

# OFFICE OF THE POLICE OVERSIGHT MONITOR

*Monthly Report  
November 2023*



Office of the Police  
Oversight Monitor

# LETTER TO THE COMMUNITY

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Dear Fort Worth Community,

I trust this newsletter finds you in good spirits. Looking back on the past month, I am delighted to share some noteworthy updates from the Office of the Police Monitor.

Firstly, I am excited to share that we are actively recruiting community members that are committed to fostering-positive relationships and willing to hold space for tough conversations through our Community-Police Mediation Program. I want to express my sincere gratitude to the community members who have shown interest in serving as mediators. Together, we are actively working towards building bridges and fostering understanding in our community-police relations

In more somber news, our thoughts and prayers go out to the Tarrant County Sheriff's Deputy Brent Brown who was shot while working an off-duty shift in East Fort Worth. We extend our deepest condolences to them and their family. I am immensely thankful for the swift actions of the FWPD in detaining the suspect, demonstrating their unwavering commitment to ensuring the safety of our community.

In a significant step towards justice, we acknowledge the approval of a \$3.5 million settlement for Atatiana Jefferson's nephew. While it can never replace a lost loved one, this settlement stands as a solemn acknowledgment of the tragedy and reinforces our commitment to accountability and community healing.

Lastly, our OPOM team had the privilege of attending the NACOLE (National Association of Civilian Oversight in Law Enforcement) conference in Chicago, IL, where we connected with and learned from leaders in the oversight field. This invaluable experience strengthens our resolve to bring the best practices and insights back to Fort Worth as we continue our mission.

Your ongoing support is crucial to our success. Together, we navigate challenges, celebrate victories, and work towards a safer and more unified community.

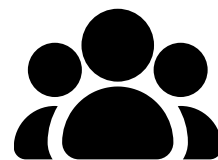
Sincerely,

*Banyale Sokunbi*  
Independent Police Monitor

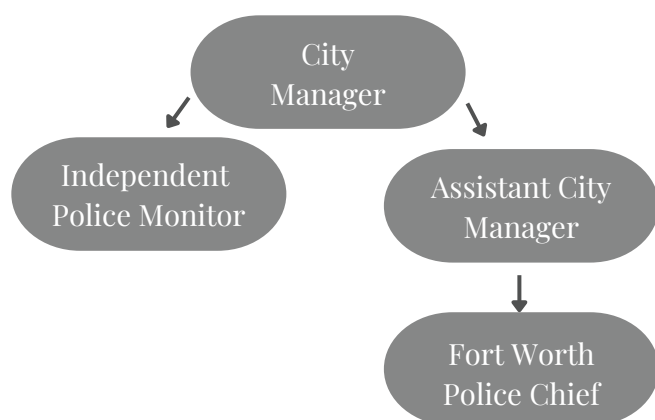


# WHO WE ARE?

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



In response to a high-profile police incident and protests in 2017, the Fort Worth City Council formed a task force of community leaders. Initially focused on race and culture discussions, it expanded to address disparities in areas like criminal justice, economic development, education, health, housing, and governance. The criminal justice committee concluded its work by advising the city council to establish a monitor for police oversight. In February 2020, Office of the Police Oversight Monitor (OPOM) was established in accordance with city ordinance and commenced operations in March of 2020 to provide oversight and accountability of Fort Worth law enforcement. OPOM reports directly to the City Manager.

# WHAT WE DO?

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

- Receives civilian complaints and refers them to Fort Worth Police Department Internal Affairs.
- Audit FWPD training sessions, body-worn camera footage, and use of force reports to ensure adherence to departmental policies.
- Engage with the community regularly to gather input, identify solutions, and improve relations.
- Collect and analyze data related to citizen complaints, uses of force, critical incidents, and other reviews.
- Create a citizen-police mediation program for conflict resolution and improving perceptions.
- Monitor FWPD contact and complaint investigations, identify patterns, and recommend changes.
- Serve as a civilian oversight agency to ensure greater accountability and public trust in the FWPD.
- Provide periodic public reports documenting findings, analysis, and recommendations.
- Review policies and procedures to meet or exceed best practices and address emerging trends.

# MISCONDUCT WORK



## What is Misconduct?

Police misconduct is the action or lack thereof of an officer that violates any rule, police procedure, order, verbal or written instruction of the FWPD or is a violation of any city ordinance, state or federal criminal law.

Misconduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Use of Force
- Abuse of Authority such as unlawful searches and seizures, premises enter and search, no warrant, threat to notify child services, threats to damage of property, etc., refusal to take complaint, refusal to identify themselves, damages to property seized.
- Failure to supervise
- Falsification of records
- Inappropriate language or attitude
- Harassment
- Interference with Constitutional rights
- Neglect of duty
- Discrimination
- Theft
- Retaliation for filing a complaint

6

**Total complaints  
received this  
month**

36

**Total complaints  
received for  
2023**

## Definitions

**Complaint** - an allegation of misconduct filed against a FWPD officer(s) by a community member. A complaint may concern an action or lack of action taken by an officer(s), an interaction with an officer, or a witnessed interaction with an officer.

**Complainant** - the individual who files a complaint against a FWPD officer(s). The complainant doesn't need to be personally affected by the incident.

**Complaint form** - used to file a formal complaint concerning a police encounter via the OPOM online interactive portal.

**Formal Complaints** - inquiries confirmed as formal complaints and are currently being reviewed. A complaint form has been received.

**Inquiry** - any and all contacts received by OPOM.

**Possible Complaint** - inquiry under review to determine if it is a formal complaint or if a complaint form has not been received.

## Complaint Process

Receives your complaint/commendation and sends a receipt of acknowledgment.

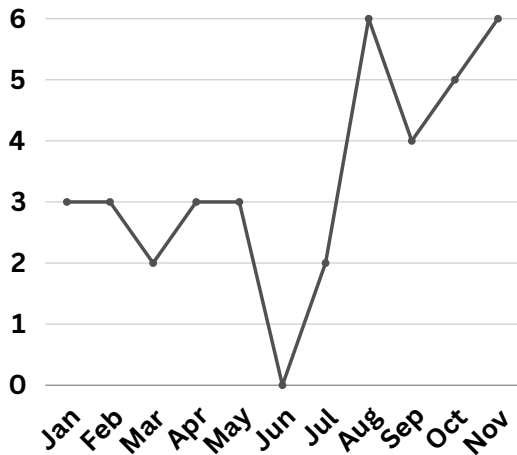
Reviews and forwards complaint/commendation to FWPD's Internal Affairs for review/Investigation.

Monitors the FWPD compliant investigation. The investigation can take up to 90 days.

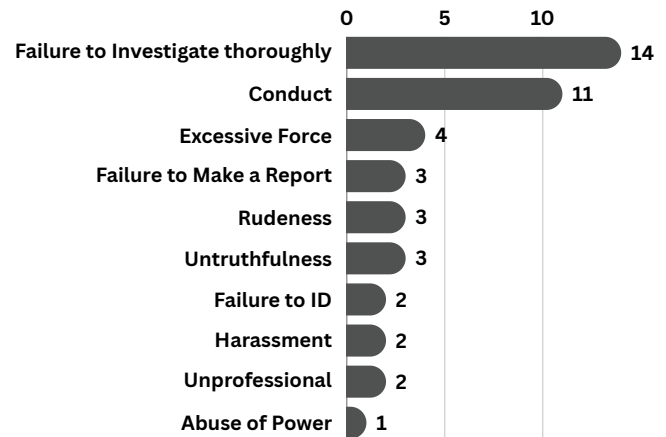
Reviews the complete FWPD complaint investigation and provides feedback and recommendations to the FWPD as appropriate.

Notifies you once OPOM's review of FWPD's investigation is complete.

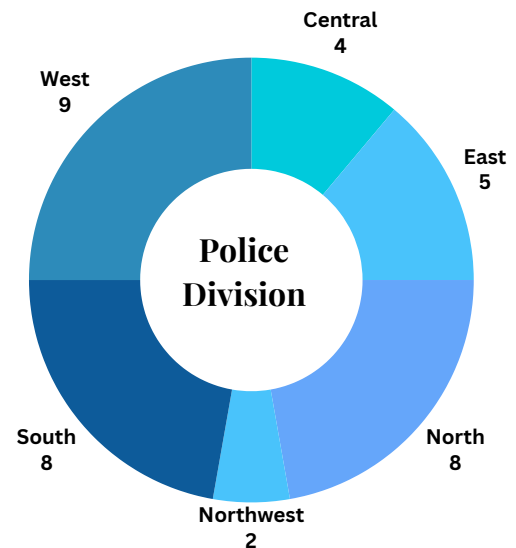
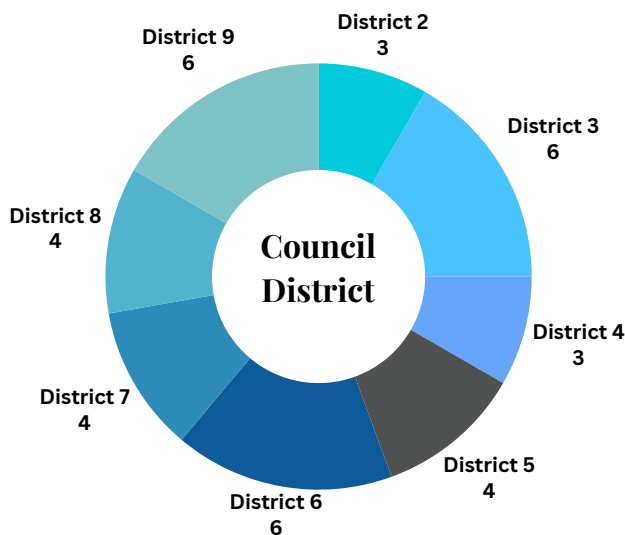
## Formal Complaints by Month



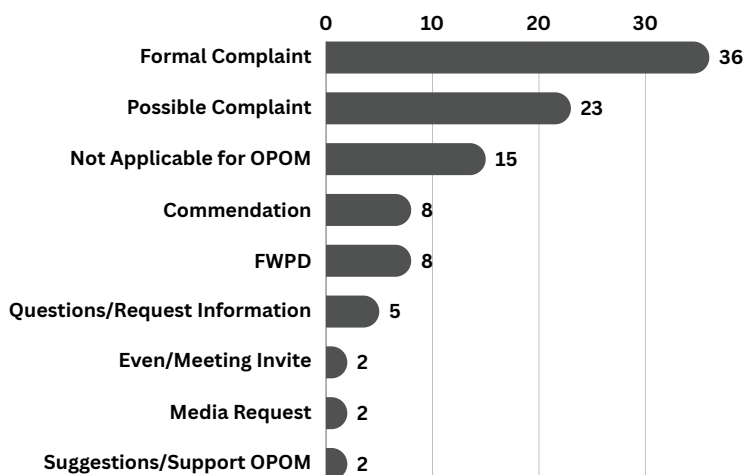
## 2023 Formal Complaints Allegations



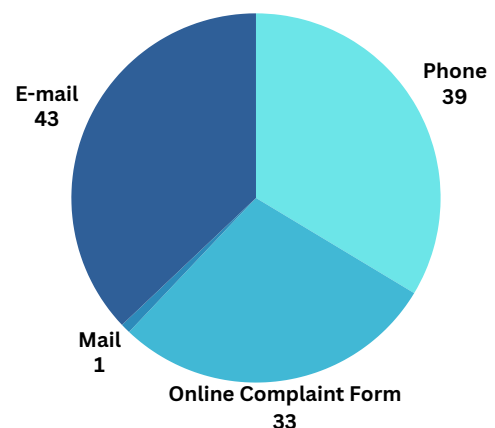
## 2023 Formal Complaints by Location



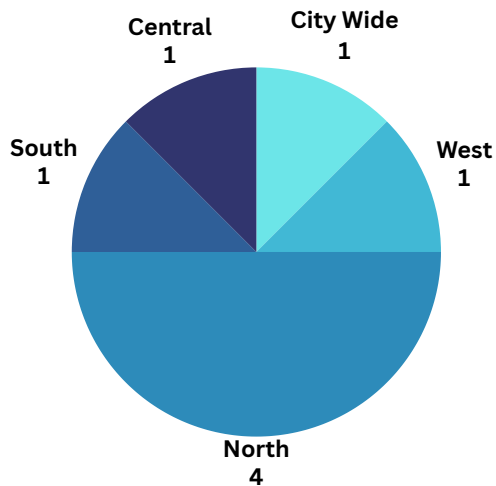
## 2023 Inquiries Defined



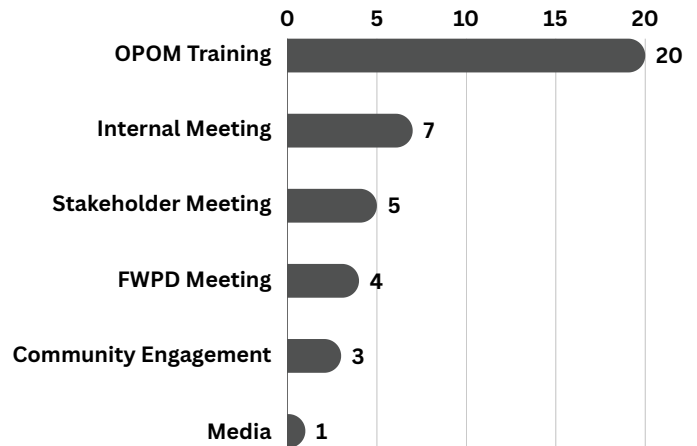
## 2023 Inquiries Contact Methods



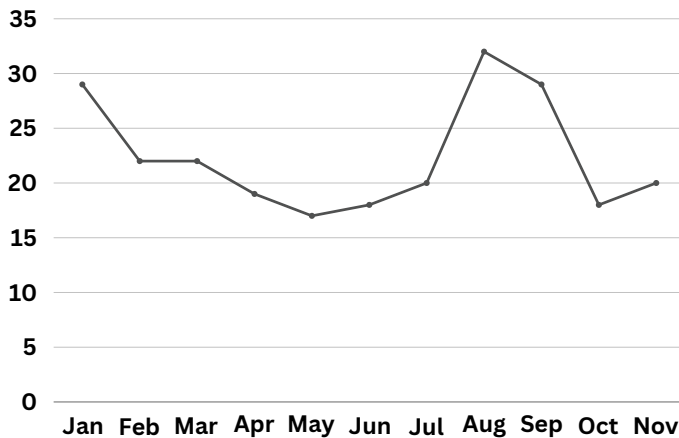
## 2023 Commendations



## November Activity Tracking



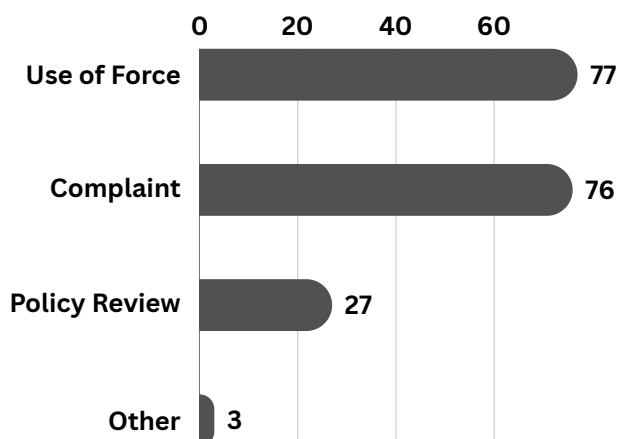
## 2023 IA Complaints Received



Complaints can also be received directly by FWPD Internal Affairs. After Internal Affairs conducts their investigations, they send the completed reports to OPOM. OPOM's role is to review these investigations to ensure they are comprehensive, thorough, and unbiased.

This is to maintain accountability and fairness in the process.

## OPOM Recommendations (2020 - Present)



**OPOM Team**  
attending the NACOLE  
conference. \*Connections were  
made!





# COMMUNITY OUTREACH



Your insights, questions, and feedback are essential in shaping a more transparent and accountable law enforcement system. We want to hear from you!

## Invite Us to Your Community Events:

Have a gathering, town hall, or community event coming up? We'd love to be a part of it! Our team is available to attend and participate, sharing information about our office, answering questions, and fostering open dialogue.

## Share Your Feedback:

Your thoughts matter. Whether you have questions, concerns, or suggestions, we want to hear them. Reach out to us to share your experiences, offer feedback, or discuss any aspect of police-community relations.

## How to Connect:

For event invitations, presentations, or general inquiries, feel free to contact us at 817.392.6518. Your proactive engagement strengthens the bond between our office and the community we serve.

## Types of Events


Tabling Events

Neighborhood Meetings


Community Conversations

Police Roll calls

Educational Presentations



Engagement Coordinator **Taylor Davis** met with Jonah Murray of Finn's Place to discuss LGBTQ-police relations.



Director **Boncy Sokunbi** attended the District 11 Resource Fair bringing awareness to OPOM.

# COMMUNITY-POLICE MEDIATION

## Community-mediator applications

**Due by end of December!**

### What is Mediation?

Community-Police Mediation is a voluntary process that brings together professionally trained community mediators to facilitate a dialogue between community members and law enforcement. It provides a space for open, two-way dialogue, allowing both parties to express their concerns, perceptions, and expectations in a confidential and non-judgmental way. It aims to address conflicts, build understanding, and improve relations between the police and the community they serve. **The goal is to foster a more positive and collaborative relationship between the police and the community.**

### Mediator

A neutral and impartial third party who facilitates communication between conflicting parties. They don't impose decisions but instead encourage open dialogue and understanding. Mediators are recruited and trained by OPOM.

### Consent

All parties must voluntarily agree to participate in mediation and give consent. The consent process involves communication between the participants and the Mediation Director or program staff about the mediation process, what to expect, and clarification of any questions.

### What qualifies for mediation?

- Rudeness/Discourteousness
- Neglect of Duty
- Unprofessionalism

*Give the gift of*  
**DIALOGUE**



Community volunteers are needed.  
That means YOU! Click below to learn  
how you can become a trained  
mediator

**CLICK HERE**

### Voluntary

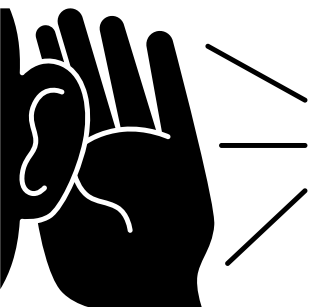
All participants engage in mediation at their own free will. They can end the process at anytime and are not forced to come to any agreement.

### Mediation is –

- Non-judgmental
- Confidential
- Voluntary

Director **Bonycle Sokunbi** met with  
Community Frontline of Fort Worth  
to discuss community-police  
relations.

*Collaborate &*  
**LISTEN**





# GET INVOLVED



## *Attend* Events

Join us for discussions to share your experiences and thoughts. The more diverse voices we hear, the richer our understanding becomes.

## *Stay* Informed

Follow us on social media for updates on the upcoming events, report releases, and helpful information. Subscribe to our Monthly Newsletter.

## *Spread the* Word

Let your friends, family, and neighbors know that OPOM is a safe place to voice concerns.

### Reasons to reach out:

- Concerns of misconduct
- To report positive interactions
- Concerns regarding transparency and accountability
- Policy and procedure inquiries
- Feedback and suggestions

### Ways to reach out:

- **Online:** <https://www.fortworthtexas.gov/departments/opom>
- **Email:** [PoliceOversight@fortworthtexas.gov](mailto:PoliceOversight@fortworthtexas.gov)
- **In person:** Call 817.392.6535 to make an appointment or stop by anytime between 8-5pm
- **By Mail:** Office of the Police Oversight Monitor  
200 Texas St  
Fort worth, TX 76102



FortWorthPoliceOversight



FWPoliceMonitor



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Click or scan the QR code to visit our Linktree and follow our socials

## REFERENCES



### Data Source:

This report uses data from the following data sources, which are updated daily for tracking purposes:

- FWPD IA Complaint Notifications
- OPOM Inquiry Complaint Tracking spreadsheet
- OPOM Recommendations Tracking spreadsheet

DATA IS NOT CONSIDERED FINALIZED UNTIL OPOM ISSUES IT'S ANNUAL REPORT