




# Baltimore City Police Accountability Board



# ANNUAL REPORT

## 2023

Prepared For The  
Mayor of Baltimore, City Council and State Legislature



Prepared By:  
Police Accountability Board &  
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# POLICE ACCOUNTABILITY BOARD CHAIR'S STATEMENT

I am honored to share with you the inaugural report of the Baltimore City Police Accountability Board, as this is the first report of the body since all board members have been confirmed. This inaugural report is a testament to our commitment to transparency, fairness, accountability and community engagement. As the Chair, it has been a privilege to work with our board members through this first year. The board has been tasked with representing and being a voice for many communities in our city in efforts to provide civilian oversight of law enforcement.

This release of our initial findings and recommendations, underscores the importance of holding law enforcement accountable and fostering trust between the police and our diverse communities. This report delves into comprehensive reviews of incidents, systemic issues, and the implementation of accountability measures within the Baltimore City Police Department and other law enforcement agencies under our jurisdiction.

Through a meticulous examination, our board has strived to provide an unbiased assessment, recognizing both commendable practices and areas in need of improvement. The release of this report is a crucial step in our collective journey toward a more just and accountable law enforcement system that serves and protects every resident of Baltimore, regardless of their zip code.

Again, this would not be possible without the hard work and commitment of each and every board member. I would also like to provide a special thanks to our Administrative Charging Committee, which has logged countless hours of reviewing body worn camera footage and reading complaints and investigation findings. My appointed representative to the ACC, **Jesmond O. Riggins Esq.**, has done tremendous job keeping the board abreast of trends and his career commitment to police reform has been invaluable to this body.

We encourage open dialogue and invite the community, stakeholders, and law enforcement officials to engage with the report's findings. By fostering transparency and promoting collaboration, we aim to build a stronger foundation for a safer, more equitable Baltimore. Together, we can continue to work towards a law enforcement system that reflects the values and aspirations of our vibrant community.

In solidarity,  
Joshua S. D. Harris, Chair



# POLICE ACCOUNTABILITY BOARD VICE CHAIR'S STATEMENT

Commitment to community fuels the work of our board and ACC. 2023 has demonstrated how a dedicated Police Accountability Board/ACC of the community, for the community and by the community can accomplish more with few than others with many- and we're just getting started. Our PAB stands on the shoulders of activists, change agents and dedicated legislators that fought for true police oversight and accountability. As we continue to pursue equity and justice for each complainant- we're critical of broken policies and conscious of the need to educate our communities on complaint filing procedures.

PAB's recommendations reflect the work of community oversight in action and captures opportunities for specified law enforcement agencies, civic leadership and governing bodies to address areas in need of change.

2024, our board will elevate our recommendations directly to each respective audience and work to uncover the solutions our communities deserve. PAB will continue to collaborate in tandem with the OECR while facilitating our board duties and educating communities on how to file complaints, and will continue to uplift the issues identified by our dedicated ACC counterparts. Internally, our executive board is deepening connectivity with committee chairs and committee members- the result is PAB's expanding capacity for service and leadership demonstrated in the result our work.

I am proud to serve as Vice-Chair of such an inspiring group of leaders and I look forward to the milestones, potential obstacles and successes we will encounter in 2024.

Respectfully,  
Jamal Turner, Vice Chair, Police Accountability Board





# ADMINISTRATIVE CHARGING COMMITTEE CHAIR'S STATEMENT

It is both an honor and a great responsibility to lead as the chairwoman of the Administrative Charging Committee. In this crucial role, we as a Committee recognize the profound importance of fostering genuine public safety. We acknowledge that police accountability and oversight are indispensable elements, contributing not only to transparency and public trust but also ensuring that our community feels secure in the knowledge that they are truly protected. Each week, the ACC meticulously adjudicates cases, upholding the principles of justice, fairness, and conducting comprehensive reviews to guarantee compliant, constitutional, respectful, and trustworthy public safety. Serving in this capacity is our commitment to the pursuit of public trust and safety.

Respectfully,  
Tiera Hawkes, Chair



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report represents the culmination of the Baltimore City Police Accountability Board's (PAB) inaugural year of operation, outlining significant strides made toward establishing a robust framework for police oversight and accountability. Since its first meeting on February 1, 2023, the PAB, under the leadership of Chair Joshua Harris, has swiftly moved to organize its internal structure, electing officers, and forming five key committees to address the diverse aspects of its mandate effectively.

Throughout the year, the PAB has engaged in a range of activities aimed at enhancing its oversight capacity, including the participation of board members in specialized training with the Maryland Police Training and Standards Commission. This initiative underscores the Board's commitment to informed and effective oversight practices. Additionally, the PAB held 11 public meetings and processed 942 complaint intakes, reflecting both the community's engagement with and trust in the Board's mission.

The Administrative Charging Committee (ACC), since its first meeting on June 13, 2023, has played a critical role in this ecosystem, adjudicating 408 cases to date. Under the chairmanship of Tiera Hawkes, the ACC's diligent weekly meetings underscore its pivotal role in reviewing and determining the outcomes of cases related to police conduct.

This report also delves into complaint data and trends, noting a significant increase in internally generated complaints and underscoring the importance of body-worn camera footage in the adjudication process. Despite challenges, including compliance with complaint forwarding mandates and BWC policy, preliminary data have begun to illuminate patterns and areas for improvement within law enforcement practices.

## Policy Recommendations

Central to this report are the PAB's 20 policy recommendations, designed to fortify the foundation of police accountability in Baltimore City. These recommendations span a range of areas, from establishing an independent Baltimore Office of Police Oversight and Accountability to enhancing BWC evidence through audio inclusion. Each recommendation is geared towards promoting transparency, accountability, and public trust, with an emphasis on aligning oversight funding with police department budgets and standardizing internal investigations into police misconduct.

## Engagement and Feedback

The PAB has also prioritized community engagement and feedback, recognizing these elements as crucial to the success of civilian oversight. Through public meetings, outreach initiatives, and the development of a user-friendly complaint submission process, the Board has sought to ensure that Baltimore City residents feel heard, respected, and valued.

## Conclusion

As the PAB closes its first full year of operation, this report not only highlights the achievements and challenges faced but also sets the direction for the future of police oversight in Baltimore City. With continued commitment to the principles of justice, transparency, and accountability, the PAB aims to foster a policing system that upholds the highest standards of conduct and community trust.



# INTRODUCTION

In the heart of Baltimore City, where the dynamics of law enforcement and civic engagement intersect, the Police Accountability Board (PAB) embarks on a crucial mission to weave a fabric of integrity, transparency, and mutual respect between the police force and the communities they serve. This report heralds a year of transformative efforts, underscoring the board's dedication to shaping a landscape where oversight is not just a mandate but a cornerstone of public trust and safety.

This document aims to elucidate the strides taken and challenges encountered by the PAB, alongside the Administrative Charging Committee (ACC) and the Civilian Review Board (CRB), in their collective pursuit of a more accountable policing framework. It draws upon in-depth analyses, stakeholder engagements, and a proactive approach to identifying and addressing gaps in current practices. The core of this narrative is a series of strategic recommendations designed to fortify the mechanisms of police oversight, embodying our vision for a policing system that aligns with the values and needs of Baltimore City's diverse communities.

Key initiatives highlighted include the critical examination of body-worn camera usage, the refinement of misconduct investigation protocols, and the advocacy for a unified oversight model that transcends municipal boundaries, setting a precedent for statewide reform. These recommendations are crafted from a place of dialogue and understanding, striving to balance the imperatives of law enforcement efficacy with the inalienable rights and dignity of the citizenry.

Marking the PAB's inaugural year as a fully operational entity, this report is both a testament to our foundational progress and a roadmap for the journey ahead. It invites policymakers, law enforcement personnel, and community members to engage in a collaborative effort to enact and sustain reforms. By embracing these recommendations, we can collectively embark on a path toward a Baltimore City where every interaction with law enforcement is underpinned by fairness, accountability, and a deep-seated respect for community welfare.

In presenting this report, we extend an invitation to all stakeholders to approach its contents with openness and a resolve to effectuate change. It is through our shared commitment to these ideals that we can achieve a vision of police oversight that not only responds to the exigencies of the present but also anticipates the needs of our future, ensuring that Baltimore City remains a beacon of justice, safety, and community solidarity.

# OVERVIEW OF BALTIMORE CITY'S POLICE OVERSIGHT STRUCTURE & PROCESS

Baltimore City employs a comprehensive oversight framework to promote transparency, accountability, and fairness within its law enforcement practices. This framework consists of three pivotal entities: the Police Accountability Board (PAB), the Administrative Charging Committee (ACC), and the Civilian Review Board (CRB). Together, they embody a holistic approach to overseeing law enforcement activities, from complaint intake through to the final adjudication of cases.

## **The Beginning: Complaint Intake and Preliminary Review**

The oversight journey begins with the PAB and CRB, which serve as the initial points of contact for public grievances against police conduct. The CRB's mandate covers complaints pertaining to excessive force, abusive language, harassment, false arrest, and false imprisonment. The PAB's remit is broader, encompassing any aspect of police conduct. However, jurisdictional nuances exist: the PAB oversees complaints against the Johns Hopkins Police Department, a city entity, whereas the CRB is responsible for matters involving the Morgan State University Police Department, reflecting their state entity status.

## **The Middle: Investigation**

At the investigation stage of the process, the CRB uniquely possesses the authority to conduct parallel investigations into complaints within its jurisdiction. This involves evidence collection and review, including interviews with complainants and witnesses. Should necessary evidence be inaccessible, the CRB can compel its submission through subpoenas, a power mirrored by the ACC at later stages of the process.

## **The End: Deliberation, Discipline, and Review**

The oversight process culminates with the ACC and CRB evaluating the findings from police and, where applicable, CRB investigations. This evaluation leads to determinations on officer misconduct and the assignment of disciplinary measures based on a pre-established matrix. These decisions are then communicated to the relevant police department, the officer(s) involved, and the complainant. The ACC, due to its city-based jurisdiction, does not review cases against Morgan State University police officers, while the CRB cannot oversee cases against Johns Hopkins police officers due to its state entity status.

In cases of disputed discipline, a trial board offers an additional review layer, ensuring due process. Officers dissatisfied with trial board outcomes may seek further review in the Circuit Court.

## **Annual Reporting and Continuous Improvement**

Integral to this oversight structure is the requirement for annual reporting by the PAB, which compiles data on complaints received, investigations conducted, and the disciplinary outcomes of reviewed cases. This report serves as a critical tool for identifying trends, recommending policy changes, and informing the public about the board's activities, thereby fostering a culture of continuous improvement and accountability within Baltimore City's law enforcement landscape. The PAB also contributes to the oversight process by appointing members to the ACC and trial board.

## **Collaborative Engagement and Transparency**

Central to the effectiveness of Baltimore City's police oversight structure is the collaborative engagement with the community and law enforcement leaders. Through public meetings, direct dialogue, and transparent communication, these oversight entities work to build trust, understanding, and mutual respect, laying the groundwork for meaningful reforms and positive change within the city's policing practices.

## **Conclusion**

Baltimore City's police oversight structure represents a comprehensive approach to ensuring accountability and transparency in law enforcement. Through its multi-tiered process of complaint intake, investigation, adjudication, and public reporting, the city strives to maintain a balance between the enforcement of law and the protection of civil rights, promoting a safe, just, and equitable Baltimore City for all its residents.



# OVERVIEW OF BALTIMORE CITY'S POLICE OVERSIGHT STRUCTURE & PROCESS

## PROCESS FLOW CHART

### Police Accountability Complaint Process

#### FILE A COMPLAINT WITH THE POLICE ACCOUNTABILITY BOARD.

Upon receiving a complaint from the public, PAB will forward the complaint to the appropriate law enforcement agency within three days.



#### FILE A COMPLAINT WITH LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY.

LEA receives a complaint from a member of the public or the PAB.



#### INVESTIGATION

Upon receiving a complaint, the law enforcement agency initiates an investigation. Following the completion of the investigation, the LEA sends the investigation file to the ACC for further action.



#### ADMINISTRATIVE CHARGING COMMITTEE

ACC will review the investigatory file within 30 days and decide whether to charge or not to charge the officer. If the officer is charged, ACC will suggest disciplinary measures based on the matrix to the law enforcement head.



#### TRIAL BOARDS

If an officer who has sustained charges fails to accept the disciplinary measures imposed, their case will be referred to the trial boards. Following the trial board hearing, the officer can seek judicial review, and the case will subsequently move to the Circuit Court, which adjudicates the petition for judicial review.



#### CASE CLOSED

In the event that allegations against an officer are unfounded and no charges are filed, the officer is exonerated. If the officer is charged and accepts the discipline imposed, the matter is considered final. Alternatively, if the matter is referred to trial boards and the officer chooses not to seek judicial review, the decision of the trial board is final.



# THE POLICE ACCOUNTABILITY BOARD

At the heart of Baltimore City's commitment to responsible law enforcement lies the PAB. This civilian-led entity epitomizes the city's dedication to fostering transparency, accountability, and public trust in policing. The PAB's establishment reflects a concerted effort to ensure law enforcement practices are conducted with the utmost respect for civil rights, thereby reinforcing community confidence.

## Composition and Representation

The PAB is distinguished by its diverse and inclusive composition, mirroring the rich tapestry of Baltimore City itself. With seventeen members, its structure is designed to capture a wide array of perspectives and expertise, enhancing the board's effectiveness in oversight tasks. The appointment process, involving the mayor and City Council members, guarantees representation from across the city, with one young adult member ensuring the voice of the youth is heard.

## Diverse Expertise on the Board

The PAB boasts a diverse membership, encompassing a wide range of backgrounds and experiences, indicative of Baltimore City's multifaceted community. The current all-civilian membership includes:

- Joshua Harris, Chair
- Jamal Turner, Vice Chair
- Stephanie Lee, Secretary
- Ambassador Peter Bodde
- Avi S. Wolasky, Esq.
- Bryan A. Upshur, Esq.
- Dr. Doris Minor Terrell, Appointments Committee Chair
- Dr. Janetta Gilmore
- Harold Madison
- Jesmond O. Riggins, Esq., Policy and Advice Committee Chair, ACC Member (Chair designee)
- Lisa Nguyen
- Mansur Abdul-Malik, Community Engagement Committee Chair
- Maraizu Onyenaka
- Marc S. Broady, Esq., Bylaws Committee Chair
- Megan Kenny, Data and Research Committee Chair
- Pastor Antoine Burton

## Core Responsibilities

The PAB is entrusted with several critical functions aimed at bolstering police accountability:

- Initial Contact for Complaints: The PAB serves as the first point for lodging complaints against police misconduct, ensuring swift referral through the appropriate channels.
- Strategic Engagement: By conducting quarterly meetings with law enforcement leaders, the PAB facilitates open dialogue on oversight and accountability.
- Civilian Appointments: The PAB's authority to appoint members to the ACC and trial boards reinforces civilian participation in disciplinary proceedings.
- Disciplinary Review: Quarterly examinations of disciplinary outcomes offer an added oversight layer, promoting fairness and transparency.
- Advisory Capacity: The PAB advises the Mayor and City Council on policing issues, drawing from its comprehensive oversight activities.
- Transparency Through Reporting: An annual report from the PAB outlines its activities, findings, and recommendations, ensuring ongoing accountability.

## Expansive Jurisdiction

The PAB's jurisdiction encompasses a broad spectrum of law enforcement agencies within Baltimore City. The PAB oversees the Baltimore City Police Department, the Baltimore City School Police, the Baltimore City Sheriff's Department, the Baltimore City Environmental Police, the Police Force of Baltimore City Community College, and the Police Department of Johns Hopkins University. This wide-reaching oversight is pivotal in cultivating a culture of accountability and trust between law enforcement and the community, driving progress towards equitable and just policing practices.



# THE ADMINISTRATIVE CHARGING COMMITTEE

The ACC occupies a foundational role within Baltimore City's police accountability structure, ensuring the system operates with integrity and effectiveness. Integral to the civilian oversight framework, the ACC is entrusted with a vital mission: to review and adjudicate police conduct cases that emerge from internal investigations conducted by law enforcement agencies. This committee is structured to guarantee fairness, openness, and justice in addressing allegations of police misconduct.

The ACC is comprised of five civilian members, reflecting a commitment to diversity and balanced representation. This composition includes the PAB Chair or their designate, reinforcing a tight-knit and continuous oversight linkage between the PAB and ACC. With two members appointed directly by the PAB and another two by the Mayor, the committee embodies a collaborative spirit and a multifaceted viewpoint on police accountability.

## **Membership of the ACC:**

- Tiera M. Hawkes, Esq., Chair (PAB appointee)
- Ray Kelly, Vice-Chair (PAB appointee)
- David Cramer (Mayoral appointee)
- Jesmond O. Riggins, Esq. (PAB chair designee)
- Kimberly Rogers (Mayoral appointee)

## **Scope of Jurisdiction:**

Echoing the PAB's broad reach, the ACC's authority extends to overseeing administrative investigations across multiple law enforcement bodies in Baltimore City, including the Baltimore City Police Department, School Police, Sheriff's Department, Environmental Police, the Police Force of the Baltimore City Community College, and the Police Department of Johns Hopkins University.

## **Core Responsibilities:**

The ACC's duties are multifaceted, each rooted in the pursuit of upholding justice and accountability within the realm of law enforcement:

- **Reviewing Investigation Outcomes:** With a keen eye, the ACC evaluates the results of investigations from various law enforcement agencies, ensuring each case is judiciously assessed based on a thorough examination of evidence, such as body-worn camera recordings.
- **Evaluating Evidence:** The committee engages in a deep dive into the evidence, including analysis of body-worn camera footage and other pertinent data, laying the groundwork for informed decisions.
- **Facilitating Testimony:** The ACC possesses the authority to summon police officers involved in investigations to testify, providing a direct channel for elucidating the specifics of conduct under scrutiny.
- **Determining Charges:** A key function of the ACC is to ascertain whether the amassed evidence justifies administrative charges against officers, a determination with profound implications for the individuals involved and the broader public's trust in the police.
- **Recommending Discipline:** In instances where charges are warranted, the ACC proposes disciplinary measures, calibrated to match the gravity of the misconduct against established guidelines.
- **Issuing Findings:** Transparency and accountability are further cemented as the committee disseminates its findings and rationales to all stakeholders, including the implicated law enforcement agencies.

Through its rigorous review and decision-making process, the ACC exemplifies Baltimore City's dedication to fostering a transparent, just, and efficacious system of police accountability. The committee's diligence is instrumental in maintaining public confidence and assuring that law enforcement personnel adhere to established standards of professional conduct.

# THE CIVILIAN REVIEW BOARD

The CRB stands as a key component in Baltimore City's commitment to ensuring effective oversight of law enforcement. As the city's foremost civilian oversight body, created in 1999, the CRB is vested with the authority to independently investigate public complaints against police officers, embodying a proactive approach to addressing misconduct. Moreover, its advisory function, which involves scrutinizing and recommending improvements to law enforcement policies, marks the CRB as a central figure in driving reform and promoting higher standards of transparency and accountability.

## **Composition of the Board**

The CRB's membership reflects a commitment to diverse representation and expertise in oversight matters. With members like Natalie Novak as Chair, the board's composition ensures a wide-ranging perspective on issues of police conduct and accountability. The inclusion of dedicated community members, both past and present, underscores the CRB's grounding in community values and its responsiveness to public concerns.

## **Scope of Oversight**

The CRB is empowered to investigate a specific range of complaints that touch on core concerns of police-community interactions, including:

- Excessive Force: Scrutinizing allegations of undue physical force by officers.
- Abusive Language: Addressing complaints about the use of harmful or derogatory language.
- Harassment: Investigating claims of intimidating or distressing behavior by officers.
- False Arrest and Imprisonment: Reviewing allegations of wrongful detention or arrest without legal grounds.

## **Broad Jurisdiction for Comprehensive Oversight**

The CRB's oversight extends across several key law enforcement agencies within Baltimore City, from the Baltimore City Police Department to specialized units like the Police Force of Morgan State University. This expansive jurisdiction ensures that the CRB's influence and oversight capabilities reach widely across the city's law enforcement landscape, fostering a culture of accountability and respect for civil liberties across various law enforcement agencies.

## **Enhancing Professionalism through Independent Review**

Through its diligent investigative work and advisory efforts, the CRB actively contributes to the elevation of law enforcement practices in Baltimore City. Its capacity to independently assess complaints and advise on policy reforms positions the CRB as a critical mechanism for ensuring that police actions reflect the city's commitment to justice, accountability, and the protection of civil rights. The CRB's work not only addresses individual instances of misconduct but also promotes systemic changes that reinforce the professionalism and integrity of Baltimore City's law enforcement agencies.



# THE MAYOR'S OFFICE OF EQUITY AND CIVIL RIGHTS AND ITS POLICE ACCOUNTABILITY DIVISION

The Mayor's Office of Equity and Civil Rights (OECR or Office) serves as a pivotal city agency with a mission to eliminate inequity, inequality, and discrimination. Tasked with a wide-ranging mandate, OECR not only oversees city-wide equity initiatives but also supports eight boards and commissions dedicated to various areas of civic life, such as enforcing the local living and prevailing wage, ensuring equal access and opportunities for persons with disabilities, as well as issues concerning women, veterans, and police oversight .

Central to police oversight, the Office and its Police Accountability Division (division) play an important role in enhancing the effectiveness of Baltimore City's oversight entities – the PAB, ACC, and CRB. Division staff are instrumental in ensuring the smooth and effective operation of these bodies, providing essential support across operational, administrative, logistical, and strategic areas vital to fulfilling their mandates.

## Key Areas of Support

- **Administrative and Logistical Support:** Directed by the Office's Director, who also serves as the PAB Director, the division equips the PAB, ACC, and CRB with essential administrative and logistical support. This support includes coordinating meetings, managing complaint intake, and offering training opportunities to board members, all aimed at boosting the operational efficiency and responsiveness of these oversight bodies.
- **Investigative and Adjudicative Assistance:** The division utilizes its expertise and resources to bolster the investigative and adjudicative efforts of CRB and ACC, respectively. Providing support in gathering evidence, accessing crucial documents, and offering legal and procedural guidance, the division enhances the robustness of civilian oversight.
- **Data Analysis and Reporting:** A vital role of the division is the analysis of police conduct, complaints, and outcomes of oversight activities. By employing a data-driven approach, the division helps in identifying trends, crafting policy recommendations, and evaluating the effectiveness of the oversight framework, thereby aligning with the PAB's commitment to evidence-based recommendations.
- **Community Engagement and Advocacy:** Aligning with the broader mission of the Office, the division is actively involved in bridging communication gaps between law enforcement and the communities of Baltimore City. Through various outreach efforts, public forums, and educational initiatives, the division plays a critical role in educating residents about their rights and the avenues available for police oversight and addressing possible misconduct.

## Challenges PAB Encountered with the Office

Throughout the year, the foundational yet challenging interactions between the PAB and Office significantly impacted PAB's ability to fully perform our responsibilities, including a key legal requirement: compiling and timely publishing a comprehensive annual report. Efforts to secure detailed information about budget allocations, staffing, and public access to board records were met with resistance, considerable delay, and often incomplete responses, impeding our reporting and oversight functions. Here are a few examples:

# THE MAYOR'S OFFICE OF EQUITY AND CIVIL RIGHTS AND ITS POLICE ACCOUNTABILITY DIVISION

- **Budget and Staffing Details:** Responses from the Office to requests for detailed budgetary information and staffing data for fiscal years 2023 and 2024 were frequently delayed. Our position was that this crucial information is necessary for the PAB to evaluate and publicly detail the resources allocated for police oversight. The Office's position was that we had no "legislative mandate" to include this information into our report. Often, the Office left our repeated inquiries unanswered for extended periods, and provided responses that lacked the requested details to guarantee transparency and accountability. This was particularly concerning given that the Office was allocated a total of \$4.53 million in the last two fiscal years specifically to support PAB and ACC, including the employment of 17 staff members dedicated to these functions.
- **Access to Information:** Similarly, attempts to gather information for the purpose of providing the public with access to board records, such as meeting minutes, agendas, and video recordings, encountered significant obstacles. After sustained questioning, the Office eventually revealed during the board's April 1, 2024 public meeting that some time in late 2023 or early 2024, it had inadvertently deleted all video recordings of past public meetings, that the recordings are irretrievable, and that it has no records retention policy in place. These issues not only delayed the publication of our report but had the potential to undermine public trust and transparency in the board, which runs counter to our mission.

Despite these obstacles, our interactions with the Office highlighted critical areas in need of significant improvement. These experiences underscore the urgent need for enhanced transparency and more efficient processes within the Office to effectively assist and support the operations of PAB, ACC, and CRB. It also underscores the need to change the longstanding posture of the Office toward the boards it is assigned to assist, which has been more of an overseer than a facilitator and supportive partner. Such a shift in posture is essential for the betterment of police oversight in the city.

## **Optimistic Outlook for Future Collaboration**

Fortunately, recent developments within the Office indicate a shift toward a more collaborative relationship with the PAB. Structural staffing adjustments to better support police accountability have been made and is a promising development. This and other changes are expected to strengthen collaboration between PAB and the Office. The Office's readiness to engage in constructive dialogue and address past shortcomings offers a hopeful prospect for a partnership that will improve transparency and accountability.

As we look ahead to the coming year, the PAB is optimistic about reinforcing its relationship with the Office, fostering a partnership that embodies the principles of justice and accountability for all residents of Baltimore City. Our aim is to capitalize on this positive momentum, ensuring that our efforts in police oversight are grounded in robust cooperation and a mutual commitment to the public's interest.

## **Acknowledgment of Leadership**

In recognizing the efforts that underpin the success of Baltimore City's police oversight, special acknowledgment is given to **Mariel Shutinya**, the former Chief of Police Accountability at the PAD. Her dedication and leadership were instrumental in establishing the operational frameworks for both the PAB and ACC, laying a solid foundation for effective civilian oversight in the city. We also want to thank her for identifying her predecessor, **Aeiramique Glass Blake**, who is a national leader in police accountability and public safety reform. She moved across the country, from San Diego, California to Baltimore City, to do this work. And within a short period of time, she began building out a robust, restorative, and transformative system for police accountability and oversight in the city. We trust her leadership and know she will take this work to the next level.

# POLICE OVERSIGHT BUDGET AND SPENDING

In the Budget and Spending section of this report, we anticipated including comprehensive details on both the budget allocation and the specific use of funds dedicated to supporting the PAB and ACC, as well as a thorough breakdown of the staffing resources allocated to these bodies through the Office.

Over the course of months, we attempted to work with the Office to obtain this vital information. We reached out directly to its director requesting detailed budgetary and staffing data to ensure transparency and to provide the public, the City Council, and the Mayor with a clear understanding of the resources committed to police oversight in Baltimore City. Our inquiries were often left unanswered for extended periods of time and responses regularly omitted clearly requested details. The Board notified the Office that this and other information was crucial and necessary for it to publish a comprehensive report. The Office responded that because the local ordinance did not mandate that the information be included in the report, the Board had no right to it. Regrettably, the information we requested was not provided.

It is important to note that in Fiscal Year 2023 and 2024, the city appropriated a total of 4.53 million to the Office specifically to support PAB and ACC. In FY2023, the Office, through Ordinance 23-217, received \$2,388,311.00 for the “hiring of staff, the purchase of equipment and technology, and the development of training resources to support the implementation of the new police accountability structures.” In Fiscal Year 2024, the Office received \$2,145,362.00 to, among other things, hire 17 staff members to support PAB and ACC through its Police Accountability Division. Regrettably, the Division has been operating at a capacity of approximately 35 percent, having only five (5) full time staff to support the three boards. Because of the Office’s lack of transparency around staffing and other budgetary issues, the PAB has made a written request that a thorough audit of Office expenditures be performed immediately.

Moving forward, we will continue to work with the Office to ensure that the funds dedicated to police accountability are being utilized as prescribed, and we will continue to report this information out to the public. Further, we are hopeful that as we work toward establishing a truly independent civilian oversight mechanism, the Administration will be transparent and inclusive of the Board in discussions concerning its budget and staffing, among other things.





# PAB ACTIVITIES

The PAB marked its inception with the first meeting held on February 1, 2023, signifying the beginning of a new chapter in civilian oversight of law enforcement in the city. This milestone was followed by the election of **Joshua Harris** as Chair on February 27, 2023, establishing the leadership that would guide the PAB through its foundational year.

## Committees and Organizational Structure

Understanding the breadth of its mandate, the PAB, during its meeting on April 3, 2023, initiated the formation of five key committees designed to address various aspects of police accountability comprehensively. By September 11, 2023, the board had not only elected a Vice Chair and Secretary but also completed the crucial task of finalizing committee assignments, further solidifying its operational framework.

## Training and Expertise Development

A significant stride towards enhancing the board's capability was the selection of two civilians for training by the Maryland Police Training and Standards Commission to serve on trial boards. This decision, made during the October 2 meeting, underscores the PAB's commitment to informed and effective oversight.

## Annual Reporting and Legislative Framework

In accordance with local law, the PAB is tasked with submitting an annual report by December 31st each year. This report aims to identify disciplinary trends, recommend policy improvements, and detail the board's activities and complaint intake. The 2023 report represents the PAB's first as a fully functional entity, following its formal establishment by legislation signed in June 2022 and the subsequent appointment and swearing-in of its members in February 2023.

## Year in Review

The PAB, operational since February 11, 2023, held 11 meetings throughout the year, underscoring its dedication to transparency and community engagement. During this period, the board processed 942 complaint intakes, reflecting the community's trust in this new oversight mechanism.

## Administrative Charging Committee

Parallel to the PAB's efforts, the ACC held its inaugural meeting on June 13, 2023. Since then, meeting weekly, the ACC has diligently adjudicated 408 cases, a testament to its vital role in the oversight ecosystem. Under the leadership of **Tiera M. Hawkes, Esq.** as Chair, the ACC's consistent and thorough review process has contributed significantly to the pursuit of accountability within the city's law enforcement agencies.

## Conclusion

The first year of the PAB's operation has laid a solid foundation for civilian oversight in Baltimore City. Through strategic leadership elections, the formation of specialized committees, targeted training initiatives, and the ACC's active case adjudication, the board has demonstrated a profound commitment to enhancing police accountability. As the PAB moves forward, it continues to build on this groundwork, striving for a transparent, accountable, and just law enforcement system in Baltimore City.

# PAB COMMITTEES

The PAB's current bylaws have established five principal committees, they are the Appointments Committee, the Bylaws Committee, the Data and Research Committee, the Community Engagement Committee, and the Policy and Advice Committee. These committees enable the board to focus on specialized areas crucial for achieving transparency, accountability, and effective civilian oversight. Additionally, the provision for Ad-Hoc committees ensures flexibility to address emerging needs.

## **Appointments Committee**

The Appointments Committee, chaired by **Dr. Doris Minor Terrell**, plays a pivotal role in strengthening civilian involvement in the police accountability process. It oversees civilian appointments to trial boards, which are convened when an officer contests disciplinary actions. The composition of these boards, including civilians, underscores the commitment to a balanced and fair adjudication process. The committee has made strides in making the application process more inclusive and accessible, including the recommendation to remove educational barriers and the adoption of a holistic approach to recruiting civilian members. These efforts aim to enhance public awareness and participation in the police oversight process, a testament to the committee's dedication to fostering community trust and collaboration.

## **Bylaws Committee**

The Bylaws Committee, chaired by **Marc S. Broady, Esq.**, is tasked with the critical responsibility of drafting and refining the governance structure of the PAB. The bylaws, which outline the roles, responsibilities, and operational procedures of the board, are being developed to ensure effective functioning and accountability. This includes provisions for meeting protocols, committee structures, and public engagement strategies. The committee's work is foundational to the board's integrity and efficiency, ensuring that it operates within a clear and robust framework.

## **Community Organization and Engagement Committee**

Dedicated to fostering community engagement and public education, the Community Engagement Committee, chaired by **Mansur Abdul-Malik**, aims to bridge the gap between the PAB and the communities it serves. By hosting meetings in communities affected by police misconduct and establishing a strong social media presence, the committee seeks to enhance public awareness and involvement in the oversight process. The committee's goals for 2024 reflect a comprehensive strategy to engage with the community, share information about police misconduct processes, and build productive relationships with other oversight bodies. This approach is instrumental in creating a culture of transparency and trust between the community and law enforcement.

## **Data and Research Committee**

The Data and Research Committee, chaired by **Megan Kenny**, is at the forefront of employing data-driven approaches to address police misconduct. By analyzing raw data from law enforcement agencies, this committee enhances PAB's capacity to understand and address issues of police misconduct comprehensively. The commitment to data-driven practices not only improves the efficiency of the oversight process but also ensures that the board's efforts are grounded in factual analysis. This approach is vital for building a credible and effective oversight mechanism.

## **Policy and Advice Committee**

The Policy and Advice Committee, chaired by **Jesmond O. Riggins, Esq.**, plays a strategic role in shaping the policy landscape of policing and police accountability in Baltimore City. Through comprehensive analysis of complaint data and input from various stakeholders, this committee formulates policy recommendations aimed at reforming policing practices and improving police accountability. The committee's work culminates in overseeing and guiding the drafting of the annual report, which outlines key recommendations for the elected officials and key stakeholders on the local and state level. This process underscores the committee's crucial role in influencing policy changes and advancing the board's mission.

# PAB COMMITTEES

## **Conclusion**

The committees of the PAB are the backbone of its efforts to ensure transparent, accountable, and effective civilian oversight of law enforcement in Baltimore City. Through specialized focus areas, these committees address the multifaceted challenges of police accountability, from policy reform and data analysis to community engagement and public education. Their collective efforts are crucial for advancing the mission of the PAB and fostering a more just and equitable policing system.



# COMPLAINTS AND TRENDS

The PAB oversees the analysis of complaints against police officers in Baltimore City. This data is crucial for understanding law enforcement accountability. Here are the key findings from our analysis; data for 2023 reflect complaints received from January 1, 2023 – December 18, 2023:

- In 2022, internal complaints, originating from within law enforcement agencies, constituted only 5.8% of all misconduct allegations. However, in 2023, this figure surged to 24.74%, signifying a substantial increase in self-reporting within the police force. This rise was largely driven by the identification of violations during audits of Body-Worn Camera (BWC) footage by the Baltimore Police Department (BPD).
- The majority of complaints (70.04%) are submitted by external sources, such as individuals or organizations outside law enforcement, complaints were filed with Law Enforcement Agencies (LEA's) Investigated, then forwarded to the PAB. Additionally, a notable portion (24.74%) originates from within law enforcement agencies, indicating an internal recognition of misconduct.
- It's important to note that some complaints (3.89%) are directly submitted to the PAB. Overall, in 2023, there were a total of 978 complaints.

## Regarding the nature of complaints:

- Each complaint may encompass multiple allegations against an officer. For instance, a single complaint might include allegations of discourtesy and false imprisonment during a traffic stop.
- It's essential to consider both the number of complaints and the number of allegations within each complaint to gain a nuanced understanding. This approach prevents overlooking important details and ensures a comprehensive assessment of the situation.
- In 2023, there were a total of 4,196 allegations spread across 926 complaints.

This data provides valuable insights for enhancing law enforcement accountability and fostering trust within the community, supporting just comprehensive public safety .

## Key Insights:

- Top ten allegations account for 69.8% of total allegations.
- Neglect of Duty is the most frequent allegation at 22%.
- Conduct Unbecoming is the second most common at 12.6%.
- False Arrest is the 10th most frequent allegation at 2.1%.
  - Some complaints involve multiple allegations:
    - 1 complaint had 68 allegations involving nine officers.
    - 12 complaints had 20 or more allegations.
    - 432 complaints had 2 allegations each.
- All officers involved in complaints are accounted for, either receiving allegations or as witnesses. Officers are identified through unique sequence ID numbers.
- Occasionally, officers are identified based on information provided by complainants during investigations.
- 13 distinct sequence IDs had at least 20 allegations, one of whom had 38 allegations across 8 complaints.
- 16 distinct sequence IDs had at least 5 complaints against them, one of whom had 9 complaints with 30 total allegations.
- NOTE: Sequence IDs are the unique identifier assigned to each new officer that also stay with the officer for the duration of their career. In laymen's terms, the Sequence ID can be considered similar to a Social Security Number for civilians.

# COMPLAINTS AND TRENDS

## ACC Data Highlights

From June 13 to December 13, 2023, the ACC reviewed cases in 23 meetings, focusing on those accruing since July 1, 2022. The breakdown of case outcomes includes 32.3 percent closed with administrative charges, 15.7 percent administratively closed due to jurisdictional issues or duplications, and 52 percent closed without administrative charges. Notably, the majority of "Admin Closed" cases were due to incidents occurring before the ACC's jurisdictional start date or were identified as duplicates.

## BWC Compliance and Trends

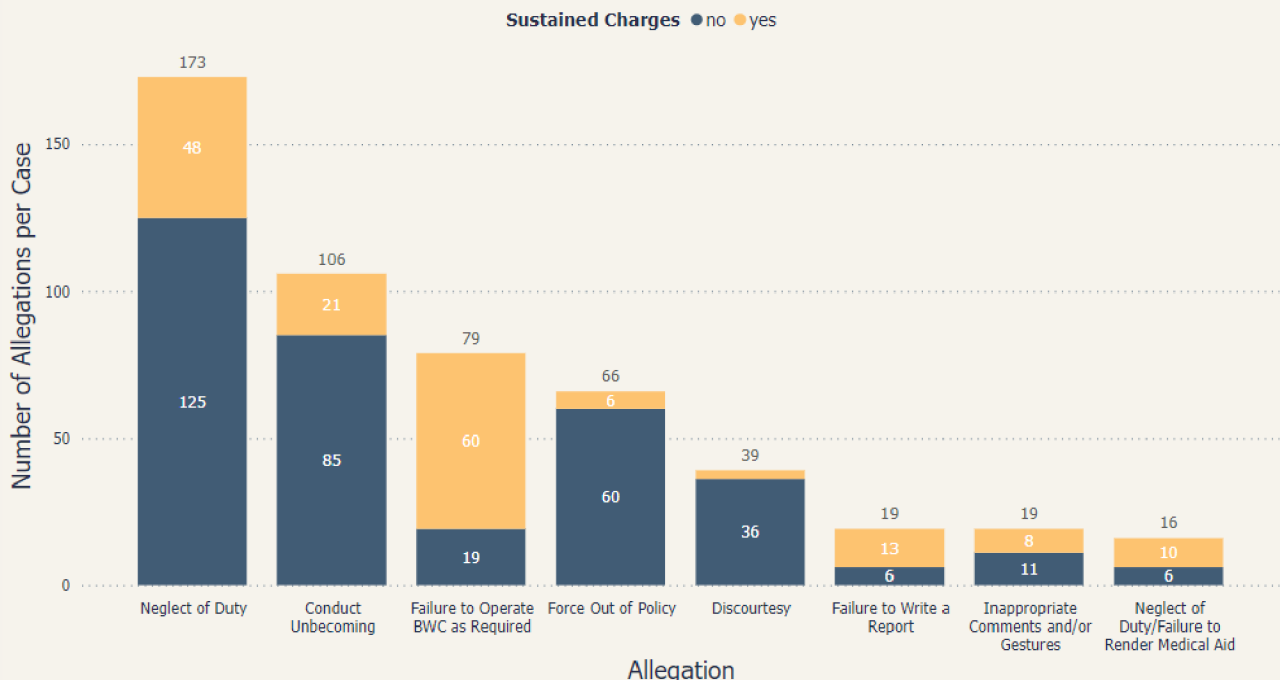
BWC footage plays a pivotal role in substantiating complaints, with 61 out of 82 BWC-related allegations sustained by the ACC. However, compliance issues with BWC policy present significant challenges, impacting the outcomes of related misconduct investigations. In cases where BWC policy violations are sustained, the adjudication of other allegations stemming from the same incident often faces hurdles without comprehensive video evidence.

## Conclusion

The preliminary data on police misconduct complaints and ACC case outcomes reveal crucial insights into the state of police accountability in Baltimore City. While the increase in internal reporting and the strategic use of BWC footage are positive developments, the data also highlight areas for improvement, particularly in compliance with complaint forwarding mandates and BWC policies. As the PAB continues to refine its data collection and analysis methods, these insights will inform targeted recommendations to enhance transparency, accountability, and trust in Baltimore's law enforcement practices.

### Most Common Allegations

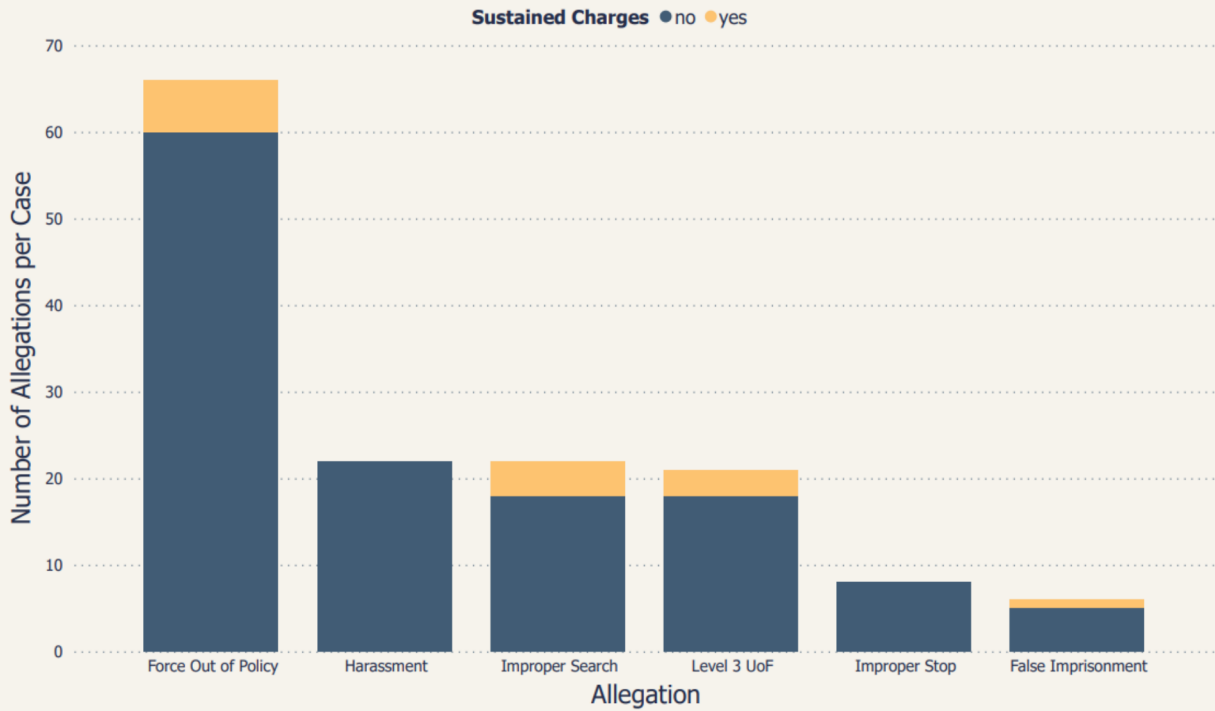
The allegations below were reported with the highest frequency. The distribution is disaggregated by charge status (e.g., Sustained and Not Sustained).



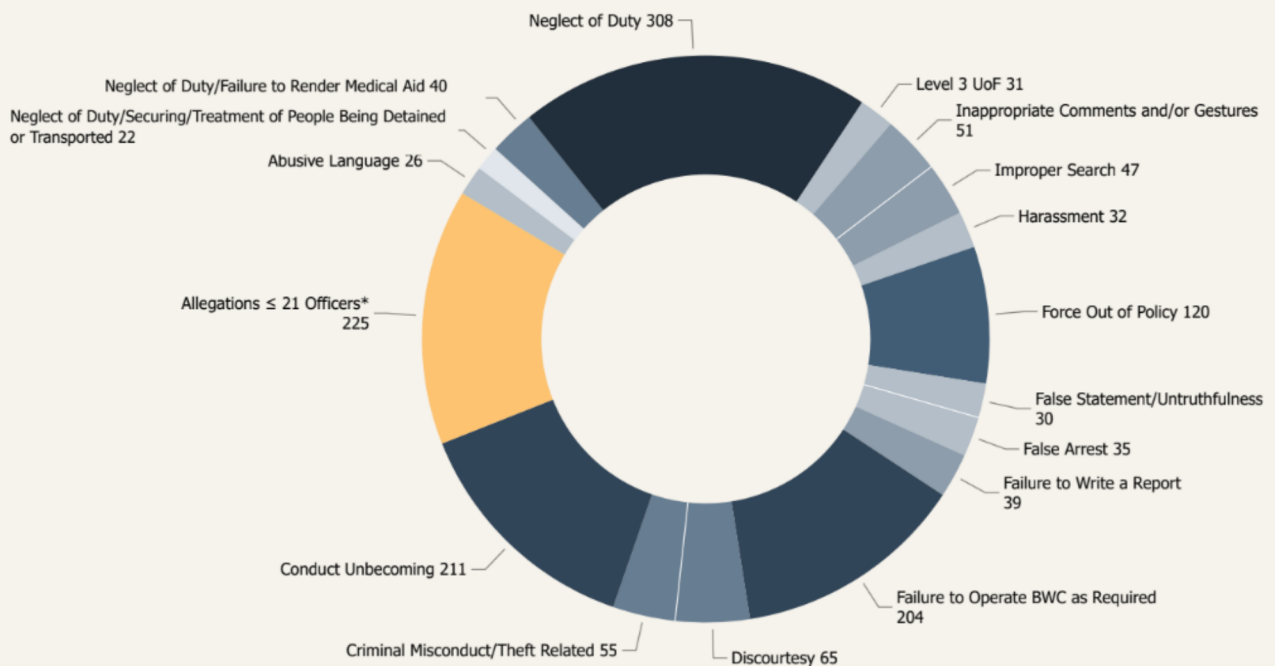
# COMPLAINTS AND TRENDS

## Serious Allegations

The distribution is disaggregated by charge status (e.g., Sustained and Not Sustained).



## Number of Officers Charged by Allegation Category





# COMPLAINTS AND TRENDS

## Incident Location Information

Incident Zip	Number of Allegations	Incident Zip Code	Percentage of Allegations
	73		
17602	3	21201	4.52%
21117	4	21202	7.92%
21201	36	21205	2.75%
21202	85	21206	3.88%
21205	13	21207	1.21%
21206	30	21211	0.81%
21207	8	21212	1.78%
21208	5	21213	5.25%
21209	5	21214	1.86%
21211	5	21215	8.16%
21212	15	21216	2.50%
21213	44	21217	7.27%
21214	19	21218	6.95%
21215	65	21223	6.70%
21216	15	21224	4.77%
21217	51	21225	2.83%
21218	46	21229	2.83%
21222	10	21230	3.96%
21223	47	21231	2.10%
21224	53	21239	2.10%
21225	36	Data Unavailable	16.96%
21226	2	ZIP codes < 10 Allegations	2.91%
21227	6		
21229	17	<b>Total</b>	<b>100.00%</b>
21230	52		
21231	27		
21234	10		
21237	3		
21239	11		
21287	1		
<b>Total</b>	<b>797</b>		

Note: Analyzing PAB Data Table 4: ZIP code trends Incident location information is often missing or incomplete when an allegation is initially received from Internal Affairs. In 2023, incident location is missing for 210 allegations received by the PAB, making up 17% of complaints. 8.2% of allegations arose from incidents occurring in the 21215 ZIP code; a total of 101 allegations. Close behind are 21202 with 98, 21217 with 90, 21218 with 86, and 21223 with 83 allegations. The Baltimore Police Department implemented a redistricting plan on July 9, 2023. BPD District information is unreliable for 2023 and not included in this report. \*There are an additional aggregated 36 unique ZIP codes, all with less than 10 allegations.

# POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

In an era where the call for police reform resonates with increasing urgency across communities, the Policy Recommendations section presents a crafted suite of proposals aimed at enhancing the framework of police oversight and accountability in Baltimore City. Drawing from an in-depth analysis of existing challenges and opportunities for growth, these recommendations embody a forward-thinking approach to policing, prioritizing transparency, fairness, and community trust. Through the lens of innovative practices and legislative refinement, this section outlines strategic steps towards realizing a policing system that not only meets the highest standards of integrity and effectiveness but also reinforces the bond between law enforcement and the community it serves.

## **Policy Recommendation 1: Establishment of the Independent Baltimore Oversight Office**

The PAB recommends that the City Council of Baltimore City pass legislation creating the Baltimore Office of Police Oversight and Accountability. This entity would be independent and quasi-governmental, tasked with the operational and administrative support of the PAB, ACC, and CRB, shifting this responsibility away from the Mayor's Office of Equity and Civil Rights (OECR).

### Rationale:

The OECR currently holds a sprawling mandate, overseeing essential areas like disability rights, veterans' affairs, gender issues, wage standards, and anti-discrimination efforts in various sectors. While these functions are crucial, the extensive scope can potentially spread the office's resources thin, hampering its ability to fully focus on police oversight and accountability.

### Benefits of an Independent Agency:

- **Specialized Focus:** A dedicated agency will concentrate solely on police oversight, enabling a more targeted and effective approach to accountability measures.
- **Enhanced Agility:** Freed from the broader responsibilities of the OECR, this new entity can respond more swiftly and adeptly to issues within its purview.
- **Impartial Oversight:** Establishing this office as independent ensures that its operations are distinct from the city's other equity and civil rights initiatives, fostering unbiased oversight.
- **Public Trust:** A specialized agency underscores the city's dedication to transparency and justice in law enforcement, potentially increasing public confidence in the oversight system and process.

### Conclusion:

Creating the Baltimore Office of Police Oversight and Accountability represents a strategic enhancement of the city's capacity to oversee law enforcement practices effectively. This change promises not only to streamline police accountability efforts but also to reaffirm the city's commitment to upholding the principles of transparency and justice in policing.

## **Policy Recommendation 2: Budget Expenditure Integrity for PAB and ACC**

The PAB recommends that the City Council of Baltimore City amend the current PAB ordinance to stipulate that funds earmarked and allocated to OECR for the support of PAB and ACC are strictly used for these purposes.

## Rationale:

The broad remit of OECR encompasses several critical but varied missions, from disability advocacy to combating employment discrimination. This diversity of responsibilities presents an existing risk that funds designated for police oversight might be used to further other goals and objectives of OECR.

## Proposed Safeguards:

- **Funding Protection:** Amending the ordinance to specifically restrict fund expenditure for the purpose of supporting PAB and ACC will protect resources dedicated to police oversight.
- **Operational Needs Focus:** Ensuring that allocations are directed toward staffing, equipment, technology, and training will enhance the effectiveness of police oversight functions.
- **Prevention of Resource Diversion:** Explicit financial guidelines will help prevent the reallocation of funds, ensuring they serve their primary purpose of supporting police accountability mechanisms.

## Impact:

Implementing this recommendation would bolster the operational integrity of PAB and ACC, facilitating a more robust framework for police oversight. By securing the financial foundation of these entities, Baltimore City can foster a more transparent, accountable, and efficient system of oversight. This financial integrity is essential for maintaining and reinforcing public trust, affirming the city's dedication to responsible and focused utilization of allocated funds for the enhancement of police accountability.

## Conclusion:

This policy recommendation underscores the necessity of clear, targeted financial provisions to safeguard the budgetary allocations for police oversight in Baltimore City. Ensuring that funds designated for the PAB and ACC are utilized as intended is crucial for maintaining the effectiveness and credibility of the oversight process, ultimately contributing to a stronger, more accountable law enforcement system.

## **Policy Recommendation 3: Creation of the Statewide Maryland Oversight Authority**

The PAB recommends that the Governor of Maryland establish the Maryland Office of Police Oversight and Accountability (MOPOA). This recommendation envisions MOPOA as a state-level, independent entity dedicated to standardizing, supporting, and enhancing police oversight mechanisms throughout Maryland. MOPOA would function as a repository and disseminator of oversight best practices, fostering collaboration and offering policy guidance to ensure a unified and effective approach to police accountability across the state.

## Rationale:

Diverse oversight practices across Maryland have led to varying levels of effectiveness and public trust in police accountability processes. By creating MOPOA, Maryland can address these disparities, bringing a standardized, evidence-based approach to police oversight. This central hub would enable the sharing of best practices, resources, and policy advice, significantly contributing to a more consistent and high-quality oversight framework statewide.

## Key Aspects of the Recommendation:

- **Statewide Standardization:** MOPOA would ensure that all jurisdictions within Maryland adhere to a set of standardized practices for police oversight, reducing disparities and enhancing effectiveness.



- **Resource and Knowledge Hub:** Serving as a central repository for oversight best practices and policy guidance, MOPOA would facilitate the sharing of resources and expertise among local oversight bodies.
- **Collaborative Platform:** Encouraging collaboration among various stakeholders, MOPOA would promote a more integrated and cohesive approach to police accountability, bridging gaps between jurisdictions and fostering mutual learning.
- **Enhancement of Trust:** By elevating oversight standards and practices, MOPOA would play a crucial role in building a statewide culture of transparency, accountability, and public trust in law enforcement.

**Impact:**

The establishment of MOPOA represents a strategic step towards unifying police oversight efforts in Maryland, promising to elevate the standards of accountability and trust in policing across the state. This initiative acknowledges the need for a more equitable and just policing framework, recognizing the importance of a consistent and collaborative approach to oversight.

**Conclusion:**

This policy recommendation underscores the critical need for a centralized body that can spearhead the standardization and enhancement of police oversight practices in Maryland. The creation of MOPOA would mark a significant advancement in the state's commitment to fostering transparency, accountability, and trust in law enforcement, ensuring that all communities benefit from effective and equitable police oversight.

**Policy Recommendation 4: Linking Oversight Budgets to Police Department Funding Statewide**

The PAB recommends that the Maryland General Assembly enact legislation to link the budgetary provisions for PABs and ACCs across the state, directly to the budgets of their respective local police departments. Specifically, it is recommended that PAB and ACC funding be set at a minimum of 0.05% of the annual budget of their local police departments, ensuring that oversight bodies have stable and sufficient resources to perform their critical functions effectively. It must be noted that the funding should be based on, not taken from, police department budgets.

**Rationale:**

This recommendation seeks to establish a reliable and sustainable funding mechanism for police oversight bodies statewide by correlating their budgets with the scale of the police departments they monitor. This approach acknowledges the intrinsic connection between the scope of policing activities and the requisite resources needed for effective oversight, advocating for a proportional and equitable financial model.

**Benefits of the Proposed Model:**

- **Predictable Funding:** By anchoring PAB and ACC budgets to a set percentage of police department budgets, oversight bodies can anticipate stable funding year-over-year, facilitating long-term planning and operational consistency.
- **Reflective of Policing Scale:** The allocation percentage ensures that the resources available to oversight bodies are commensurate with the size and complexity of the police operations they oversee, enhancing their ability to conduct thorough and impactful oversight.
- **Promotes Fiscal Responsibility:** Establishing a direct financial relationship between police department budgets and oversight funding emphasizes a commitment to accountability and fiscal prudence in the realm of police oversight.

**Impact:**

Implementing this legislative change would mark a significant advancement in the funding of police oversight mechanisms, ensuring they possess the necessary financial resources to uphold transparency, accountability, and justice within law enforcement practices. This financial model signifies a comprehensive approach to supporting police oversight, reinforcing its independence and operational efficacy.

## Conclusion:

This policy recommendation offers a strategic and equitable solution to the ongoing challenge of securing adequate funding for police oversight bodies in Maryland. By establishing a budgetary foundation that reflects the operational scale of police departments, the General Assembly can affirm its commitment to fostering a robust, independent, and well-resourced oversight framework, vital for the integrity of law enforcement and the trust of the communities they serve.

### **Policy Recommendation 5: Proportional Oversight Funding Based on BPD Budget**

Building upon the statewide approach advocated in the previous recommendation, the PAB specifically urges the City Council of Baltimore City to legislate a budgetary model that directly ties PAB and ACC funding to a minimum of 0.05% of the Baltimore Police Department's (BPD) annual budget. This strategy aims to provide a stable and sufficient financial foundation for police oversight within Baltimore City, ensuring the allocation parallels the fiscal scale of BPD operations. Again, as in the previous recommendation, the funding should be based on, not taken from, BPD's budget.

## Rationale:

This local-focused recommendation emphasizes the critical need for predictable and adequate resources dedicated to effective police oversight in Baltimore City. By establishing a direct financial correlation with BPD's budget, the PAB and ACC can achieve a sustainable funding mechanism reflective of the policing scope they are tasked with overseeing.

## Benefits of a Localized Budgetary Model:

- **Stable Funding Source:** Anchoring the budget of PAB and ACC to a set percentage of the BPD budget ensures consistent funding, facilitating operational stability and strategic planning.
- **Alignment with Oversight Demands:** The funding model adjusts with the scale and complexity of BPD operations, guaranteeing that oversight resources are proportionate and responsive to the needs of effective governance.
- **Enhanced Oversight Capability:** Adequate funding allows for the expansion of oversight activities, including in-depth investigations, comprehensive training, and community engagement efforts, thereby enhancing the overall impact of PAB and ACC.

## Impact:

Adoption of this legislative proposal by the City Council would markedly strengthen the financial underpinnings of police oversight in Baltimore City. It demonstrates a tangible commitment to maintaining an independent, robust, and responsive oversight framework capable of addressing the complexities of policing in a major urban environment.

## Conclusion:

This policy recommendation provides a practical and equitable solution to the challenge of funding police oversight in Baltimore City. By formalizing a budgetary connection between the PAB and ACC and the budget of BPD, the City Council can ensure that these critical oversight bodies have the necessary resources to promote transparency, accountability, and justice effectively. This approach would reaffirm the city's dedication to upholding the highest standards of law enforcement practices and community trust.

## **Policy Recommendation 6: Amendment to Affirm PAB and ACC Independence**

The PAB recommends that the City Council of Baltimore City amend the current PAB ordinance to formally recognize the PAB and ACC as independent entities. This legislative change is advised – pending the creation of a new, dedicated office for police oversight – for the purpose of dissolving any ambiguity about the independence of these bodies from OECR.

### Rationale:

Clarifying the independent status of PAB and ACC is crucial for maintaining the integrity of police oversight in Baltimore City. This amendment seeks to unequivocally establish these bodies' autonomy, ensuring that their operations are not influenced, or perceived as influenced, by external pressures or interests, particularly those of OECR with its broad mandate.

### Key Aspects of the Recommendation:

- **Formal Recognition of Independence:** Clearly defining PAB and ACC as independent in the city's legal framework helps to solidify their autonomy, crucial for impartial oversight.
- **Elimination of Ambiguity:** This legislative clarification removes any potential for misunderstanding about the relationship between PAB/ACC and OECR, ensuring clarity in their operational dynamics.
- **Reinforcement of Public Trust:** Acknowledging the independence of PAB and ACC through formal ordinance reinforces confidence in their objectivity and the fairness of the oversight process.

### Impact:

Adopting this amendment will significantly bolster the perceived and actual independence of PAB and ACC, enhancing their authority and legitimacy in the eyes of the public and law enforcement alike. By formalizing their status as independent entities, the City Council can foster a stronger foundation for accountable and transparent police oversight in Baltimore City, contributing to improved policing standards and community relations.

### Conclusion:

This policy recommendation addresses a foundational aspect of effective police oversight by seeking legislative action to affirm the independence of PAB and ACC. By doing so, Baltimore City takes a critical step towards ensuring that its oversight mechanisms operate with unimpeachable integrity and autonomy, crucial for upholding justice and maintaining public trust in the oversight system and process.

## **Policy Recommendation 7: Renaming JHU's Oversight Board for Clarity**

The PAB recommends that Johns Hopkins University (JHU) rename its police oversight board – the Johns Hopkins University Police Accountability Board – to avoid public confusion regarding the distinct functions and jurisdictions of the two similarly named entities. This recommendation arises from community feedback indicating that the nomenclature similarity between the city's PAB and JHU's oversight board has led to misunderstandings about their respective roles in police oversight.

### Rationale:

The close resemblance in the names of the oversight boards has the potential to blur the lines of distinction in the public's mind, hindering effective engagement and participation in the oversight process. A name change for JHU's board would significantly aid in clarifying these entities' unique mandates and operational domains.



### Key Aspects of the Recommendation:

- **Enhanced Public Understanding:** A new name for JHU’s police oversight board will help eliminate confusion, making it easier for the public to understand and engage with the appropriate entity based on their concerns or needs.
- **Support for Effective Engagement:** Clarifying the difference between the citywide PAB and JHU’s oversight mechanism through distinct naming will streamline public interactions, ensuring that inquiries and complaints are directed to the correct board.
- **Reinforcement of Unique Mandates:** This change will underline the separate jurisdictions and mandates of each board, highlighting their individual roles within the broader landscape of police accountability and oversight.

### Impact:

Implementing this recommendation would markedly improve public comprehension of the police oversight ecosystem in Baltimore, ensuring that community members can more easily navigate and participate in the oversight process. This clarity is crucial for fostering transparency and trust between the public and oversight bodies, enhancing the effectiveness and credibility of police accountability mechanisms.

### Conclusion:

Renaming the Johns Hopkins University Police Oversight Board is a straightforward yet impactful measure to differentiate clearly between the university’s oversight body and the citywide Police Accountability Board. This adjustment will facilitate clearer communication, better public understanding, and more effective engagement with the oversight process, ultimately strengthening the accountability and transparency of police operations in Baltimore.

### **Policy Recommendation 8: Timely Submission of Case Files to ACC**

The PAB recommends that the City Council of Baltimore City amend the current PAB ordinance to mandate that law enforcement agencies, particularly BPD, are required to submit their completed investigative casefiles to the ACC at least 270 days before a case’s expiration date. This would align the ordinance with state law and the federal Consent Decree which requires BPD to complete its investigations within 90 days.

### Rationale:

This recommendation emerges from the ACC's practical experiences, where the receipt of casefiles too close to or beyond a case's expiration date hampers its ability to conduct thorough reviews as envisioned by the Maryland General Assembly and City Council. Timely access to these files is essential for the ACC to exercise its full legal authority effectively, including reviewing cases, requesting additional information, developing facts further, or issuing subpoenas.

### Key Aspects of the Recommendation:

- **Deadline for File Submission:** Setting a 90-day submission deadline before a case’s expiration ensures the ACC has adequate time to undertake a comprehensive review of the casefiles.
- **ACC’s Legal Authority:** Timely receipt of casefiles allows the ACC to fully exercise its legal authority, enhancing the rigor and depth of police conduct review.
- **Efficiency in Case Disposal:** This timely process facilitates the ACC’s capacity to make informed decisions on case dispositions, whether concluding the review, soliciting further details, or expanding the investigation through subpoenas.



## Impact:

Passing this ordinance amendment would substantially improve the operational efficiency of the ACC, enabling more effective oversight of law enforcement conduct. By ensuring that investigative files are delivered well before a case's expiration, the ACC can perform its duties with the diligence and thoroughness required, potentially leading to more accurate and just outcomes in cases of alleged police misconduct.

## Conclusion:

The proposed ordinance amendment is a strategic measure aimed at optimizing the police oversight process in Baltimore City by ensuring that the ACC receives casefiles in a timely manner. This change is vital for the ACC to fulfill its mandate of fairly reviewing misconduct allegations and upholding the principles of transparency and justice within the policing system.

## **Policy Recommendation 9: Mandatory BWC Activation for All Police Encounters**

The PAB and ACC recommends that BPD revises its BWC policy to mandate that officers activate their cameras at the onset of all "voluntary encounters," with certain exceptions. These exceptions include interactions initiated by the public for non-enforcement reasons, such as casual conversation or inquiries, and situations where certain individuals explicitly request that the encounter not be recorded.

## Rationale:

This recommendation emerges from ACC's observations of officers, particularly those assigned to specialized district units, exploiting the voluntary encounter exception in order to avoid or delay activating their BWCs. The ACC has noted instances where officers delay recording encounters that, while initially presented as voluntary, are in fact involuntary and related to investigative or enforcement actions. This loophole compromises the ability of BPD's Police Integrity Bureau and oversight bodies to access and review complete and unbiased evidence during investigations, particularly when officer accounts conflict with complainant statements or when constitutional rights violations are implicated.

## Key Aspects of the Recommendation:

- **Clarified Activation Requirements:** Define clear criteria under which officers must activate their BWCs, minimizing exceptions to ensure encounters are comprehensively recorded from the start.
- **Defined Exceptions:** Specify conditions under which BWCs may remain off, focusing on truly voluntary interactions and respecting privacy requests from civilians, with clear guidelines to prevent abuse of these exceptions.
- **Enhanced Accountability and Transparency:** This policy aims to eliminate opportunities for selective recording, ensuring that BWC footage provides a complete and accurate account of police encounters, thereby enhancing the integrity of evidence used in oversight investigations.

## Impact:

Implementing this policy would significantly improve the reliability and completeness of evidence available to the Public Integrity Bureau and the ACC during investigations into police conduct. By requiring consistent BWC activation, BPD would take a crucial step toward fostering greater accountability, transparency, and public trust, ensuring that interactions are documented in a manner that protects both officers' and civilians' rights.

## Conclusion:

Mandatory activation of BWCs during voluntary encounters, with narrowly defined exceptions, is essential for closing loopholes that compromise the collection of critical evidence in police oversight. This policy change would align BPD practices with best practices for accountability and transparency, ensuring that all relevant interactions are recorded in a way that supports fair and thorough investigations into police conduct.

## **Policy Recommendation 10: Inclusion of Audio in BWC Pre-Event Recordings**

As a complementary measure to previous policy enhancement, the PAB and ACC recommend that BPD work with its body-worn camera provider, Axon Enterprise, Inc., to modify camera functionality to incorporate audio recording in the sixty-second pre-event buffer that is automatically saved when officers activate their cameras. Currently, this buffer captures video without audio for the sixty seconds prior to activation.

### Rationale:

The inclusion of audio in the pre-event video buffer is critical for providing a comprehensive account of events leading up to an officer's decision to activate their BWC. This adjustment would ensure that both visual and auditory evidence from crucial moments before formal recording begins is preserved, offering a fuller context for review in investigations.

### Key Aspects of the Recommendation:

- **Technical Consultation and Modification:** BPD should collaborate with Axon to explore technical solutions for including audio in the pre-activation video buffer, ensuring that this feature aligns with legal and operational standards.
- **Enhanced Evidence Collection:** Capturing audio along with video in the moments before BWC activation can reveal critical interactions and statements, shedding light on the circumstances surrounding police encounters.
- **Accountability and Transparency:** Audio-inclusive pre-event recording would significantly improve the accountability of officers by preserving a more complete evidentiary record, thereby enhancing the transparency of police operations, and bolstering public trust.

### Impact:

Implementing this recommendation would mark a substantial improvement in the quality and utility of evidence available from BWCs, facilitating more accurate and fair assessments of police conduct. By capturing audio in addition to video during the pre-event period, oversight bodies and investigative units will have access to a richer, more detailed context for evaluating the appropriateness of police actions and responses.

### Conclusion:

The inclusion of audio in the sixty-second pre-event video buffer of BWCs represents a vital enhancement to evidence collection in policing oversight. This policy change, through collaboration with technology providers like Axon, underscores the commitment of the PAB, ACC, and BPD to leveraging technological advancements for the improvement of police accountability and community relations.

## **Policy Recommendation 11: Continuous BWC Training and Certification Program**

The PAB recommends the implementation of a mandatory, continuous training and certification program for all Baltimore City law enforcement officers on the proper usage of BWCs. This program should cover operational procedures, ethical considerations, privacy concerns, and situational awareness to ensure officers are proficient and up-to-date with BWC policies and best practices.

### Rationale:

Effective use of BWCs is paramount in fostering transparency, accountability, and trust between law enforcement and the community. However, the potential of BWCs can only be fully realized when officers are thoroughly trained and consistently adhere to activation protocols and privacy guidelines. A structured training program will address gaps in knowledge, clarify ambiguities, and promote uniformity in BWC usage across all encounters.

### Key Aspects of the Recommendation:

- **Comprehensive Curriculum:** Develop a curriculum that encompasses technical training on BWC operation, legal obligations for activation and deactivation, ethical implications, and strategies for balancing evidence collection with individual privacy rights.
- **Regular Certification:** Introduce a certification or recertification process that requires officers to demonstrate their knowledge and adherence to BWC policies annually, ensuring ongoing compliance and accountability.
- **Scenario-Based Training:** Incorporate practical, scenario-based training exercises that simulate real-life encounters, reinforcing the appropriate use of BWCs in various situations officers may face in the field.
- **Transparency and Reporting:** Establish mechanisms to track training completion and certification status, making this information accessible to oversight bodies and, where appropriate, the public to enhance transparency and confidence in the police force's commitment to responsible BWC usage.

### Impact:

- The establishment of a continuous training and certification program on BWC use will significantly contribute to the integrity of police operations and evidence collection. By ensuring all officers are knowledgeable and compliant with BWC policies, the program will enhance the quality of footage available for review in complaints and investigations, reduce incidents of misuse or non-compliance, and strengthen public trust in the law enforcement process.

### Conclusion:

Adopting a comprehensive training and certification program for BWC use is essential for upholding high standards of policing and accountability within Baltimore City. Through dedicated educational efforts and rigorous certification, law enforcement agencies can ensure their officers are equipped to use BWCs effectively and ethically, aligning with the community's expectations for transparency and justice.

## **Policy Recommendation 12: Adoption of Data Analytics in Oversight Processes**

The PAB recommends the City of Baltimore ensure the development and implementation of an advanced data analytics system tailored for police oversight purposes. This system would leverage a team of data and data visualization experts to systematically analyze patterns in police conduct, complaints received, and the outcomes of oversight investigations. The goal is to identify trends, potential risk areas, and opportunities for policy and procedural improvements, supporting a more informed and proactive oversight framework.

### Rationale

The complexity and volume of data involved in police oversight necessitate sophisticated analytical tools to efficiently uncover insights and inform decision-making. An advanced data analytics system can provide a nuanced understanding of policing patterns, highlight areas for immediate attention, and track the effectiveness of implemented reforms over time. This approach ensures that oversight efforts are grounded in empirical evidence, enhancing their impact and credibility.

### Key Aspects of the Recommendation:

- **Build Robust Data Team:** This analytics team will develop a specialized analytics platform that integrates data from various sources, including BWC footage, complaint records, and police incident reports, to facilitate comprehensive analysis.



- **Trend Identification:** Utilize the analytics team to identify patterns and trends in police behavior, complaint occurrences, and investigation outcomes, identifying systemic issues and areas for targeted interventions.
- **Policy Impact Assessment:** Leverage analytics to evaluate the effectiveness of existing policies and reforms, providing empirical evidence to guide future policy development and adjustments.
- **Transparency and Engagement:** Incorporate mechanisms for sharing analytical insights with the public and stakeholders in an accessible format, fostering transparency and encouraging community involvement in oversight processes.

**Impact:**

The introduction of an advanced data analytics team and system within the PAB and ACC will significantly enhance the capacity to conduct evidence-based oversight, leading to more strategic and effective interventions. By identifying trends and evaluating policy impacts, the system will facilitate a dynamic approach to police oversight, enabling continuous improvement and adaptation to emerging challenges. This proactive stance will contribute to building a more accountable, transparent, and responsive policing environment in Baltimore City.

**Conclusion:**

Adopting advanced data analytics for police oversight represents a forward-thinking approach to enhancing the effectiveness and responsiveness of oversight mechanisms in Baltimore City. By recruiting and building an analytics team to analyze complex datasets, the PAB and ACC can gain deeper insights into policing practices, guide meaningful reforms, and foster a culture of continuous improvement and accountability within law enforcement agencies.

**Policy Recommendation 13: Law Enforcement Transparency via Comprehensive Websites**

The PAB recommends that all law enforcement agencies within Baltimore City create and sustain comprehensive public websites. These digital platforms should function as central repositories for in-depth information on the agencies' organizational structures, leadership profiles, operational units, and methods for public contact. Moreover, the websites should provide conspicuous access to the agencies' policies, procedures, and a direct pathway to the PAB's complaint submission process.

**Rationale:**

Establishing these websites aims to significantly increase transparency and facilitate public engagement with law enforcement. By making critical information readily accessible and navigable, these platforms can play a vital role in building public trust and encouraging community participation in the oversight system and process.

**Key Website Features:**

- **Comprehensive Information:** Detailed insights into agency operations, leadership, and contact details, ensuring the public is well-informed about their law enforcement bodies.
- **Policy Transparency:** Easy access to up-to-date policies and procedures to promote understanding and accountability.
- **Direct PAB Access:** A straightforward link to the PAB's website and complaint form to streamline public participation in the oversight process.
- **Inclusivity and Accessibility:** Compliance with ADA standards and mobile optimization to guarantee that information is accessible to all community members, regardless of disability or technology use.
- **Community Engagement:** Dedicated sections for community outreach initiatives and updates, fostering a dialogue between law enforcement and the communities they serve.

**Impact:**

The implementation of this recommendation would serve as a significant step forward in demystifying law enforcement operations for the public, enhancing the accountability framework, and fostering a culture of transparency. It acknowledges the importance of informed public engagement and seeks to lower the barriers to accessing vital information and participating in the oversight process.



## Conclusion:

The establishment and meticulous upkeep of public websites by Baltimore City's law enforcement agencies embody a proactive approach to enhancing public trust and transparency. By providing clear, accessible, and detailed information about law enforcement practices and facilitating direct engagement with oversight mechanisms, these digital platforms can significantly contribute to a more informed, engaged, and trustful community-police relationship.

### **Policy Recommendation 14: Defining Law Enforcement's Interaction with Oversight Bodies**

The PAB recommends that all law enforcement agencies in Baltimore City develop, enact, and publish policies specifically outlining how they will interact with both the PAB and ACC. The formulation and publication of such policies aim to demystify the oversight process for law enforcement personnel and the public, enhancing the framework of accountability and transparency that underpins police operations.

## Rationale:

Clear guidelines on the interaction between law enforcement agencies and oversight bodies are fundamental to ensuring that the principles of accountability and transparency are consistently applied. By formalizing these protocols, agencies affirm their commitment to an open and cooperative oversight process.

## Key Components of the Recommendation:

- **Policy Development and Adoption:** Agencies are urged to collaboratively design comprehensive policies that delineate the parameters of their engagement with PAB and ACC.
- **Public Accessibility:** These policies should be readily available to the public, ensuring transparency about the nature of law enforcement's cooperation with oversight mechanisms.
- **Cultural Integration:** The adoption of these policies should be accompanied by efforts to embed a culture of accountability and openness within law enforcement agencies, emphasizing the importance of constructive interaction with oversight bodies.

## Impact:

The establishment of explicit policies governing interactions with the PAB and ACC will serve to solidify the oversight process, making it more understandable and accessible to both officers and the community. This initiative not only fosters a culture of transparency but also reinforces the legitimacy and efficacy of the oversight mechanism, contributing to the cultivation of trust between law enforcement and the communities they serve.

## Conclusion:

This policy recommendation advocates for a structured approach to defining how law enforcement agencies engage with oversight bodies in Baltimore City. By clarifying these interactions through formal policies, law enforcement agencies can better navigate the oversight landscape, thereby promoting a more accountable, transparent, and trusted policing environment.

### **Policy Recommendation 15: Standardization of Internal Misconduct Investigations**

The PAB strongly recommends that all law enforcement agencies in Baltimore City develop and publicly disclose comprehensive policies governing their internal investigations into allegations of police misconduct. These policies should embody principles of investigative integrity, diligence, thoroughness, and timeliness, ensuring that all investigations are conducted in a manner that upholds justice and maintains public trust.

## Rationale:

Creating a standardized framework for internal investigations across all city law enforcement agencies is crucial for promoting consistency, fairness, and accountability in addressing allegations of misconduct. Public access to these policies not only enhances transparency but also reinforces the community's confidence in the law enforcement's commitment to upholding ethical standards and rectifying wrongdoing within its ranks.

## Key Aspects of the Recommendation:

- **Investigative Integrity:** Policies must emphasize the importance of conducting investigations with the highest degree of integrity, ensuring that all procedures are fair, impartial, and free from any undue influence.
- **Diligence and Thoroughness:** Investigations should be characterized by meticulous attention to detail and a comprehensive approach, leaving no stone unturned in the pursuit of truth and accountability.
- **Timeliness:** The policies should outline clear timelines for each phase of the investigation process, ensuring that cases are resolved expediently without compromising the quality of the investigation.
- **Public Disclosure:** It is vital that the policies guiding internal investigations are not only created but also shared openly. Each agency should post their complete investigation guidelines on their website, making it easy for everyone in the community to see how complaints of police misconduct are handled. This step towards openness not only shows accountability but also builds trust by ensuring the community can directly see the commitment to fair and just investigations.

## Impact:

Implementing this policy across Baltimore City's law enforcement agencies will standardize the approach to internal investigations of police misconduct, ensuring they are carried out with integrity and efficiency. This initiative is pivotal in strengthening the accountability framework within law enforcement, contributing to a culture of trust, transparency, and justice that benefits both the community and the police force.

## Conclusion:

The adoption of detailed, publicly available policies governing internal investigations into police misconduct represents a significant step forward in Baltimore City's ongoing efforts to enhance police accountability and community relations. By establishing clear standards for investigative processes, law enforcement agencies can demonstrate their unwavering commitment to ethical practices and the principles of justice, reinforcing the foundational trust necessary for effective policing.

## **Policy Recommendation 16: Governance of AI Technology Use in Policing**

The PAB recommends that all law enforcement agencies in Baltimore City establish a detailed policy on the utilization of Artificial Intelligence (AI) within their operations. This policy should provide clear guidelines applicable at both organizational and individual officer levels, aiming to optimize the benefits of AI technologies in policing practices. The intent is to embrace the potential of AI to improve operational efficiency and decision-making processes, while simultaneously upholding civil liberties and fostering public trust.

## Rationale:

As law enforcement agencies increasingly integrate AI technologies into their operations, the need for a robust governance framework becomes paramount. This recommendation seeks to ensure that the adoption and use of AI in policing are conducted ethically, with a strong commitment to transparency, accountability, and the protection of human rights. It addresses the potential risks associated with AI, including biases and privacy concerns, advocating for a balanced approach that leverages technological advances without compromising civil liberties.

## Key Aspects of the Recommendation:

- **Ethical Framework:** The policy should include ethical guidelines for AI use, emphasizing fairness, non-discrimination, and respect for privacy and human dignity.
- **Transparency and Accountability:** Establishing mechanisms for transparent AI operations and accountability in the event of errors or misuse, ensuring that AI applications in policing are open to scrutiny and evaluation.
- **Training and Awareness:** Provision for ongoing training and education for officers on the responsible use of AI, highlighting the importance of ethical considerations and the potential impact on community relations.
- **Public Engagement:** Involving the community in discussions about AI use in policing, fostering a dialogue that promotes understanding and addresses public concerns about technology's role in law enforcement.

## Impact:

Implementing a comprehensive AI policy within Baltimore City's law enforcement agencies represents a proactive approach to modernizing policing practices. By setting a precedent for ethical AI use, the city can enhance the effectiveness of its police force while ensuring that technological advancements contribute positively to public safety, without undermining the principles of justice and equity.

## Conclusion:

This policy recommendation underscores the importance of thoughtful and responsible governance of AI technologies in law enforcement. By adopting a comprehensive policy that prioritizes ethical considerations, transparency, and public trust, Baltimore City can lead the way in demonstrating how AI can be harnessed to support policing efforts that are equitable, just, and respectful of civil liberties.

## **Policy Recommendation 17: Transparent and Equitable Sharing of Police Misconduct Records**

The PAB recommends that the Baltimore Police Department adopt fair, transparent, and standardized practices for sharing police misconduct files and data with PAB, ACC, and key stakeholders in the post-arrest criminal justice process, such as the Baltimore City Office of the Public Defender and the Baltimore City State's Attorney's Office.

## Rationale:

The implementation of uniform data-sharing protocols is vital for the integrity of police oversight, aiding in more informed defense and prosecution processes, and ultimately, fostering public trust and accountability in law enforcement. Equal access to pertinent information is essential to protecting defendants' Constitutional rights and promoting fairness and transparency within the criminal justice system.

### Key Aspects of the Recommendation:

- **Standardized Data-Sharing Protocols:** Adoption of efficient and equitable practices for file sharing, including the use of Comma-separated values (CSV) files for seamless data integration and avoidance of manual data entry errors.
- **Comprehensive Officer Information Sharing:** Agencies should provide detailed information on officers, including Sequence IDs, assignments, and unit placements, to enable the PAB to identify and address specific areas of concern effectively.
- **Roster Accessibility:** Granting staff access to a comprehensive roster of sworn personnel, including specific assignment details, to facilitate a broader understanding of potential misconduct trends.
- **Consistency Across Platforms:** Ensuring that the data shared with the PAB, other governmental entities, and the public are consistent to prevent mistrust and support the development of effective practices and policies.

### Impact:

By instituting these file-sharing practices, Baltimore City can significantly improve the landscape of police oversight and criminal justice, ensuring that all involved parties have the necessary information to conduct thorough reviews, defenses, and prosecutions. This recommendation aims to bolster the city's commitment to justice, equity, and accountability, enhancing the public's confidence in law enforcement and oversight bodies.

### Conclusion:

Adopting equitable and accessible police misconduct file sharing practices is crucial for advancing the principles of fairness and transparency within Baltimore City's law enforcement and judicial processes. By standardizing how critical information is shared and ensuring comprehensive access to data, the city can strengthen its oversight mechanisms, support the rights of defendants, and reinforce public trust in its commitment to accountable policing.

### **Policy Recommendation 18: Extending the Timeline for Misconduct Charges**

The PAB urges the Maryland General Assembly to pass legislation providing an exception to the existing "one-year-and-a-day" rule that currently governs the timeline for administratively charging police officers. This rule mandates that law enforcement agencies must administratively charge officers within one year and one day from the incident date that prompted the investigation, with no allowances for extensions under any circumstances.

### Rationale:

The strict adherence to this timeline does not accommodate the intricacies of serious allegations that might necessitate pausing the administrative investigation pending the outcome of a related criminal investigation or prosecution. This can lead to potential injustices, where substantial complaints of misconduct are prematurely dismissed due to the constraints of procedural deadlines, rather than the merits of the case.

### Key Aspects of the Recommendation:

- **Flexibility in Investigation Timelines:** Proposing an exception for cases where serious allegations are under investigation, allowing for administrative processes to be paused during ongoing criminal investigations.



- **Ensuring Comprehensive Reviews:** This change aims to provide sufficient time to thoroughly investigate complex or serious allegations that overlap with criminal proceedings, ensuring investigations are not hindered by rigid deadlines.
- **Promoting Justice and Accountability:** By removing this procedural barrier, the PAB seeks to enhance the ability of oversight bodies to hold officers accountable for serious misconduct, irrespective of concurrent criminal inquiries.

**Impact:**

Implementing this recommendation would mark a significant advancement in the framework governing police oversight and accountability. It would ensure that investigations into serious allegations are not constrained by procedural timelines but are instead guided by the principles of thoroughness, fairness, and justice.

**Conclusion:**

This legislative amendment is crucial for removing unwarranted procedural obstacles that can undermine the investigation of serious police misconduct. By allowing for exceptions to the "one-year-and-a-day" rule, Maryland's General Assembly would foster a more equitable and effective system of police oversight, one that can adapt to the complexities inherent in investigating and adjudicating serious allegations.

**Policy Recommendation 19: Guaranteed Oversight Access to Incident Scenes and Evidence**

The PAB proposes that all law enforcement agencies within Baltimore City establish and publish policies requiring the inclusion of PAB and ACC members and/or representatives at the scenes of critical incidents. Furthermore, these policies should guarantee that relevant BWC and CCTV footage are made available to PAB and ACC members or their representatives no later than five (5) calendar days following an incident. This initiative is designed to reinforce public confidence by promoting prompt and transparent oversight, enabling an impartial evaluation of the events as they are recorded.

**Rationale:**

Immediate access to critical incident scenes and subsequent provision of video evidence are key to conducting thorough and unbiased oversight. These measures ensure that the PAB and ACC can perform their functions effectively, fostering a climate of accountability and transparency that is crucial for maintaining public trust in law enforcement practices.

**Key Aspects of the Recommendation:**

- **Presence at Incident Scenes:** Authorizing PAB and ACC representation at critical incident sites allows for direct oversight from the onset, ensuring that all relevant facts and circumstances are observed and noted.
- **Timely Access to Footage:** Authorizing that BWC and CCTV footage be shared with oversight bodies within a five-day window ensures that reviews are based on comprehensive and contemporaneous evidence, facilitating a more accurate assessment of the events.
- **Policy Publication:** Publicizing these policies enhances transparency and accountability, signaling to the community and law enforcement personnel alike that oversight processes are both rigorous and impartial.

## Impact:

Implementing this recommendation would significantly improve the oversight capacity of the PAB and ACC, enabling them to conduct more immediate and informed evaluations of critical incidents. By establishing a framework for prompt access to scenes and evidence, Baltimore City can advance its commitment to accountable policing practices, ultimately strengthening the relationship between law enforcement agencies and the communities they serve.

## Conclusion:

This policy recommendation underscores the importance of immediate oversight presence and rapid evidence retrieval in the aftermath of critical incidents. By formalizing these practices, Baltimore City's law enforcement agencies can ensure that oversight processes are both timely and transparent, contributing to an environment where public trust in policing oversight is bolstered and maintained.

## **Policy Recommendation 20: Investigatory and Subpoena Powers for PAB**

The PAB recommends that the City Council of Baltimore City pass legislation to provide investigatory and subpoena powers for the PAB, analogous to those currently held by the CRB. This recommendation comes in anticipation of CRB's potential dissolution, emphasizing the need to preserve a multifaceted oversight framework where civilian-led investigations into police misconduct can occur alongside those conducted by law enforcement.

## Rationale:

Granting these powers to the PAB is essential for upholding a comprehensive and balanced oversight system. Investigatory and subpoena capabilities will enable the PAB to independently gather evidence and testimonies, ensuring that civilian oversight is not solely reliant on law enforcement's internal investigations. This approach enriches the oversight process with a range of perspectives, contributing to more thorough and impartial evaluations of policing practices.

## Key Aspects of the Recommendation:

- **Investigatory Powers:** Equipping the PAB with the authority to independently investigate complaints allows for direct engagement with the facts of each case, enhancing the board's ability to make informed decisions.
- **Subpoena Powers:** Providing the PAB with the ability to subpoena documents, records, and witnesses is critical for accessing all relevant information during investigations, ensuring no aspect of a case is overlooked due to lack of evidence.
- **Concurrent Investigations:** Allowing civilian and law enforcement-led investigations to proceed in parallel ensures a richer, more nuanced understanding of each incident, fostering greater accountability and transparency in the oversight process.

## Impact:

Implementing this legislative change would significantly strengthen the PAB's role in the oversight ecosystem, ensuring it has the necessary tools to conduct effective and independent investigations. This enhancement of powers is crucial for building a more equitable and just law enforcement environment in Baltimore City, where diverse investigative perspectives contribute to fair outcomes and uphold public trust.

## Conclusion:

This policy recommendation highlights the importance of empowering the PAB with investigatory and subpoena powers to maintain a robust and effective oversight framework if or when the CRB is dissolved. By enabling the PAB to conduct its own investigations and compel the production of evidence, Baltimore City can ensure that its police accountability mechanisms remain comprehensive, transparent, and capable of fostering justice within the law enforcement system.

# ENGAGEMENT AND FEEDBACK

The PAB stands as a beacon of transparency and accountability, bridging the gap between law enforcement and the communities they serve. At the heart of this mission lies the commitment to an open, accessible process for community members to report concerns and submit complaints about police conduct.

## *Submitting a Complaint: Simple and Accessible*

The PAB offers multiple, user-friendly avenues for filing complaints, ensuring that every community member can easily voice their concerns:

- Email: Directly contact PAB at [pab@baltimorecity.gov](mailto:pab@baltimorecity.gov) for a swift, electronic submission.
- Online Portal: Utilize the "File a Complaint with the Police Accountability Board" portal on the PAB's website at <https://civilrights.baltimorecity.gov/intake-form> for a guided, secure complaint process.
- Phone: Reach PAB at **410-396-3151** for those who prefer or require verbal communication.
- In-Person: Visit the PAB office within the Mayor's Office of Equity and Civil Rights at **7 E. Redwood Street, 9th Floor, Baltimore, MD 21202**, for personal assistance and submission.

Following the receipt of a complaint, the PAB ensures its prompt forwarding to the relevant law enforcement agency within three (3) days, demonstrating the board's dedication to efficient complaint handling and resolution.

## Fostering Community Dialogue and Feedback

The PAB's approach to community engagement is twofold, focusing both on being responsive to concerns and proactive in community involvement:

- Public Meetings: Regularly scheduled and open to all, these meetings serve as vital platforms for updates, discussions, and policy deliberations, always concluding with a public comment period to hear directly from community members. The meetings are held at the Mayor's Office of Equity and Civil Rights on the first Monday of each month unless a holiday falls on that Monday, then the meeting will be held the following Monday.
- Community and Advocacy Events: The PAB actively participates in and contributes to community events and advocacy gatherings, recognizing the importance of direct interaction in understanding and addressing the concerns of Baltimore's residents.

Additional engagement opportunities include:

- Stay Informed: Signing up for the PAB's email list offers the latest updates, meeting schedules, and public engagement opportunities. Also, you can find board agendas, minutes, and video recordings of its public meetings on the Office's website.
- Invite the Board: Community groups and advocacy organizations can extend invitations to PAB members to attend events and gatherings to facilitate a deeper understanding of the board, its work, and its members.

Through these comprehensive engagement and feedback mechanisms, the PAB strives for genuine civilian oversight of policing, ensuring that the voices of Baltimore's citizens are integral to shaping a just and equitable policing framework.

## CONCLUSION

As we conclude this comprehensive report, the journey towards enhancing transparency, accountability, and trust between law enforcement and the communities they serve is both ongoing and evolving. Through diligent analysis, community engagement, and a steadfast commitment to justice, the PAB has laid out a series of recommendations that, if implemented, promise to significantly improve the landscape of policing and police oversight in Baltimore City.

The report has documented the current state of police oversight, identified areas for improvement, and proposed twenty (20) targeted recommendations aimed at refining the operational and administrative framework of the PAB, as well as enhancing the overall effectiveness of police accountability mechanisms in Baltimore. From advocating for the establishment of a Maryland Office of Police Oversight and Accountability to recommending changes in body-worn camera policies, each recommendation is designed to address specific challenges while advancing the principles of fairness, transparency, and community trust.

Importantly, this report acknowledges the critical role of community engagement and feedback in the oversight process. By facilitating a straightforward and accessible platform for submitting complaints and fostering regular dialogue through public meetings and community events, the PAB demonstrates its commitment to ensuring that the voices of Baltimore's residents are heard and valued.

As we move forward, it is imperative that the recommendations outlined in this report are not only considered but actively implemented. The journey towards a more just and equitable policing system requires the collective effort of the PAB, law enforcement agencies, city and state officials, and, most importantly, the community members themselves. By working collaboratively, we can ensure that the principles of accountability and transparency are not just ideals but realities in the daily operations of Baltimore's law enforcement agencies.

In closing, the PAB calls upon all stakeholders to embrace the recommendations set forth in this report. Together, we can achieve meaningful reform and foster an environment where public safety and community trust are mutually reinforcing pillars of our society. Let us continue to strive for a Baltimore where every citizen and law enforcement officer feels respected, protected, and valued, fostering a community of mutual trust and dedication to the safety and well-being of all its members.