



**FY 2014 PERFORMANCE PLAN
DC Office of Police Complaints**

MISSION

The mission of the Office of Police Complaints (DCOPC) is to increase public confidence in the police and promote positive community-police interactions.

SUMMARY OF SERVICES

OPC receives, investigates, adjudicates, and mediates police misconduct complaints filed by the public against Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) and D.C. Housing Authority (DCHA) police officers. In addition to these responsibilities, the agency issues policy recommendations to the Mayor, the Council of the District of Columbia, and the Chiefs of Police of MPD and DCHA's Office of Public Safety proposing reforms that will promote greater police accountability by reducing the level of police misconduct or improving the citizen complaint process.

Measure	FY 2011 Actual	FY 2012 Actual	FY 2013 YTD
Number of contacts from the public inquiring about filing a complaint	1198	1241	1047
Number of complaints received	557	574	440

OBJECTIVE 1: Resolve police misconduct complaints in an impartial, timely, and professional manner.

INITIATIVE 1.1: Maintain OPC's training program for investigators.

OPC's effectiveness is tied in significant measure to its ability to resolve fairly and promptly police misconduct complaints filed with the agency. In FY13, OPC arranged six "brown-bag" lunch presentations, sent all members of the investigative unit who had not already attended to the Reid Technique of Interviewing and Interrogation workshop, had every investigator attend 32 hours of training at the MPD academy, and had eight members of the unit become eligible for oversight practitioner credentialing by enrolling in training provided by the National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement (NACOLE). This has increased OPC staff members' knowledge and enthusiasm for their work, and helped decrease OPC's staff vacancy rate while also ensuring that the investigators are as well trained as possible. OPC will continue to provide at least four in-house continuing education sessions that will teach investigators about new issues and trends in the field of police accountability and citizen review and provide updates on current legal precedent. In addition, OPC will provide advanced skills trainings in investigative techniques by identifying external training opportunities, including, but not limited to, sending new agency employees to the Reid workshop and having additional agency staff members obtain oversight practitioner credentialing from



NACOLE. Together, these sessions and the training will ensure that investigators are aware of and understand emerging issues so that they may promptly identify material facts, quickly determine the proper course of an investigation, and have the necessary skills to obtain all relevant evidence in order to resolve most citizen complaints within six months of being filed with the agency. This initiative will be achieved by September 30, 2014.

INITIATIVE 1.2: Improve access to evidence in the possession of MPD and the Office of Unified Communications (OUC).

OPC's ability to resolve investigations promptly relies in significant part on the timely production by MPD of documents and evidence in its possession, including records maintained by the Office of Unified Communications (OUC). OPC has worked with MPD during FY 2012 and FY 2013 to develop a system to track these requests better, and has identified several obstacles that prevent OPC from timely receiving documents, resulting in significant reductions in both the number and age of outstanding requests. In FY 2014, OPC will establish a regular meeting schedule with MPD and OUC in order to reconcile lists of outstanding documents and to discuss any issues preventing the timely production of records. OPC will also work with MPD to begin developing a system whereby OPC can have direct access to MPD documents that OPC is entitled by statute to receive. Also in FY 2014, OPC will be making requests for documents directly to OUC, instead of to MPD as was done in the past, and the agency will work with OUC to establish protocols for these requests for information to be fulfilled. This initiative will be achieved by **September 30, 2014**.

INITIATIVE 1.3: Research the techniques of non-District oversight agencies.

OPC representatives have made visits to other citizen oversight agencies, namely, the Citizen Complaint Review Board of New York City and San Francisco's Office of Citizen Complaints, to learn about investigative and management techniques that could help OPC be even more effective and efficient. Areas of inquiry included, among others, training strategies, access to police documents, case management and review, data analysis, and use of technology. OPC will complement those efforts by conducting similar visits to at least two additional non-District oversight agencies. This initiative will be achieved by September 30, 2014.

INITIATIVE 1.4: Research the techniques of District investigative agencies.

In FY14, OPC will supplement its research of the techniques of non-District oversight agencies by also examining the investigative and management practices of at least two other District agencies that conduct investigations. This initiative will be achieved by **September 30, 2014**.

INITIATIVE 1.4: Explore the creation of a permanent conciliation program

OPC's statute authorizes the agency to conduct conciliation, which is a form of alternative dispute resolution whereby a complainant can discuss allegations of misconduct with the officer or officers involved in the interaction. Such a program promotes better relations and understanding between complainants and officers, and



allows OPC to more quickly and cost effectively resolve complaints that would otherwise require a full investigation. OPC has designed a pilot program to gauge how conciliation could work at OPC. By the fourth quarter of the fiscal year, OPC will have completed this pilot program, conducted an assessment of its effectiveness, and taken steps to determine how, if at all, the agency can implement such a program permanently. Completion date: **September 30, 2014.**

OBJECTIVE 2: Promote positive community-police interactions through public education and awareness.

INITIATIVE 2.1: Conduct OPC outreach efforts throughout the District.

OPC provides a forum, independent of MPD and DCHA, for members of the public to address police misconduct concerns. Vital to the agency's mission is increasing the public's awareness of the agency, the services it provides, and the role it plays in community-police interactions. To accomplish this, the agency has conducted outreach events almost since the agency opened its doors in 2001. The number of events has risen over the years, and the agency has conducted 20 or more such sessions in each fiscal year from FY08 through FY13. **By September 30, 2014**, OPC plans to conduct at least 24 of these events, with at least one such session in each of the District's eight wards. OPC will focus its efforts on coordinating with community groups, social service providers, and legal advocacy organizations that work with populations that frequently come into contact with the police.

INITIATIVE 2.2: Provide training about OPC services to other District agencies

OPC regularly invites presenters from other District agencies to explain their services and mission to OPC staff members, which in turn allows OPC to provide better service and more thorough information to people who contact the agency. In FY14, OPC will conduct at least three similar training sessions for employees of other District government entities, targeting those offices that provide direct services to the public in situations likely to involve the police. This targeted outreach will allow OPC to focus on getting information about the agency's complaint process and mission to the District's front-line service providers, resulting in more comprehensive access to OPC services by District residents. These trainings will be provided by **September 30, 2014.**

INITIATIVE 2.3: Develop educational material regarding an individual's rights when interacting with the police

OPC conducts outreach to diverse populations of District residents, often educating them on their basic constitutional rights and what to do when interacting with the police. In FY14, OPC will reinforce these efforts by developing a concise educational material, such as a postcard or brochure, for distribution at community fairs and training presentations. This item will highlight key information for people to be aware of during encounters with the police, and will be developed by **March 31, 2014.**



OBJECTIVE 3: Enhance OPC’s ability to effect police reform by issuing policy recommendations to the Mayor, the District Council, MPD, and DCHA.

INITIATIVE 3.1: Review and analyze sustained complaints of police misconduct.

During Fiscal Year 2013, OPC complaint examiners sustained numerous complaints of police misconduct. In **FY14**, OPC staff members will review the findings of all complaints sustained during that year and look for patterns or trends that bear further review and analysis and possibly warrant the issuance of policy recommendations.

INITIATIVE 3.2: Survey the methods used by other independent police review agencies to create policy recommendations

Many oversight agencies help to bring about police reform by issuing policy recommendations. In FY 2013, OPC staff conducted a survey of other agencies’ reports to identify both trends and emerging areas related to efforts to reduce police misconduct and improve policing. This research has allowed OPC to identify those offices that are producing the highest quality reports. In FY14, OPC will conduct interviews of representatives of at least three such agencies to learn their processes for identifying areas in need of reform and preparing recommendations. This research into best practices by other citizen oversight offices will allow OPC to propose more effective reforms aimed at strengthening police accountability in the District while also identifying methods for the city to reduce its exposure to litigation and civil liability. These interviews will be complete by **March 31, 2014**.



KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS - DC Office of Police Complaints

Measure	FY 2012 Actual	FY 2013 Target	FY 2013 Actual	FY 2014 Projection	FY 2015 Projection	FY 2016 Projection
Percent of investigations completed and reports produced by the agency within six months.	60.6%	60%	45.33%	60%	60%	60%
Percent of Complaint Examiner decisions issued within 120 days.	92.9%	80%	88.24%	80%	80%	80%
Percent of complaints resolved through mediation. ¹	7.6%	9%	6.67%	9%	9%	9%
Number of outreach activities sponsored or attended by OPC.	24	24	28	24	24	24

¹ This Key Performance Indicator is also an industry measure. In assessing the effectiveness of mediation programs used by different police oversight agencies, experts in the field consider the percentage of all complaints that were successfully mediated by an oversight agency. See Samuel Walker, Carol Archbold, and Leigh Herbst, *Mediating Citizen Complaints Against Police Officers: A Guide for Police and Community Leaders*, U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services at 40 (2002). With 8.7% of its complaints resolved through mediation in FY11, OPC's performance places it at or near the top when compared to other mediation programs in the United States.