local News

Fort Worth Police Oversight Monitor Focuses on Community Outreach During First Year

During its first year, the Office of Police Oversight Monitor in Fort Worth has concentrated efforts in reaching the community and working on creating the parameters for a new oversight board.

KIM ROBERTS | MAY 17, 2021

How civilian review of law enforcement can improve police-community relations

A need for stronger community relationships and greater transparency of operations has caused many local governments to engage with police oversight programs

Nov 4, 2020

How has oversight changed the Fort Worth Police Department?

KERA | By Miranda Suarez

Published October 29, 2021 at 4:04 PM CDT

INFORMATION DISSEMINATION

Website and Social Media

A new website and social media accounts were created to reach a broader audience. Educating the community about the history of civilian oversight, the mission and purpose of the OPOM and step by step guidance on the complaint process was the primary focus.

Other information readily available on the new site included how to file a complaint or commendation, historical documents, reports, survey data, frequently asked questions, upcoming community engagements, print on demand informational materials and information about the history of civilian oversight.

www.fortworthtexas.gov/OPOM

Office of the Police Oversight Monitor

"Fostering Community Trust Through Collaboration and Law Enforcement Accountability and Transparency"

Office of the Police Oversight Monitor
CITY OF FORT WORTH

OPOM Promotional Materials

The City of Fort Worth's Office of the Police Oversight Monitor was first established in February 2020 pursuant to Fort Worth City Code Art. 2, § 2-27J(a) as a mechanism with which to provide oversight and accountability of the Fort Worth Police Department. Kim Neal, was appointed as the City of Fort Worth's first Police Monitor in March 2020. Efforts to build this newly-created office first began in mid-March 2020. The office serves a proactive leader in law enforcement accountability to the Fort Worth Police Department and the population it serves.

2022 Community Engagements Newsletters Promotional Materials

History of Civilian Oversight

The first assembly of citizens to receive complaints of misconduct against police officers date back to the 1820s. The demand for citizen or community oversight first occurred in the 1940s. Many of these early review procedures were short lived due to insufficient fiscal support, lack of resources and served as only means to receive and review police complaints. Further development of community oversight was strongly influenced by the civil rights movement and the perception in many quarters that law enforcement responded to racial unrest with excessive force.

Community review revived in the early 1970s as urban African-Americans gained more political power and as more white political leaders came to see the need for improved police accountability. They were more successful because they had more powers and enhanced resources. There was then a momentum of increased oversight agencies, responsibilities and policies, which usually came into existence due to a high-profile case of alleged police misconduct (usually a shooting or other physical force incident), often involving white officers and suspects of color. Racial or ethnic profiling and allegations of discrimination are often at the heart of movements to introduce community oversight.

By the early 2000s, community review became more widespread in the United States. According to a report recently released by the National Association of Civilian Oversight of Police, as of March 2016, 144 oversight agencies were operating at the local level in the U.S. Roles of community review of law enforcement have evolved in cities, counties and towns using a form or hybrid of recognized community oversight models.

Sources

1. Snow, Robert, "Civilian Oversight: Plus or Minus," Law and Order 40 (December 1992).
2. Terrill, Richard J., "Civilian Oversight of the Police Complaints Process in the United States: Concerns, Developments, and More Concerns," in *Complaints Against the Police: The Trend to External Review*, ed. Andrew J. Goldsmith, Oxford, England: Clarendon Press, 1991; see also Walker, Samuel, and Vic W. Rumpus, "The Effectiveness of Civilian Review: Observations on Recent Trends and New Issues Regarding the Civilian Review of Police," *American Journal of Police* 11 (4) (1992).
3. Angelis, J. et al. *Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement: Assessing the Evidence*. National Association of Civilian Oversight of Police: Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Diagnostic Center (2018).

Contact Us

Phone
[817-392-6333](tel:817-392-6333)

Email
policeoversight@fortworthtexas.gov

Location
200 Texas St.
76102
[View Map](#)

Hours

Sunday	Closed
Monday	09:00 AM-05:00 PM
Tuesday	09:00 AM-05:00 PM
Wednesday	09:00 AM-05:00 PM
Thursday	09:00 AM-05:00 PM
Friday	09:00 AM-05:00 PM
Saturday	Closed

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@FWPoliceMonitor

OPOM will serve as the designated civilian oversight agency empowered to act fairly and impartially, ensuring greater accountability of and public trust in FWPD

Fort Worth, TX fortworthtexas.gov/opom/ Joined June 2020

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PARTNERING WITH THE COMMUNITY

OPOM's First Working Group

The OPOM needed to cultivate a rich tradition of community participation and collaboration to drive real change and accountability in Fort Worth. OPOM worked early to establish a coalition among a diverse network including community organizations, faith-based communities, and civic leaders.

The office assembled this new coalition of community stakeholders together to talk about survey results and better involve the public in the process of engaging with police, community and local government. The group also partnered with the office to examine feedback from OPOM's community engagements and other groups' recommendations to propose an enhanced community-police accountability model. Working Group members included:

- Rhonda Branch Yearby, Tarrant Churches Together
- Donald Nommo, Civil Service Board Member
- Sandra Garcia, Hispanic Women's Network
- Amy Govea, JPS Behavioral
- Felipe Gutierrez, One Safe Place
- Fernando Peralta, Las Familias de Rosemont
- Jacinto "Cinto" Ramos, FWISD
- Willie Rankin, LVTRise
- Katie Sherrod, Episcopal Diocese FW
- Elder Edward L. Spears II, Faith and Love COGIC & Pentecostal Minister Union
- Dante Williams, CommUnity Frontline
- Estella Williams, NACCP, Fort Worth/Tarrant County
- Pamela Young, United Fort Worth & Tarrant County Coalition for Community Oversight

Mutual Accountability Working Group

On December 31, 2020, a Mutual Accountability Working Group was formed by OPOM to work with FWPd and other City leaders to create a recommendation as a first step to build community oversight of Fort Worth.

Members included:

- Estrus Tucker, Facilitator
- Pastor Dr. Cedric N. Belcher Sr., Grace Temple Seventh Day Adventist Church
- Cristal Hernandez, Hispanic Women's Network
- Felix Alvarado & Alberto Govea, LULAC, Fort Worth
- Estella Williams, NAACP, Fort Worth/Tarrant County
- Felipe Gutierrez, One Safe Place
- Pamela Young, United Fort Worth/Tarrant County Coalition for Community Oversight
- Fort Worth City Attorney's Office
- Fort Worth Police Department
- Office of Police Oversight Monitor

The working group collaborated for eight months to reach consensus on recommendations to enhance police oversight with the creation of a board of appointed community members.

OPOM Director Kim Neal shared the proposal during the September 21, 2021, City Council Work Session to receive their feedback. Additional Community Conversations were hosted by the OPOM in October/November 2021 to gain insights and additional feedback from the community. The proposal is slated to be discussed again with City Council during a Work Session in 2022.

The OPOM would like to sincerely thank all working group members for their participation and continued support.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Since March 2020, OPOM made a concentrated effort to identify ways to help advance the growth of transparency, accountability, and community collaboration between FWPD and the City of Fort Worth. One of the office's key responsibilities is to report back to the community it was tasked to serve. With these goals in mind, OPOM recommended over a dozen policy changes for FWPD. The following list represents some key recommendations that have been incorporated into the Fort Worth Police Department's General Orders, Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) or practices.

- FWPD should reiterate the arrest process and duties with the Jail facility staff and Sergeants. FWPD must ensure that the staff at the Jail facility understand the arrest procedures and process and follow such procedures consistently.
- FWPD should formally document allegations for all complaints received. Including allegations and dispositions in all complaints will increase professionalism, transparency, accountability and allow FWPD to track and report complaints appropriately.
- FWPD Internal Affairs should ensure proper documentation of all investigatory activities surrounding each complaint and that all case details are entered into the department's database in a timely manner.
- FWPD Investigative Supervisors should consider the timeliness of investigations conducted by the criminal investigators in their monthly case audits.
- OPOM should monitor the Use of Force Review Board.
- FWPD should acknowledge new complaints and formally notify complainants of the investigation results.

Information shown on pages 17-20 list OPOM recommendations submitted to FWPD, their status as of December 2021 and the origin of the recommendation. Note that multiple complaints submitted based on different situations may have resulted in recommendations made using similar language. This occurred when a previously submitted OPOM recommendation was still under review by the FWPD.

Recommendations that have been implemented by FWPD are shown as being in-progress* until final inclusion into FWPD General Orders, SOPs or practices.



Community mural located at 1417 Vaughn Blvd.

Citizen Complaints

The following recommendations were presented to FWPD based upon insights gleaned by OPOM staff while monitoring formal complaints submitted against a Fort Worth police officer.

April 2020

Investigative supervisors should consider the timeliness of investigations conducted by the criminal investigators in their monthly case audits (General Order 321.08). ***PD Concur/In-progress***

Internal Affairs Section (IAS) should ensure the proper documentation of all investigatory activities surrounding each complaint and that all case details are entered into IAPro in a timely manner. ***PD Concur/In-progress***

General Order 410.04, Personnel Complaints, should be revised to require all complaints be included in those received by Chain of Command, formally documented in IAPro/BlueTeam. IAS now documents all complaints with an IAS number and is making additional changes to General Order 410 and the procedure about how complaints are investigated. ***PD Concur/Complete***

May 2020

Develop and release a Foot Pursuit Policy. February 2021: OPOM submitted a draft policy currently under review by FWPD Chain of Command. ***PD Concur/In-progress***

The officer's decision making and tactics used during the traffic stop should be reviewed by the involved officer's chain of command. ***PD Concur/Complete***

Revise the De-escalation Policy to provide more guidance for officers to make decisions. July 2020: The revised De-escalation Policy was distributed to FWPD personnel. ***PD Concur/Complete***

Formally notify complainants of the result of their complaint investigations. IAS now distributes a standardized letter to complainants at the completion of the investigation. Copies of the letters are saved in the case file on IAPro. ***PD Concur/Complete***

Clarify its terminology and refer to all investigations of complaints, preliminary and full investigations, as investigations. Formally document allegations for all complaints received. ***PD Concur/Complete***

Consider providing additional training related to report writing and professionalism to the involved officer, as well as all officers assigned to specialized units. Sept. 2020: The Use of Force Coordinator began providing use of force reporting training to all supervisors. ***PD Concur/In-Progress***

IAS include detailed information on their investigatory activities within the complaint file summaries. June 2020: IAS Detectives were provided with this new guidance. ***PD Concur/Complete***

September 2020

Formally document allegations for all complaints received. FWPD currently only identifies allegations in those complaints tracked as IAS complaints. Including allegations and dispositions in all complaints, will increase professionalism, transparency, accountability, and allow FWPD to track and report complaints appropriately. FWPD is making changes to General Order 410 and potentially the procedure about how complaints are investigated. **PD Concur/Complete**

Develop and release a Foot Pursuit Policy. The Foot Pursuit Policy, like the Vehicle Pursuit Policy (General Order 305.03) should be detailed, comprehensive, and thoroughly describe the circumstances under which officers are allowed to conduct foot pursuits and corresponding searches. The policy should also outline the importance of officer and public safety when conducting foot pursuits. FWPD should collaborate with OPOM on the policy's development and implementation. February 2021: OPOM submitted a draft policy. Draft is currently under review by FWPD Chain of Command.
PD Concur/In-progress

October 2020

Reiterate the arrest process and duties with the Jail facility staff and Sergeants. **PD Concur/Complete**

Formally document allegations for all complaints received. All complaints are now assigned an IAS number, formally documented with allegations, and saved in the case file on IAPro. **PD Concur/Complete**

IAS and/or chain of command include detailed information on their investigatory activities within the complaint file summaries. IAS should formally document allegations for all complaints received. All investigation activities are now formally documented and saved in the casefile on IAPro.
PD Concur/Complete



Community mural located in River East.

Use of Force

The following recommendations were presented to FWPd based upon insights gleaned by OPOM staff while reviewing the current General Orders, SOPs, structure of the department, benchmark studies, and/or monitoring uses of force by Fort Worth police officers.

August 2020

All officers involved in Use of Force incidences should complete an incident supplemental report as part of their use of force reporting. Supervisors and the chain of command reviewing use of force reports should ensure that all reports are submitted and thoroughly reviewed as part of their investigation and review of use of force incidents. The officer's chain of command should formally document such incidences through an inter-office correspondence (IOC) or upload/attach to the BlueTeam report and IAPro. *PD Concur/Complete*

December 2020

IAS should fully investigate an officer's use of force incident. *PD Concur/Complete*

January 2021

As a de-escalation technique, the General Orders be amended to mandate taser warnings prior to deployment. *PD Concur/Complete*

IAS should fully investigate a Use of Force report where an officer used an intermediate level of force, instead of a low level of force. *PD Concur/Complete*

February 2021

Add FWPd mission statement, define what Use of Force Review Board reviews, changing critical police incidents to deadly force encounters and grammatical changes. *PD Concur/Complete*

March 2021

General Order 306.09 identify the collaboration between FWPd and OPOM on the revision of the UOF Board composition based on current best practices research. *PD Concur/In-Progress*

April 2021

Add language to emphasize that diversity of the Use of Force Review Board members is a priority for the Department. Suggests that a thorough notification and recruitment effort be conducted to ensure all resources have been exhausted to give opportunity for diverse qualified officers to sit on the Use of Force Review Board. *PD Concur/Complete*

June 2021

IAS should fully investigate use of force reports for potential procedural violations of excessive force. *PD Concur/Complete*

August 2021

IAS should fully investigate use of force reports and identify any patterns, trends, interventions, or trainings needed, auditing an officer's past uses of force for potential patterns reviewed. *PD Concur/Complete*

December 2021

IAS should fully investigate use of force reports to determine any procedural challenges and audit an officer's past uses of force for potential patterns review. Offer additional training opportunities, including mental health training to officers to ensure they are effectively servicing the diverse needs of every community member. **PD Concur/Complete**

Policy Review

The following recommendations were presented to FWPDP based upon insights gleaned by OPOM staff while reviewing the current General Orders, SOPs, structure of the department, benchmark studies and stakeholder feedback.

April 2020

OPOM monitor oral boards for new potential recruits. OPOM also advised that HR sit on board. Both OPOM and HR sat on oral boards beginning in January 2021. **PD Concur/Complete**

August 2020

Proposed revisions to General Order 421.00, Employee Wellness and Early Intervention. The goal was to ensure any triggers or outcomes are accounted for and addressed. **PD Concur/In-Progress**

FWPDP should consider revising the BWC policy (GO 506.03) to address issues in supervisory review of BWC footage and ensure greater accountability in instances in which officers fail to activate and/or use the BWC according to policy. OPOM will continue to monitor FWPDP BWC usage and make recommendations regarding revisions to the Policy as needed. **PD Concur/Complete**

January 2021

Proposed revisions to UOF Review Board composition regarding OPOM's involvement and its responsibilities. The goal was to ensure that OPOM remained independent and had the ability to monitor the board. **PD Concur/Complete**

March 2021

Create SOPs and training for the oral board recruitment process and members. June 2021: Training was created for potential new oral board members regarding expectations. SOPs are in-process. **PD Concur/In-progress**

October 2021

OPOM follow-up regarding Backgrounds Unit recommendations (**PD Concur/In-Progress**):

1. Request status of the Oral Board SOPs (prior recommendation).
2. Need for uniformity and consistency of polygraph testing.
3. The Background History Form used during oral boards should be modified to ensure all board members' consistent completion.
4. Training for oral board members needed. Recommended conferring with HR to assist with training.
5. A due diligence checklist was recommended for background investigators when conducting background reviews for consistency.
6. Additional tracking of applicant data who did not pass the oral board process. Should include reasoning for failure such as gender, race, age, education level, etc.

DATA COLLECTION

Perception Surveys

Although some challenges cities face with civilian oversight of law enforcement are universal, each experience has its own set of successes and challenges. In 2020, the OPOM conducted two separate surveys to evaluate Fort Worth community members' and police officer's perceptions of community-police relations. Surveys were accessible for members of the community and police department to complete July 23 - August 7, 2020.

Key Officer results:

- **68.5%** believed that ongoing de-escalation training is necessary
- **66.1%** of respondents strongly disagreed that police have reason to distrust most citizens
- Many noted the need for increased transparency and greater emphasis on generating community literacy in police roles and actions.
- Many noted a need for greater support among city leadership and an increased effort to improve diversity within specialized units and recruiting.

Key Community results:

- **62%** of respondents had a positive view of FWPD performance.
- Most all racial groups noted that they were treated fairly by FWPD except Black/African Americans (**41.2%**).
- Most respondents somewhat or strongly agreed that the FWPD is a legitimate authority (**68.6%**), that the community should do what the FWPD tells them to do (**61.7%**), and have confidence that FWPD officers can do their job well (**65.2%**).
- Most respondents (**52.6%**) noted that community oversight of the FWPD is very important.
- While many respondents remain optimistic that relations between the community and police would improve, most asserted that real change could not begin until it is embraced by law enforcement.

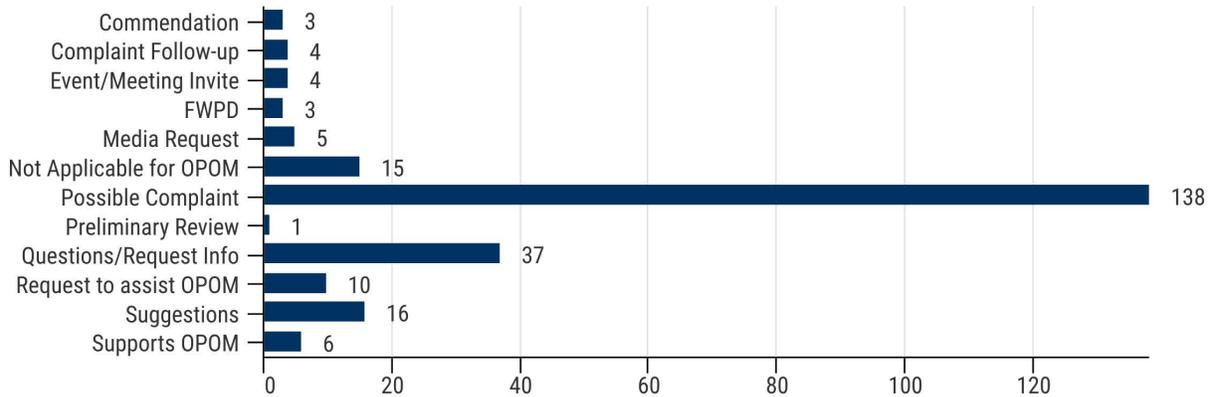
The OPOM presented a survey analysis during the the City Council Work Session on September 15, 2020. OPOM also conducted multiple community engagements about the surveys and the survey results. The presentation was recorded and made available via Fort Worth TV. The survey analysis was also made available online at www.fortworthtexas.gov/OPOM.

OPOM used the input gathered from community members, community stakeholders, and officers to craft recommendations for community oversight, improve police-community engagement efforts, identify neighborhood specific community policing strategies, and enhance the OPOM.

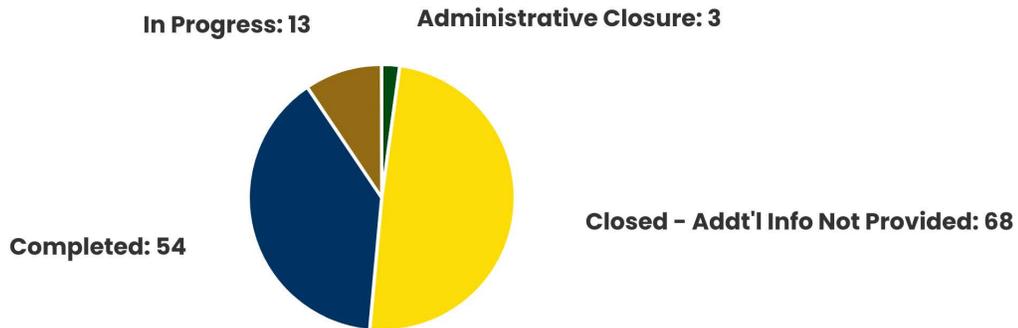
Complaint and Commendation Statistics

The following is an analysis of the progress and timely completion of all inquiries, including commendations and formal complaints received by the Office of Police Oversight Monitor between March 2020 - December 2021.

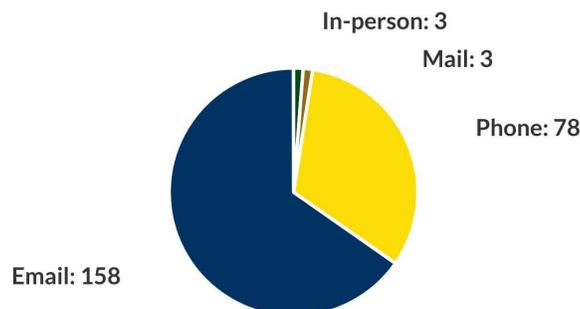
Inquiries Defined



Formal Complaints Status



Inquiries Contact Method



*Note that these numbers do not include complaints filed directly with the FYPD, as they were not monitored by the OPOM in 2020-21. The OPOM did not begin receiving formal notifications about these complaints until late August 2021. From August 2021 - December 2021, the OPOM received 110 formal complaints filed directly with the FYPD.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Created a complaint form and began receiving and reviewing complaints, inquiries, commendations, and uses of force.
- Reviewed, researched and benchmarked FWPD polices and procedures.
- Conducted meetings with multiple community organizations, city and civic leaders.
- Conducted and/or attended periodic meetings set with the Police Chief, Assistant Police Chiefs and FWPD Professional Standards Division.
- Made recommendations pursuant to OPOM reviews and observations.
- Conducted research on promising law enforcement practices regarding matters like use of force reviews, complaint mediation processes, pursuits, early intervention, etc.
- Provided periodic updates during Work Session to City Council.
- Created a website and informational materials.
- Commenced working on the creation of an automated complaint form and database of identified data points.
- Authored and published three editions of the OPOM newsletter.
- Facilitated ad hoc working group meetings.
- Collaborated with stakeholders and examined the results from collaboration sessions, community/officer perception surveys and other key stakeholder groups' recommendations received to propose enhanced community-police accountability model.
- Proposed an ad hoc Mutual Accountability Working group.
- Held seven Mutual Accountability Working group meetings to collaborate and reach consensus on a recommendation to enhance community oversight of Fort Worth law enforcement. Their recommendation was presented to the Mayor and City Council during the work session on September 21, 2021. Subsequent community engagements were conducted to share recommendation in late 2021.
- Facilitated the ad hoc working group meetings.
- Monitored FWPD's uses of force, critical incidents, and the Use of Force Review Board meetings.
- Monitored FWPD Recruitment Oral Boards.
- Partnered with Texas A&M Law Externship Program to expose students to public policy and legal implications regarding community oversight of law enforcement.
- Conducted over 250 virtual and in-person meetings, Lunch & Learns, Collaborative Conversations, and Summer Open Houses.
- Conducted more than 95 community presentations.
- Reviewed more than 1,000 use of force reports to ensure practices are reflective of departmental policies, identify patterns and trends, and to recommend changes to the FWPD General Orders.
- Attended periodic meetings involving FWPD Executive Team, Internal Affairs and Patrol Action.
- Recommended over a dozen changes to FWPD policies and procedures through review and monitoring of FWPD operations.
- Hired five new staff members including a Senior Policy Advisor, Deputy Director, Senior Management Analyst, and a Senior Administrative Assistant.

OPOM Timeline



January 2021

Participated in the interview process for the new FWPD Police Chief.

The Mutual Accountability Working Group continued meeting to discuss a community police policy advisory group.

April 2021

The second OPOM newsletter was published.

An update about the progress of the office was shared with the City Council.

June 2021

Virtual Community Collaboration Sessions were held.

Continued to meet regularly with the Chief of Police, Assistant Chiefs, Professional Standards Division and other divisions to monitor and discuss processes and share recommendations.

Monitored the Recruitment and Oral Boards Process.

August 2021

Virtual Community Collaboration Sessions continued to be held.

Participated in City of Fort Worth Open House events, held city-wide.

October 2021

Attended the NACOLE 2021 Conference.

Monitored the Recruitment and Oral Boards Process.

February 2021

Began to monitor the Use of Force Review Board.

The Mutual Accountability Working Group continued to meet and seek out consensus on how to form a community police policy advisory group.

May 2021

Attended the NACOLE 2021 Virtual Conference.

Honored as a grant recipient of the Fund to Advance Racial Equity 2021 Grantee Celebration.

The Mutual Accountability Working Group continued to meet to finalize their community police policy advisory group recommendation.

July 2021

Continued to host Virtual Community Collaboration Sessions with community stakeholders.

Continued to meet regularly with the Chief of Police, Assistant Chiefs, Professional Standards Division and other divisions to monitor and discuss processes and share recommendations.

September 2021

Shared an Informal Report with City Council about the progress of the OPOM.

Shared a presentation about the Mutual Accountability Working Group's proposal with City Council.

December 2021

Published the Winter 2021 edition of the OPOM newsletter.

Continued to meet regularly with the Chief of Police, Assistant Chiefs, Professional Standards Division and other divisions to monitor and discuss processes and share recommendations.

DEFINITION OF TERMS & COMMON ACRONYMS Allegatio

Arrest - Seized by legal authority and taken into custody.

Allegation - When a citizen accuses an officer of specific wrong-doing.

Case - An identification of an investigation.

Complaint - An allegation (excluding any criminal investigation) from any source, of any action or inaction by a Fort Worth police office which the source considers to be contrary to law, proper procedure, good order, or in some manner prejudicial to the individual, FWPD or community.

Complainant - A citizen filing a complaint against a sworn Fort Worth police officer.

Critical Police Incident - The death or serious bodily injury of an individual in the custody of a Fort Worth Police Department employee, a Fort Worth Fire Department Arson Investigator, a City of Fort Worth Marshal, or a law enforcement officer whose ordinary jurisdiction does not include the City of Fort Worth, while in the course and scope of duty as a law enforcement officer within the City of Fort Worth.

Exonerated - When a preponderance of evidence shows that the alleged conduct occurred but did not violate FWPD policies, procedures or training.

Fiscal Year - October 1 - September 30.

Finding - The conclusion of the investigation of the allegation against an officer.

General Orders - Published directives to enforce a policy or procedure that is not otherwise addressed in applicable regulations or law.

Investigation - An official review that includes, but is not limited to, witness interviews; evidence collection; policy, procedure and legal review; analysis and conclusion with findings.

Inquiry - An examination into facts or principles.

Misconduct - Behavior or activity that is illegal or wrong and or does not conform to an established standard.

NACOLE - The National Association of Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement.

Not Sustained - Where there are insufficient facts to decide whether the alleged misconduct occurred.

OPOM - The Office of the Police Monitor.

Outside City Limits - The incident did not occur in the City of Fort Worth.

Preponderance of Evidence - The greater weight of the evidence required in a civil (non-criminal lawsuit for the trier of fact) jury or judge without a jury to decide in favor of one side or the other. This preponderance is based on the more convincing evidence and its probable truth or accuracy, and not on the amount of evidence.

Review - To assess a complaint filed with or referred to OPOM.

Search - The examination of a person's premises (residence, business, or vehicle) by law enforcement officers looking for evidence of the commission of a crime. The search is proper if it is incident to an arrest or written or verbal permission is granted to conduct the search.

Suspect - Includes any individual who a police officer reasonably believes is about to commit, is committing or has committed an offense, or poses an immediate threat to the safety of the public, officers or themselves.

Sustained - Where the complainant's allegation is supported by sufficient evidence to determine that the incident occurred, and the actions of the officer were improper.

Unfounded - When an investigation determines no facts exist to support the incident alleged.

Use of Excessive Force - Officer(s) use of some type of force, whether physical or by instrument, that is beyond what is reasonably necessary.

Use of Force - Officer(s) use of some type of force, whether physical or by instrument, that restricts the movement of a person.

Victim - A person harmed, injured, or killed because of a crime, accident, or other event or action.

Withdrawn - A complaint that is reviewed and closed per directive.



Community mural located at 200 Carroll Street.

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The Office of the Police Oversight Monitor
OPOM...Fostering Community Trust Through Collaboration and Law Enforcement

