

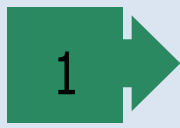


2024
ANNUAL
REPORT

Office of Policing Reform and
Accountability

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Deputy Inspector General

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Office of Policing Reform and Accountability

The City of Houston's Office of Policing Reform and Accountability (OPRA), established on April 28, 2021, under Executive Order 1-5, aims to rebuild community trust by promoting police accountability through independent, transparent, and effective oversight.

Mission

The mission of the OPRA is to improve accountability and transparency between the Houston Police Department (HPD) and the community by implementing reforms, reviewing complaint investigations, and fostering open dialogue between the department and the community it polices. Together with HPD's Internal Affairs Division (IAD), the office aims to ensure that policing in Houston is fair, equitable, and aligned with community needs.

Vision

OPRA's vision is to safeguard a culture of accountability within HPD through ensuring the actions of HPD employees comply with law and policy. This is further accomplished by overseeing the Independent Police Oversight Board (IPOB), who thoroughly and objectively review internal investigations, recommend improvements to policy and training, and engage in collaborative initiatives that promote systemic advancements.

Values

Transparency: Provide accessible and comprehensive data on police actions, policies, and diversity to the public.

Accountability: Coordinate review of internal affairs investigations and ensure disciplinary actions are fair and consistent.

Community Engagement: Partner with residents and stakeholders to shape policing strategies and promote public safety.

Equity: Strive for fairness and inclusivity in all aspects of policing and oversight.

Proactive Oversight: Continuously evolving oversight systems to meet community needs and enhance trust.

Collaboration: Work closely with the IPOB, local leaders, and organizations to achieve shared goals.

Roles and Responsibilities of the Office of Policing Reform and Accountability

1. Oversight and Accountability

- Establish timelines, create implementation reports, and measure progress toward greater independence and transparency (E.O. 7.1.7).
- Conduct independent investigations of police misconduct allegations identified by the Independent Police Oversight Board (IPOB), separate from the Internal Affairs Division (IAD) (E.O. 7.2.1).
- Audit the IPOB annually to ensure compliance and effectiveness (E.O. 7.1.10).

2. Administrative Operations

- Manage the day-to-day functions of OPRA (E.O. 7.1.9).
- Perform recordkeeping and administrative tasks to support the office's operations.
- Serve as a support system for the IPOB—Key functions include:
 - Conducting independent investigations of misconduct allegations identified by the IPOB.
 - Managing complaint intake processes, including online submissions and multilingual support.
 - Providing training and administrative assistance to IPOB members.
 - Enhancing community outreach to improve transparency and public trust.

3. Community Engagement and Outreach

- Develop and execute community outreach plans to inform the public about the complaint process; listen to community concerns on specific issues; and report back to the community on outcomes.
- Raise awareness of IPOB and its role.
- Ensure complaints can be submitted in person at approved community events (E.O. 7.1.2).
- Accept and translate complaint forms into multiple languages (E.O. 7.1.3).

4. Transparency and Communication

- Update the OPRA website and the City of Houston Police Transparency website to provide resources and complaint submission options (E.O. 7.1.1).
- Communicate transparently and promptly with complainants, confirming complaint intake and reporting on results (E.O. 7.1.4).

- Act as an ombudsperson to assist complainants in understanding the process and requirements (E.O. 7.1.5).

5. Training and Development

- Provide training for IPOB members at the start of their terms and annually, either directly or by selecting an independent training group (E.O. 7.1.6).

Independent Police Oversight Board Audit

The Independent Police Oversight Board (IPOB) was established to ensure transparency, accountability, and community oversight of the HPD. The IPOB operates as a civilian-led oversight body that reviews internal investigations involving potential misconduct by HPD employees. This oversight includes critical incidents such as the use of force, discharge of firearms, and cases resulting in serious bodily injury or death.

Purpose and Evolution

The IPOB was created under the authority of the Mayor's Executive Order 1-5, which was revised on November 9, 2021. This revised order introduced a hybrid model of civilian oversight, combining the volunteer-based IPOB with the Office of Policing Reform and Accountability (OPRA). The OPRA provides full-time administrative and investigative support to the IPOB, strengthening its ability to provide independent and thorough reviews of HPD activities.

The purpose of the IPOB is to:

- Review internal investigations of misconduct involving HPD employees.
- Recommend policy and training reforms to the Chief of Police and the Mayor.
- Monitor community concerns related to policing and report findings to the Chief of Police.
- Support transparency and ensure citizens are treated with dignity and respect.

Structure and Responsibilities

The IPOB is composed of thirty-one (31) members, appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by City Council. The board is organized into six panels, each consisting of five members, including a Panel Chair. These panels rotate to review cases assigned to them and provide recommendations based on evidence. The IPOB members are selected to reflect diversity in background, expertise, and experience.

Key Responsibilities

1. **Case Review:** IPOB panels have discretion to review any internal investigation including significant incidents, such as:
 - Use of force.
 - Discharge of firearms.
 - Serious bodily injury or death.
2. **Recommendations:** The board submits written recommendations on training, policy revisions, and disciplinary actions.
3. **Policy Review:** IPOB reviews existing and proposed HPD policies and makes reform suggestions.
4. **Community Engagement:** IPOB monitors community concerns and ensures they are addressed within HPD operations.

Significance of the Audit

This IPOB audit evaluates the efficiency, effectiveness, and outcomes of the board's reviews and recommendations. By analyzing case completion timelines, investigative outcomes, and adherence to established policies, the audit aims to identify areas for improvement in IPOB operations. This assessment ensures that the IPOB continues to fulfill its mandate of promoting accountability and transparency within HPD while addressing community concerns.

The audit seeks to identify areas of opportunity for process improvement in the collaboration between IPOB and the IAD. It also aims to streamline processes to ensure efficient, effective, and accountable operations. By strengthening these collaborations and improving workflow, the audit provides a pathway to enhance police accountability and ensure the IPOB's sustained impact on fostering public trust in law enforcement practices within the City of Houston.

Audit Methodology and Process

This audit aims to assess IPOB's performance, timeliness, and completeness of internal investigations, ensuring compliance with the annual audit requirement specified under Executive Order EO 1-5 Revised. The audit aims to highlight delays, inefficiencies, and opportunities for process improvement by systematically evaluating case timelines, performance metrics, and data completeness. Additionally, the audit assesses IPOB's role in escalations, policy outcomes, and their contribution to ensuring accountability and transparency in police oversight.

Data Scope and Methodology

The data used for this audit encompasses key elements necessary for evaluating IPOB's operational efficiency. Timelines, including Incident Date, Discovery Date, Assigned Date, and Completion Date, are analyzed to measure the overall duration of investigations and identify deviations from expected performance benchmarks. Performance metrics, such as the length of IAD investigations and IPOB's completion days, provide critical insights into the timeliness of case reviews and adherence to due dates.

The audit examines key data fields such as case categories, Forms 2 and 3 responses, escalation data, and policy outcomes. Case categories allow for identifying patterns and trends in specific cases, such as use of force, firearm discharges, or serious bodily injury. Forms 2 and 3 responses are reviewed for completeness, timeliness, and accuracy, as they play a significant role in recording panel decisions and dissenting opinions. Escalation data and policy outcomes are evaluated to determine whether escalation meetings occurred and assess policy recommendations' effectiveness in addressing systemic issues.

The audit employs a structured and data-driven methodology to analyze IPOB's processes. Timeliness analysis forms the foundation of the audit, where investigation durations are measured by evaluating the time between critical milestones such as Incident Date, Discovery Date, Assigned Date, and Completion Date. The measured durations are compared against IPOB's established deadlines to identify delays, calculate the average time taken to complete cases, and determine the frequency of overdue cases. Visual representations of trends in delays by case type or investigator help illustrate areas requiring improvement.

In addition to timeliness, the completeness of data fields is rigorously reviewed. Critical fields, including Forms 2 and 3 responses, escalation data, and policy recommendations, are analyzed to quantify missing or incomplete entries. This step ensures that record-keeping gaps do not impact investigative outcomes' integrity. Specific case categories with higher instances of incomplete or missing data are flagged for further review, allowing for targeted corrective measures.

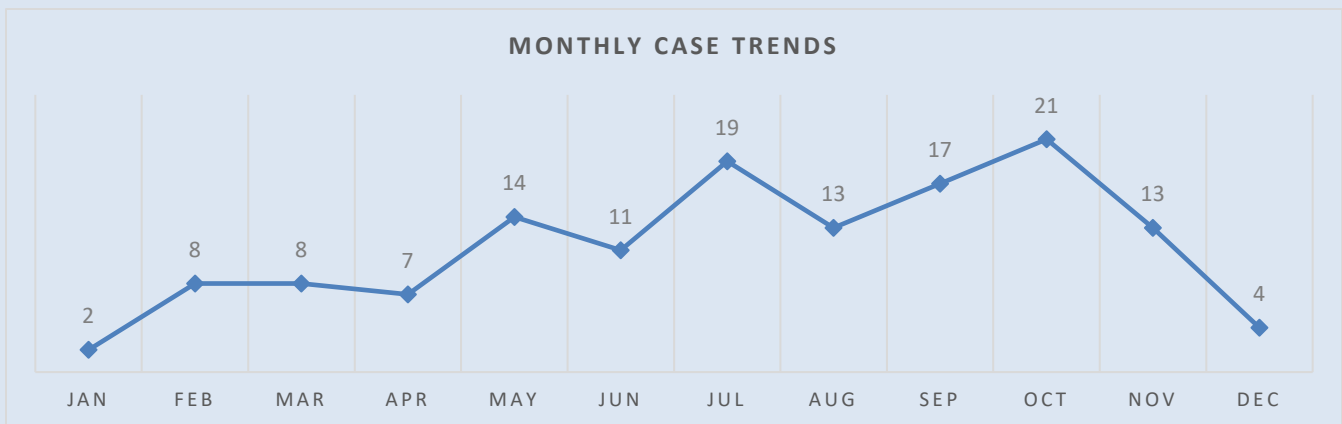
Escalation and policy assessment form a critical part of the methodology. The audit reviews cases flagged for escalation to determine whether escalation meetings were conducted, outcomes were documented, and policy recommendations were made. The effectiveness of these recommendations is evaluated to identify gaps in training, procedural inefficiencies, or systemic issues requiring reform. Additionally, the audit validates the consistency and accuracy of key fields to ensure that timelines, case categorizations, and policy outcomes align with the reported data.

Compliance

The audit process results in an annual performance report that comprehensively assesses IPOB's operational efficiency. The report highlights areas for targeted reforms, such as improved escalation management, enhanced training programs, and policy changes to increase efficiency and accountability. The audit process aligns with the annual frequency mandated in EO 1-5 Revised. By conducting a systematic and thorough evaluation, the audit ensures that IPOB adheres to its operational responsibilities while promoting transparency, accountability, and efficiency in police oversight.

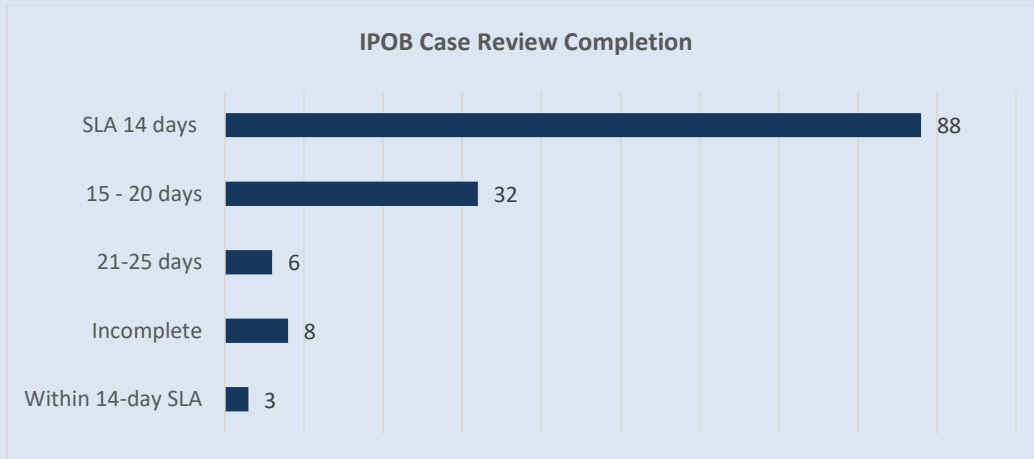
Summary of Findings

In 2024, IAD distributed 137 cases across four panels: Panel A handled 39 cases, Panel C handled 36 cases, Panel B handled 32 cases, and Panel D handled 30 cases. Monthly case trends showed October as the peak month with 21 cases, while January had the lowest with 2 cases. Notable fluctuations occurred throughout the year, including increases in May (14 cases) and July (19 cases). On average, IPOB handled approximately 11.42 cases per month across all panels.



Case Review Completion

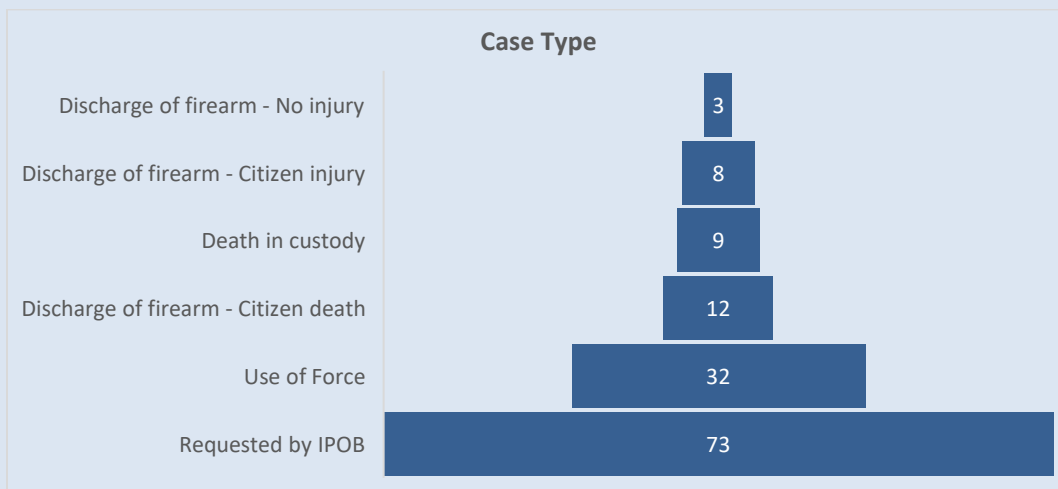
The IPOB case completion data indicates that 64.23% of cases were resolved within the standard 14-day deadline, while 23.36% were completed within 15–20 days, and 4.38% were resolved within 21–25 days. A total of 5.84% of cases were not reviewed and pulled by HPD, and 2.19% were within the 14-day deadline period at the time of this audit.



Case Review Type

Since OPRA’s inception, three (3) types of investigations were mandated for IPOB review including: 1) use of force, 2) discharge of firearms, and 3) serious bodily injury or death (E.O. 5.1.1.1). At the beginning of 2024, OPRA and IPOB leadership decided to exercise the discretion allotted to them under the executive order to review any investigation involving an allegation of conduct and behavior made by a community member as well as any investigation involving an updated, revised or new general order.¹

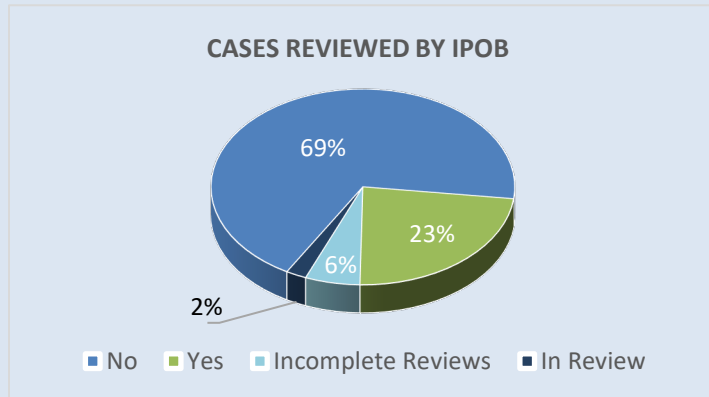
The case distribution by category is as follows: 53.28% were requested by IPOB (discretion), 23.36% involved the use of force, 8.76% were related to firearm discharges resulting in citizen deaths, 6.57% involved deaths in custody, 5.84% were related to firearm discharges causing citizen injuries, and 2.19% involved firearm discharges with no injuries.



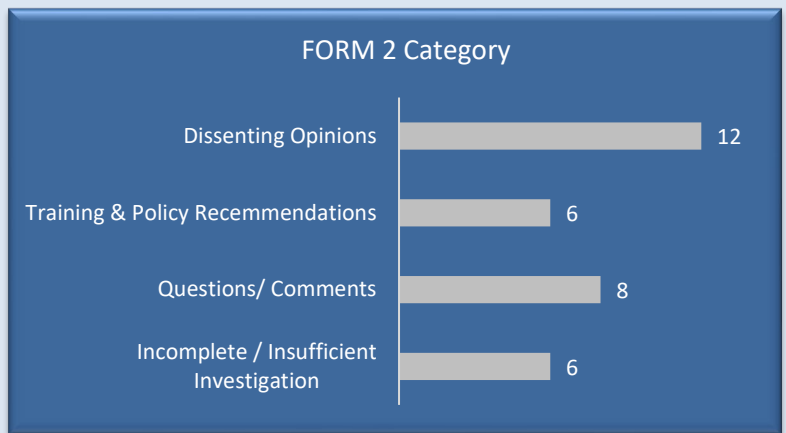
¹ General Orders are a collection of written orders of the Chief of Police that establish policies and procedures of the department as authorized by Section 34-23 of the City of Houston Code of Ordinances.

FORM 2 and 3

Panel members use Form 2s to document disagreements with the IAD investigation and case specific recommendations. It includes sections for dissenting opinions, incomplete investigations, training or policy recommendations, and a dedicated space for questions or comments. For instance, panel members can pose case specific questions about facts or investigative strategy, such as whether an officer should have been cited for a particular action. When the panel disagrees with IAD's conclusion or believes the investigation is insufficient, a Form 2 would start the escalation process. During the escalation process, the case is reviewed by the IAD Captain and possibly a member of HPD's executive team. IAD responds to a Panel's Form 2 by completing a Form 3. Of the 137 cases reviewed by the panels, thirty-two cases or 23% had a Form 2 drafted. Based on the data analyzed, a Form 2 was completed and categorized as follows: ²



- Dissenting Opinions reflect instances where board members expressed disagreement with the findings or conclusions of investigations.
- Incomplete/Insufficient Investigations pointed to instances where investigations were deemed inadequate or requiring further follow-up to resolve outstanding issues.
- Training/Policy Recommendations constituted cases where updates or revisions to existing training protocols or policies were recommended.
- Questions/Comments category highlights the Board's focus on seeking clarification or requesting further investigation details.



² On 69% of the cases reviewed, or 94 cases, the panel had no issues with the investigation. Additionally, 6.25% were marked as incomplete reviews, and 2.34% were still under review, where Form 2 could be used.

While most cases received timely Form 3 responses, it remains essential to address the unresolved cases promptly to uphold the oversight process's transparency, integrity, and impact.

As noted above, in addition to dissention, the Board also uses a Form 2 to make training and policy recommendations. The following is a non-exhaustive list of the training and policy recommendations made by the Board in 2024:

- Improved communication between units during a police pursuit to help minimize or reduce high speed pursuits
- Conflict resolution training particular to traffic stops
- Updated policy on professionalism when dealing with the community
- Yearly refresher training on the use of force
- Training on the legality of searches and seizures
- Improved de-escalation training
- Secondary approval for suspended cases
- Communicate with the public regarding investigative case prioritization
- Updated policy regarding unmarked vehicles being first on scene and/or making contact with suspects while serving felony warrants

Overall Response Summary

The recommendations and concerns raised in Form 2 submissions exemplify IPOB's dedication to enhancing accountability and fostering trust in law enforcement practices. The Form 3 responses provided by IAD reflect a variety of outcomes addressing the cases reviewed. Some cases resulted in administrative or procedural changes, such as updates to autopsy report processes or divisional protocol adjustments, though these changes did not always lead to citation modifications. In certain instances, citations were revised based on recommendations from IPOB and discussions between IPOB and IAD. Several cases included acknowledgments of IPOB's recommendations or confirmations that recommendations already existed in current policy. However, a significant number of cases concluded without any changes to policies or citations.

In very few instances additional investigation was initiated but often had no effect on the outcome. On 5 separate occasions, the panel requested an escalation meeting to discuss the investigation with a member of the executive staff. Of the 5 cases, one resulted in a cite addition for conduct and behavior. A small number of cases were noted as having no response, potentially due to administrative or personnel challenges. Overall, the responses highlight a mix of actionable changes, policy confirmations, and clarifications, with a need for continued follow-up to ensure the resolution of all outstanding issues and a process to track training and policy follow through.

Performance Measures

Performance measures are essential tools for evaluating the effectiveness and impact of programs and initiatives within any organization. For OPRA, performance measures provide a structured approach to assess how well the office achieves its transparency, accountability, and community trust goals. These measures help ensure that OPRA's activities align with its mission to foster safer communities and improve police oversight as well as align with the Administration's goals and priorities.

By focusing on key indicators such as citizen engagement and complaint handling, OPRA can monitor its progress, identify areas for improvement, and make data-driven decisions to enhance its impact. These metrics provide insights into the office's operational efficiency and serve as benchmarks for measuring the success of its initiatives in promoting trust, accountability, and safety across Houston.

Community Engagement

OPRA actively participated in various community engagement meetings to strengthen relationships, promote transparency, and address community concerns. OPRA is responsible for engaging members of the public through a wide variety of community events and public service opportunities. Participation allowed OPRA to address localized concerns and engage with community leaders directly. These meetings included:

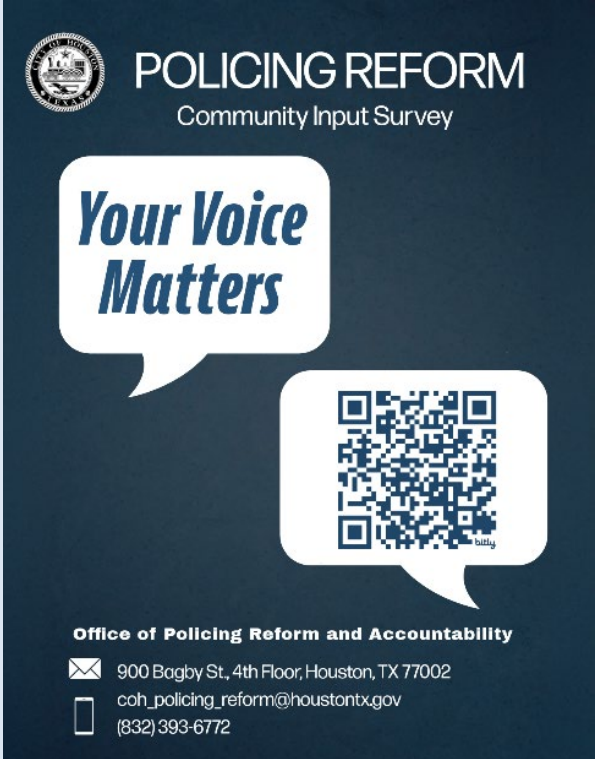
- Courtesy visits with elected Council members
- Monthly Super Neighborhood meetings including 17, 25, Alief, Spring Branch, Sunnyside and Acres Home
- District K Presidential Advisory Council
- Townhall Meetings across multiple districts, including District I, District E, District K, and At-Large Townhalls, provided forums to discuss policing and safety initiatives with a broader audience.
- Participation in the Mayor's Youth Council Mental Health Committee
- HPD's Youth Police Advisory Council
- Monthly participation in the Greater Houston Coalition for Justice
- Monthly participation in the Criminal Justice Coordinating Committee
- Harris County Attorney's Office Legal Symposium
- Domestic Violence Criminal Justice Safety Assessment

OPRA staff also attended the National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement (“NACOLE”) annual conference to engage members of the oversight community throughout the country. This year’s conference took place in Tucson, Arizona. NACOLE is a non-profit organization that works to enhance accountability and transparency in policing and build community trust through civilian oversight. The conference program addresses both skills training and current and emerging topics and provides a forum where the growing community of oversight practitioners meet to exchange information and ideas about issues facing civilian oversight.

Community Survey

OPRA created and distributed a comprehensive survey titled "*Your Voice Matters: Community Input Survey on Policing in Houston*" to gather citizen feedback on their experiences and opinions about HPD. The survey aimed to foster community participation, shape future policing strategies, and strengthen the relationship between law enforcement and the community. This survey allowed OPRA to:

- Understand community needs: Collecting detailed feedback on safety, trust, and police effectiveness.
- Identify improvement areas: Highlight key concerns such as training, accountability, and respect in police interactions.
- Shape future strategies: Incorporating community input into policy reforms, outreach programs, and law enforcement practices to build stronger relationships between HPD and Houston residents.
- This survey is a tool for open communication between the community and OPRA and supports the Administration’s commitment to fostering transparency, accountability, and collaborative community engagement.



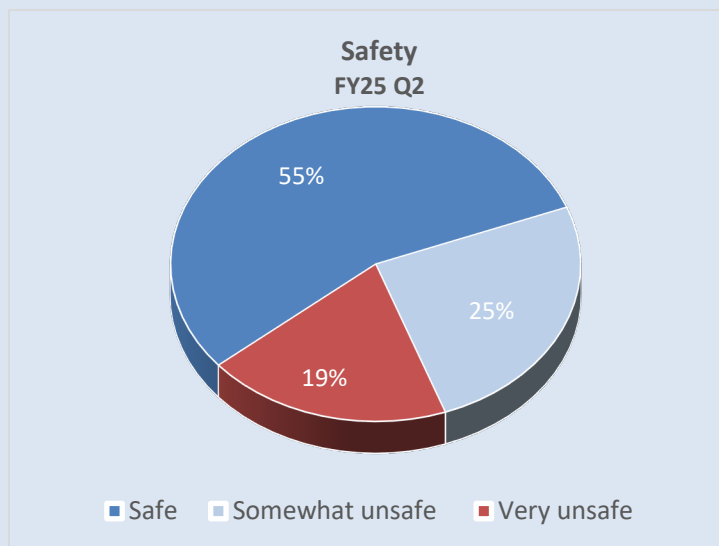
The poster is dark blue with white and light blue text. At the top left is the Houston Police Department seal. To its right, the text reads "POLICING REFORM" in large white letters, with "Community Input Survey" below it in smaller white letters. In the center, a white speech bubble contains the text "Your Voice Matters" in a blue, italicized font. To the right of this is another white speech bubble containing a QR code. At the bottom, the text "Office of Policing Reform and Accountability" is written in white. Below this, there are three lines of contact information: an envelope icon followed by "900 Bagby St, 4th Floor, Houston, TX 77002", a smartphone icon followed by "coh_policing_reform@houstontx.gov", and "(832) 393-6772".

Key Focus Areas of the Survey

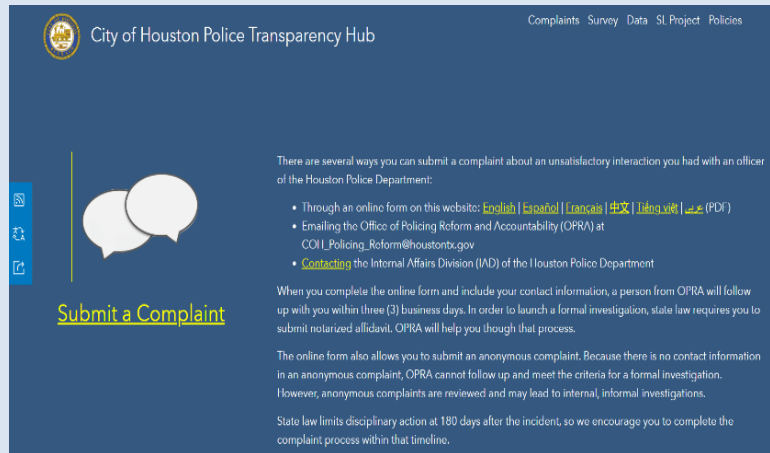
1. **Community Safety and Police Presence:** Respondents were asked about their perceptions of safety in their neighborhoods and whether they felt there was an adequate police presence.
2. **Trust and Respect:** Questions assessed the community's level of trust in HPD and whether officers treated individuals with respect during interactions.
3. **Police Effectiveness and Involvement:** Participants evaluated the effectiveness of police in preventing crime and their involvement in community activities.
4. **Interactions with Police:** For those who had direct interactions with police in the past 12 months, the survey asked for feedback on the quality of those experiences.
5. **Accountability and Training:** Citizens were asked about their confidence in police training to handle various situations and whether they believed officers were held accountable for misconduct.
6. **Top Priorities for Policing:** Respondents could identify what they felt should be HPD's top priorities, such as reducing violent crime, addressing drug issues, building community relationships, or enhancing road safety.
7. **Community Suggestions:** The survey included open-ended questions for suggestions on improving police-community relations and ideas for specific community programs or initiatives.

Survey Results for FY25 Q1 & Q2

- **Performance Metric:** Percent of citizens who feel safe in their neighborhood (Outcome Measure).
- **Objective:** This metric assesses the effectiveness of OPRA's initiatives in fostering trust and improving perceptions of safety within the community.
- **Significance:** By focusing on how safe citizens feel in their neighborhoods, OPRA aligns its efforts with community-centered outcomes, ensuring that its programs contribute to a safer and more connected environment.



- **Online Form:** A user-friendly form available on the Houston Police Transparency website allows individuals to submit complaints in six languages—English, Spanish, French, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Arabic. This multilingual feature ensures that non-English speakers can participate without barriers.
- **Email Submission:** Complaints can be sent directly to OPRA via a designated email address (COH_Policing_Reform@houstontx.gov), providing a simple and immediate method for filing concerns.
- **Phone Contact:** OPRA can be reached at (832) 393-6772, where individuals can also schedule appointments for more personalized support in addressing their complaints.
- **Mail:** For those who prefer traditional methods, complaints can be submitted by mail, ensuring inclusivity for individuals who may not have access to digital platforms.

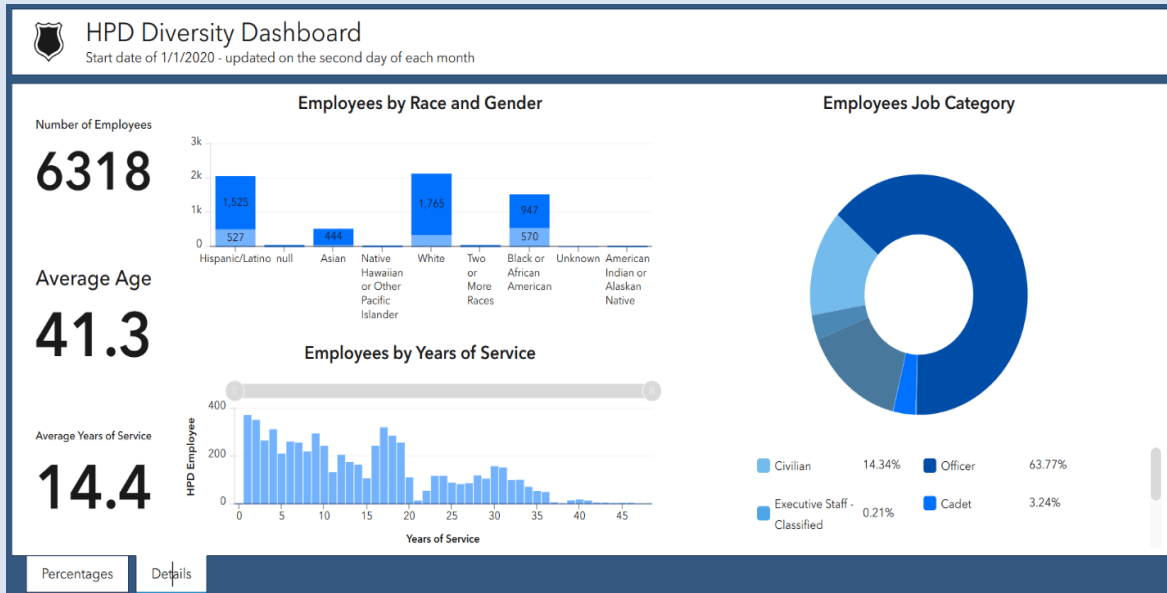


Performance Measure	Measure Type	FY25 Target	Q1	Q2
Number of citizen initiated complaints received	Output	40	21	26

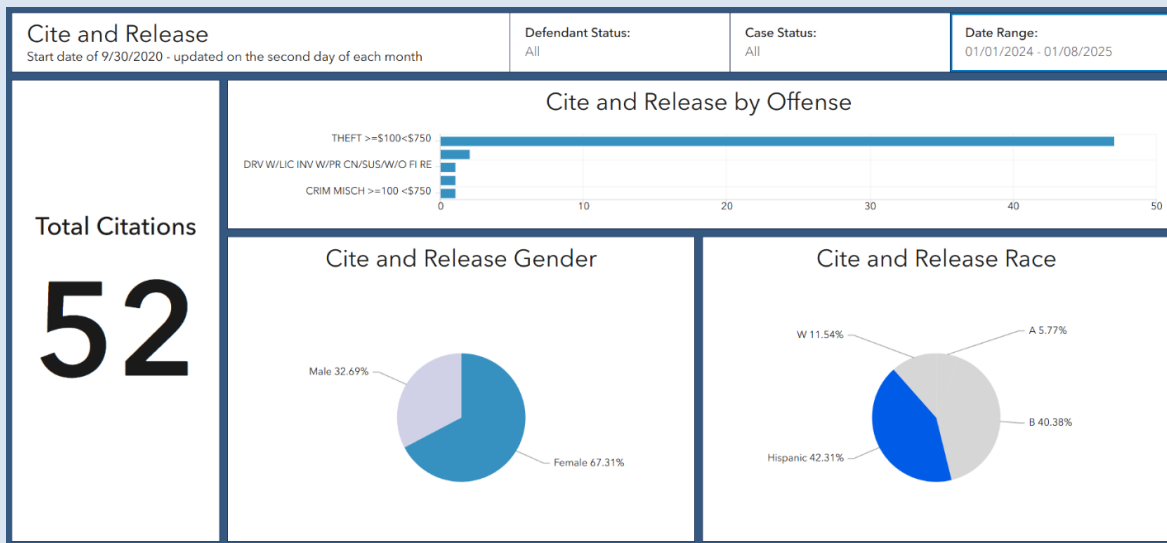
Transparency Dashboard

The Police Transparency Hub provides a comprehensive view of police-related activities through the following dashboards:

1. HPD Diversity Dashboard—Highlights the demographic composition of the Houston Police Department by rank and compares HPD demographics to the broader population of Houston.



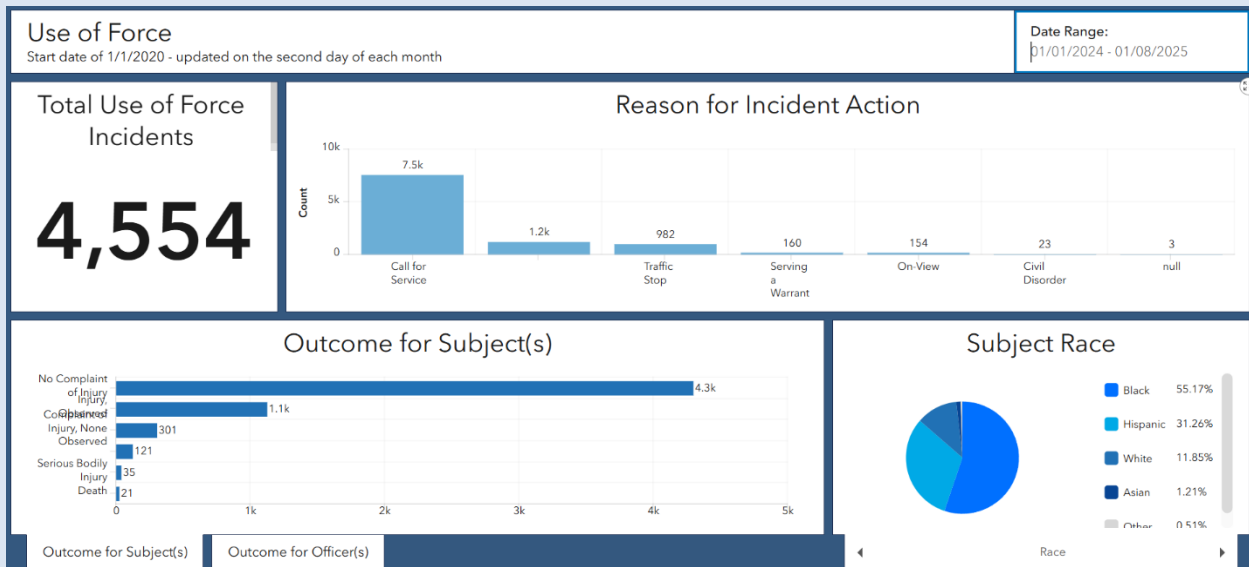
2. Cite and Release Dashboard—tracks incidents where officers issued citations instead of arrests for certain misdemeanor offenses and provides data in accordance with Article 14.06(c) of the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure.



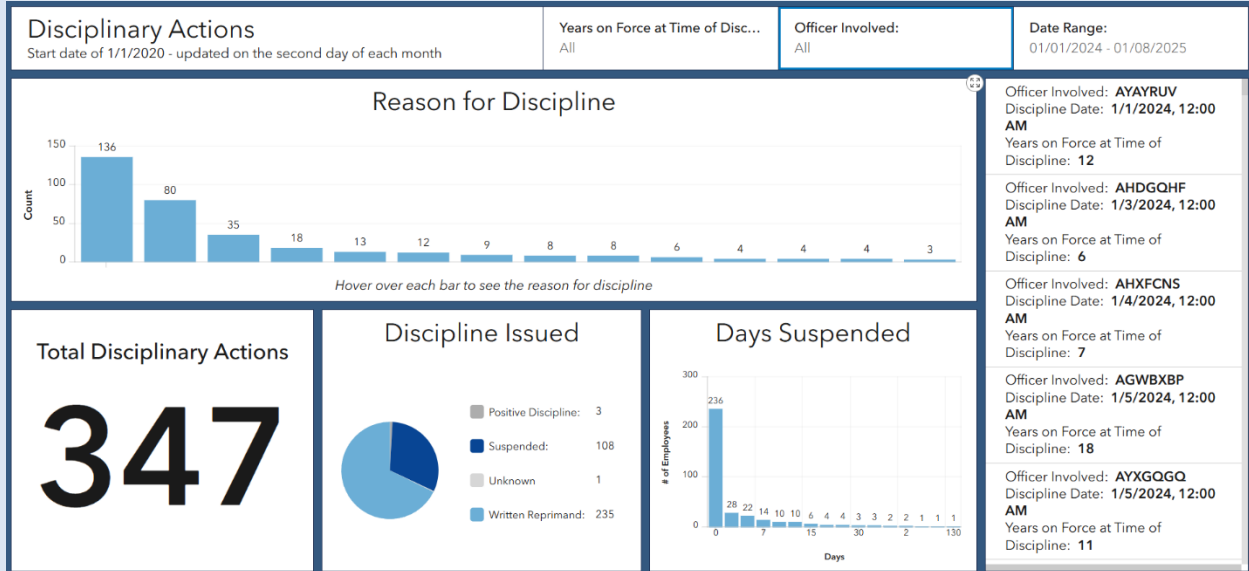
- Traffic Stops Dashboard—Displays information about traffic stops, including reasons for stops, searches conducted, and the demographics of those stopped; and supports transparency in compliance with Article 2.131 of the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure.



- Use of Force Dashboard—visualizes encounters where force was used, detailing the reason for the interaction, the outcomes, and demographic information for both officers and individuals involved.



- Disciplinary Actions Dashboard—provides a history of disciplinary actions within HPD, including reasons and outcomes and includes officer-specific data, such as tenure at the time of disciplinary action.



These dashboards offer a transparent and accessible way for the public to engage with data on police activities, promoting accountability and trust in the community [Police Transparency Hub](#)

City of Houston Police Transparency Hub
Complaints Survey Data SL Project Policies

City of Houston

Police Transparency Hub

This website provides the public with data and information about the Houston Police Department.

[Submit a Complaint](#)

[Take a Survey](#)

[View Data Dashboards](#)

[HPD SL Project Progress](#)

[Policies & Resources](#)

SL Review, Progress, and Compliance

OPRA played a significant role in the comprehensive review of HPD’s management and operational practices in response to the public discovery of the suspended cases code. OPRA leadership participated in the Independent Review Committee’s detailed audit and analysis of HPD’s case management practices. The review highlighted systemic issues and provided actionable recommendations to improve case management and operational efficiency. The full report is available at <https://www.houstontx.gov/sl-codes-report.html>.



OPRA remains focused on monitoring HPD’s compliance with the Committee’s recommendations to ensure meaningful and sustained improvements.

Summary of SL Project Progress (as of Jan 2, 2025)

HPD has achieved significant progress in addressing the suspended cases as part of the SL Project. Below are the key updates and milestones:

Review Completion

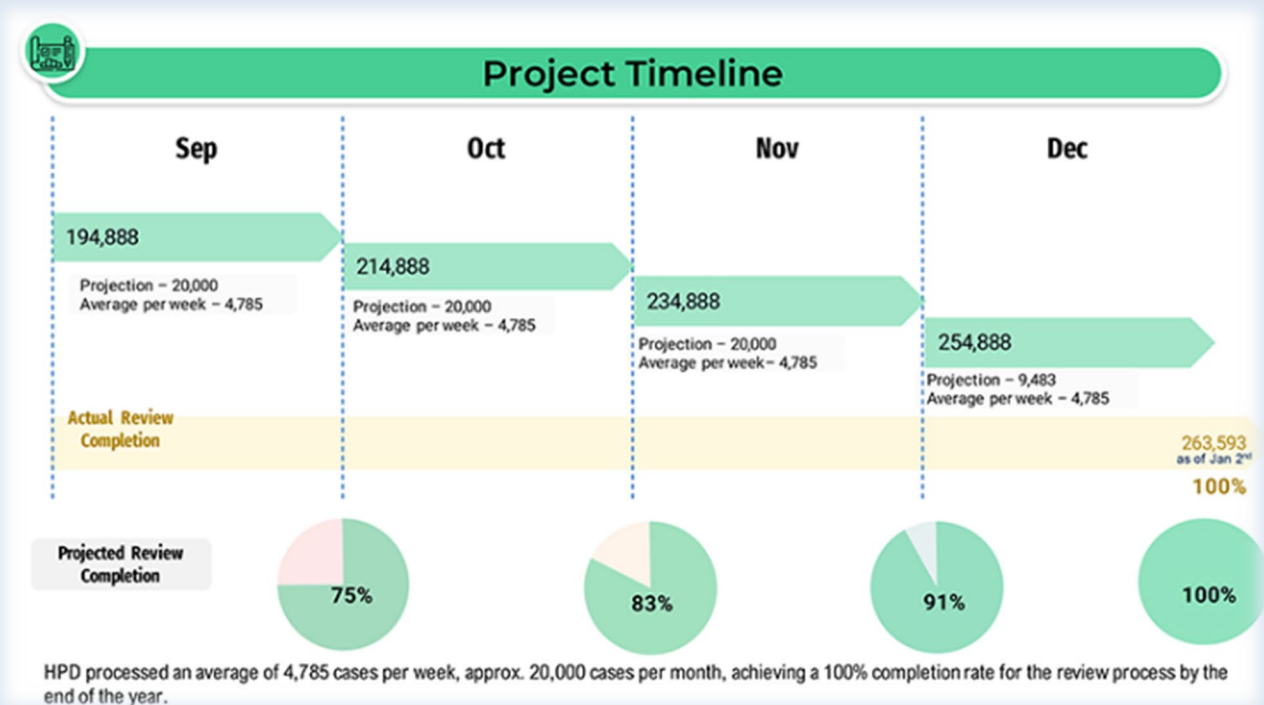
- As of January 2, 2025, HPD completed the review of **263,593 incidents**, representing nearly **100% of the cases** identified in February 2024.
- The review prioritized **crimes against persons** over property crimes, focusing on divisions such as Special Victims, Major Assaults, Homicide, Property Crimes, Vehicular Crimes, and Auto Theft.
- Reviewed cases were categorized using case management terminology such as **inactivated, closed, cleared, or suspended** based on investigative outcomes.

Processing Rates

- HPD processed an average of **4,785 cases per week**, approximately **20,000 cases per month**.
- This consistent pace allowed HPD to meet its projected review completion timeline, achieving **100% review progress** by the end of 2024.

Project Timeline

- The SL Project began in February 2024, with a systematic plan to address the backlog.
- By January 2025, the review process was fully completed, aligning with HPD's projected timeline and demonstrating operational efficiency.



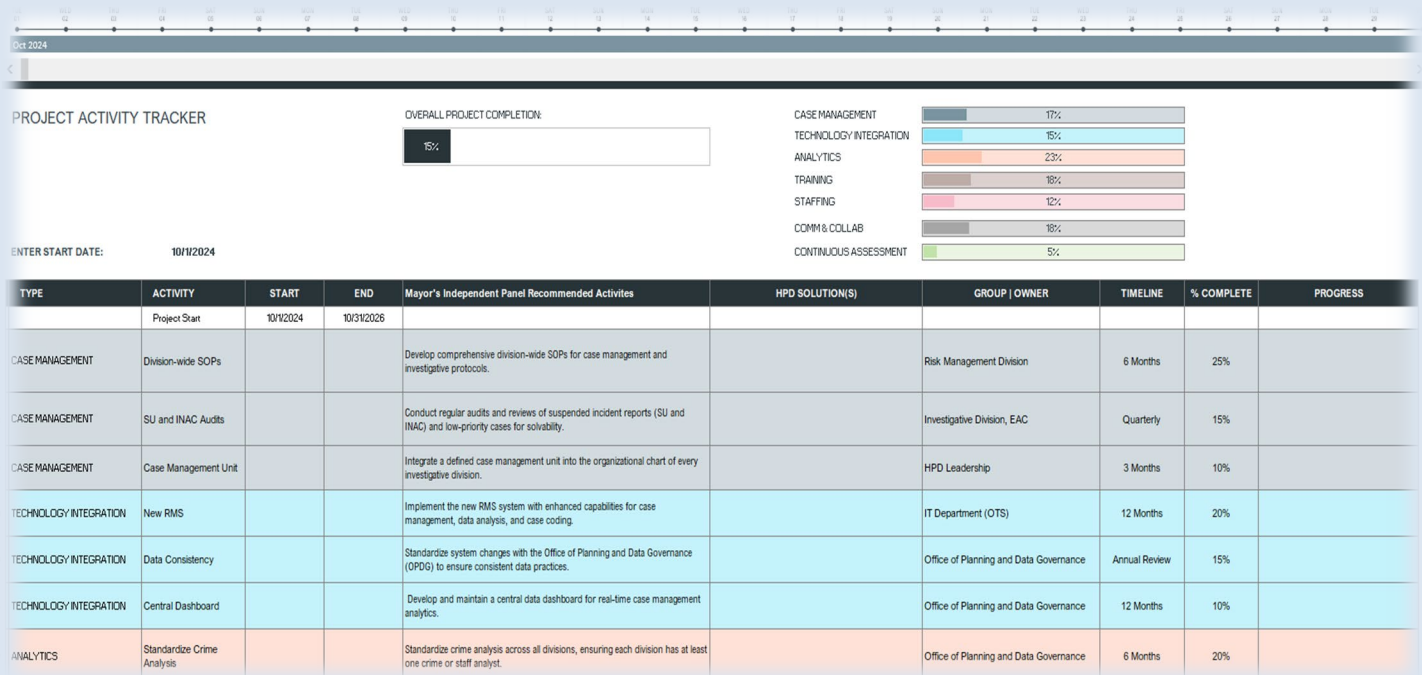
Final Status Update

While several divisions have achieved full resolution of their cases, others, such as the Major Assaults & Family Violence Division, are lagging behind with a **20% completion rate**. This is attributed to the division allocating the majority of their SL resources to finishing the SL review process, coupled with a smaller proportional increase in personnel compared to their case volume.

This situation underscores the importance of revisiting investigative priorities and strategies within HPD. Such discussions will help refine the approach to managing pending investigations and provide clarity on the number of cases requiring follow-up. Aligning resources and strategies across divisions will be critical to ensuring timely and effective resolution of all remaining cases.

Recommendations Progress Tracker

OPRA is actively implementing measures to monitor and ensure progress on the recommendations tied to the SL Project. OPRA has taken steps to monitor and report progress on these reforms in alignment with its oversight role.



Compliance Dashboard Development

OPRA is working on creating a compliance dashboard that is anticipated to be publicly released in early February, coinciding with the one-year anniversary of the SL Project. This dashboard will provide a visualization of the progress made across divisions and establish a framework for monthly compliance tracking. Efforts are currently underway to finalize the design and decide on the visualization format.

Case Management SOPs

Recognizing the need for standardized procedures, OPRA is prioritizing the finalization of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for case management. Given the departure of previous key personnel and the lack of finalized SOPs, OPRA is aiming to address this gap before the release of the new Records Management System (RMS) to maintain public confidence and transparency.

Targeted Meetings for Strategy Refinement

OPRA is planning focused meetings in early 2025 to address outstanding concerns, including the development of case management policies and revisions. These smaller, targeted meetings aim to identify and resolve potential issues without waiting for large group sessions, ensuring faster decision-making and implementation.

Interdivisional Collaboration

OPRA is engaging with affected divisions, such as the Special Victims Division (SVD), to align processes for tracking and managing progress. A meeting with SVD is expected to take place shortly after the new year to kickstart this collaborative effort.

Prioritization of Policy Revisions

OPRA, with input from stakeholders, is working on revising and finalizing policies tied to case management and recommendations. Feedback is being sought to ensure the policies align with operational needs and public expectations, with a plan to address areas of concern proactively.

By taking these steps, OPRA ensures that the SL Project's recommendations are implemented effectively and monitored consistently while maintaining transparency and accountability to the public.

2024 Accomplishments Summary

Oversight and Accountability

- Monitored and tracked the review of 137 internal investigations.
- Participated in the Independent Review Committee's audit of HPD's case management practices, ensuring that the review of 263,593 cases reached 100% completion by the end of 2024.
- Collaborated with HPD to prioritize crimes against persons during the review of suspended cases, ensuring a focus on high-impact categories.
- Implemented enhancements to case management practices
- Conducted independent review of citizen concerns and helped develop solutions by connecting the community members to specific members within HPD who would most appropriately address the issue.

Community Engagement

- Strengthened community relations by participating in town hall meetings, super neighborhood meetings, and advisory councils across various districts, promoting

transparency and addressing public concerns.

- The "Your Voice Matters" community survey was distributed to gather insights on police effectiveness, accountability, and community trust, using the feedback to shape future policing strategies and reforms.

- Created and launched a Gift Card Reallocation Program with the goal of repurposing unused gift cards from previous gun buyback programs to support HPD's Domestic Abuse Response Team (DART) in providing critical resources to survivors of domestic violence. This initiative not only allowed the City to provide more support to a vulnerable population but also prevented in significant financial loss. As of the end of 2024, gift cards amounting to \$42,000 were distributed to crime victims.

Transparency Initiatives

- Took steps to more effectively and directly manage the data on the Police Transparency Hub improving public access to HPD updates.
- Updated the City of Houston website with dashboards to track SL case progress
- Introduced a new performance measure, a community survey published on the Police Transparency HUB and COH website, to gather community feedback on relational policing and safety concerns, enhancing transparency and trust.

IPOB Operations and Performance Monitoring

- Conducted a comprehensive audit of the Independent Police Oversight Board (IPOB), evaluating investigation timelines, case completion rates, and policy outcomes to improve operational efficiency and effectiveness.
- Strengthened collaboration with HPD divisions, ensuring timely responses to IPOB recommendations, achieving an 85% response rate for cases requiring FORM 3 replies.
- Provided continuous training for IPOB members to enhance their ability to objectively review cases and recommend actionable improvements.

2025 Recommendations & Goals

- Increase Board participation and membership
- Work with HPD Command staff and IAD to finalize IAD/IPOB workflow to help streamline current processes.
- Create Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to document OPRA/IPOB protocols based on updated workflow.
- Update and digitize Board forms and documents to allow better tracking of case dissentions, and training and policy recommendations to enhance efficiency.
- Strengthen escalation processes and develop a protocol to track HPD follow-through on policy and training recommendations.
- Establish and build a relationship with the HPD Training Division and create a method to formalize training recommendations made by IPOB and track updates made to training modules at the Academy and yearly training refreshers.
- Create a process to more effectively collaborate with the Risk Management Division on policy change recommendations resulting from trends or patterns observed after reviewing IAD investigations.
- Implement measures to address delays in IPOB case reviews, particularly for high-impact categories.
- Develop additional training opportunities for IPOB members.
- Create a process to allow panel members to receive and review case files electronically.
- OPRA and IPOB leadership to participate in training session with cadets at police academy to instill a greater understanding of the review process and promote awareness of community concerns and consequences of violations at an earlier stage in officer's career.
- Work with Board leadership to develop methods of more effectively monitoring community concerns as enumerated in Executive Order 1-5.
- Track compliance with the Independent Review Committee's recommendations and ensure accountability by developing a compliance dashboard for public release.
- Redesign and rebuild the Police Transparency Hub to possibly include the following:
 - District-specific crime data
 - Calls for service dashboard
 - Response time dashboard
 - Police pursuits data
 - Data on the Safe Roadways Initiative

By pursuing these goals, OPRA aims to enhance its oversight capabilities, streamline operations, and further strengthen transparency, accountability, and trust in policing throughout 2025

Conclusion

The Office of Policing Reform and Accountability is dedicated to fostering trust, accountability, and transparency between the Houston Police Department and the community. Future initiatives focus on implementing meaningful reforms, improving complaint review processes, and encouraging open dialogue to ensure equitable policing that aligns with community needs. Community-oriented policing is vital because it transforms the relationship between law enforcement and the public from one of enforcement to partnership. By emphasizing trust, collaboration, and proactive problem-solving, this method not only addresses crime but also creates a foundation for lasting peace and community well-being. Trust is the foundation of effective policing. When community members feel respected and heard by law enforcement, they are more likely to cooperate with police efforts. This approach fosters transparency and accountability, helping to bridge the historical divide between police and marginalized communities. By working closely with residents, businesses, and local organizations, police can better understand the unique needs and challenges of each community.

In today's world, where public scrutiny of law enforcement is high, adopting a community-oriented approach is essential for fostering trust, equity, and a safer future for all. OPRA and IPOB, through their work strive to create mutual understanding, helping police better navigate cultural nuances and build rapport with diverse populations. The goal of this collaboration is to enable HPD to implement targeted strategies that address specific issues, such as drug activity, gang violence, or property crime. This leads to more sustainable reductions in crime and shifts the focus from reactive to proactive. OPRA endeavors to foster a shared responsibility for public safety, creating a resilient environment where residents and police are partners in building a better community.