

Jurisdiction

The CCRB has jurisdiction to investigate and mediate four categories of complaints against NYPD officers:

Force: The use of unnecessary or excessive force, up to and including deadly force.

Abuse of authority: Improper street stops, frisks, searches, unwarranted threats of arrest and other abuses of police authority.

Discourtesy: Inappropriate behavior or language, including rude or obscene gestures and words.

Offensive language: Derogatory remarks or gestures based upon a person's race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, gender or disability.

Mediation

Mediation is a non-disciplinary process in which the complainant and the police officer meet in order to discuss the incident that led to the complaint. Only certain types of allegations are eligible for mediation (complaints alleging injury or property damage, for example, are not eligible), and both the complainant and the officer must voluntarily agree to mediation.

After both parties agree to mediate, CCRB staff schedules a meeting between the civilian and officer with a neutral, trained mediator at the CCRB's offices. The mediator facilitates the discussion between the parties and what is said during the mediation session is confidential. If the civilian and officer agree that the issues raised by the complaint have been resolved, the case is closed as "mediated." If the mediation is not successful, the agency can either investigate the complaint or close it as "mediation attempted."

"It is in the interest of the people of the city of New York and the New York City police department that the investigation of complaints concerning misconduct by officers of the department towards members of the public be complete, thorough, and impartial. These inquiries must be conducted fairly and independently, and in a manner in which the public and the police department have confidence. An independent civilian complaint review board is hereby established as a body comprised solely of members of the public with the authority to investigate allegations of police misconduct. . . ."

New York City Charter
Chapter 18-A

New York City Civilian Complaint Review Board



To File a Complaint Concerning a New York City Police Officer Call 311

(outside NYC: 212-NEW-YORK)
TTY/TDD: 212-504-4115

Civilian Complaint Review Board
40 Rector Street, 2nd Floor
New York NY 10006
nyc.gov/ccrb

By Subway: R or W to Rector
1 train to Rector
4 or 5 to Wall Street
2 or 3 to Wall Street
J, M, or Z to Broad Street

Who We Are

Established in 1993 as a city agency independent of the New York City Police Department (NYPD), the New York City Civilian Complaint Review Board (CCRB) investigates and mediates misconduct complaints against NYPD officers.

The mayor appoints all thirteen members of the board, who must reflect the diversity of the city's population. The city council designates five board members (one from each borough), the police commissioner designates three, and the mayor designates five, including the chair. Board members hold monthly public meetings, set policy, review all investigations conducted by the staff, and make findings on every allegation raised by complaints.

The board hires the executive director, who in turn is responsible for the agency's daily operations. Investigations are conducted and supervised by the agency's all-civilian staff.



The Investigative Process

In-person Interview

Interviewing the civilian(s) who interacted with the police is essential to every investigation. The in-person interview generally takes place at the CCRB's offices and forms the foundation of the investigation, providing the investigator with information used to obtain additional evidence. Without the cooperation of the civilians involved, the board may close the complaint without conducting an investigation.



Gathering of Evidence

The investigator collects all relevant evidence concerning the incident at issue. Investigators interview all civilian and police witnesses and obtain pertinent court and NYPD records, including roll calls, detail rosters, arrest reports, 911 calls, and police radio communications. The CCRB has subpoena power, which means that it can also obtain reports from commercial establishments and, with the patient's consent, medical records.

Submission of Investigative File to the Board

After the investigative process is complete, the investigator summarizes the evidence along with applicable NYPD and legal guidelines in a detailed closing report. The report and the entire investigative file are submitted to a three-member board panel, or in some cases, the entire 13-member board, for the board's review.

Investigative Results

Board Findings

The board generally meets in three-member panels (comprised of a mayoral designee, city council designee, and a police commissioner designee) to reach one of six outcomes for each allegation raised by complaints it investigates. Board members decide on the outcome of allegations based upon the preponderance of the evidence. After cases are closed, the CCRB notifies the civilians and subject officers of its findings by letter.



Substantiated: The officer engaged in the action alleged, which constituted misconduct.

Exonerated: The officer engaged in the action alleged, but it was lawful and proper.

Unfounded: The officer did not engage in the alleged action.

Unsubstantiated: There is insufficient evidence to prove one of the above findings.

Officer(s) unidentified: The agency could not identify the subject(s) of the alleged misconduct.

Miscellaneous: Usually, the subject of the allegation is no longer a member of the NYPD.

Police Department Disciplinary Process

The board informs the NYPD of its findings on every case it closes. When the board substantiates one or more allegations in a case, it forwards the case to the NYPD, usually with a disciplinary recommendation. The NYPD may determine that the officer merits no discipline, instructions (retraining), or a command discipline (the loss of up to ten vacation days). It can also seek a more serious penalty against the officer by serving the officer with charges and specifications. Non-probationary officers have the right to challenge the imposition of discipline in administrative hearings at which civilian witnesses may be required to testify. In all cases, the police commissioner has the authority to decide whether discipline is imposed and the level of discipline.