

# Office of Police Accountability

## 2019 Annual Report Executive Summary

**In 2019, the Office of Police Accountability (OPA) embraced change and worked to improve the police accountability system for both community members and Seattle Police Department (SPD) employees. Here are a few highlights.**

### **Civilianizing OPA Leadership**

OPA fully civilianized its leadership and supervisors in an effort to increase the community's confidence in OPA's objectivity and to comply with legal mandates. The organization is now led by a civilian director, deputy director of investigations, and deputy director of public affairs. OPA also hired a civilian investigations supervisor to supervise its investigators.

### **Empowering SPD Supervisors**

OPA developed a program in which SPD supervisors could review and document complaints that are clearly refuted by evidence, then screen the incidents with OPA to determine whether a formal complaint referral is required. This increased supervisors' involvement with the accountability system and improved the quality of their reviews.

### **Addressing Serious Misconduct**

OPA focused its efforts on investigating allegations of serious misconduct. This was achieved via a system-wide agreement to shift the handling of minor policy violations back to the chain of command, as well as screening out allegations that lacked a factual basis.

### **Engaging with the Community**

OPA increased community awareness and understanding of its services by conducting or participating in 91 educational and outreach activities. To assist with this, OPA created a suite of outreach materials in various languages that provide information and guidance on issues like how to file a complaint.

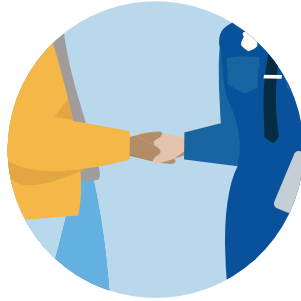


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## 2019 Annual Report Facts at a Glance



Received **928** complaints



**1 in 5** allegations was for unprofessional behavior



Investigated **36%** of all complaints



**40%** of sworn employees received at least one complaint



Completed **99%** of investigations on time



Resolved **13** cases through alternative dispute resolution



Issued **28** policy recommendations



Attended **91** community outreach events



Translated outreach materials into **5** languages