

Community Information Sheet on Proposed Changes to Civilian Oversight Ordinances

Introduction

The Alexandria Independent Policing Auditor (AIPA) and the Independent Community Policing Review Board (ICPRB) are seeking community feedback on proposed changes to the enabling ordinances in the City Code Art. § 2-4-220 through 2-4-229 and § 4-1-5 through 4-1-6. On June 25, 2024, the Independent Policing Auditor presented to City Council on the history and status of civilian oversight in Alexandria. Following this presentation, City Council directed the Auditor to establish an ad-hoc committee to propose revisions to the AIPA and ICPRB ordinances. The committee was tasked with clarifying the roles, duties, and requirements of both agencies.

The ad-hoc committee, consisting of AIPA staff, ICPRB members, representatives from the Alexandria Police Department, the City Attorney's Office, and the City Manager's Office, met weekly from July to October 2024. During September and October, the ICPRB held public meetings to review, discuss, and receive public comment on the proposed changes. On October 23, 2024, the Auditor hosted a virtual event to collect additional community feedback.

To continue engaging with the public, a feedback form is now available on the AIPA and ICPRB websites. The AIPA team and ICPRB members will also distribute the form at upcoming community events in December. All feedback will be included in the AIPA's final presentation to City Council, prior to a vote on the proposed changes in January 2025.

Background on the AIPA and ICPRB

On July 9, 2020, Alexandria City Council unanimously adopted Resolution 2950, condemning police brutality and systemic racism in response to the death of George Floyd. The resolution outlined Council's intention to create a community policing review board and tasked the City Manager and City Attorney with presenting proposed ordinances at the September 2020 Legislative Meeting.

Following this, on January 12, 2021, City Council developed a draft ordinance, drawing from national examples and community input. On April 17, 2021, Council passed the ordinances establishing the Alexandria Independent Community Policing Review Board (ICPRB), to be effective on July 1, 2021. In addition, the Office of the Alexandria Independent Policing Auditor (AIPA) was established to support the Board in its review and community engagement efforts, as well as conduct independent investigations and audits of police misconduct. The first Independent Policing Auditor commenced in December 2022, as a proactive leader in law enforcement transparency and accountability.

KEY CHANGES TO THE ICPRB ORDINANCES

(CITY CODE ART. § 2-4-220 THRU 2-4-229)

Board Purpose and Scope

- The Board will receive inquiries and refer cases to the Independent Auditor or Alexandria Police Department Office of Professional Responsibility (APD) for formal complaints and investigations.
- The Board shall have the authority to review investigations completed by APD and AIPA for thoroughness and fairness, and to identify patterns and practices of potential discrimination, bias, and other abuses of police authority.
- The Board shall issue a written report of each review conducted to the public and provide quarterly updates to City Council.

Board Qualifications, Training, and Meetings

- Board members shall comply with terms of a Standards of Professional Conduct Statement
- New provisions for removal of board members upon failure to safeguard confidential information, complete training requirements, and comply with terms of the Standards of Professional Conduct Statement.
- Board training requirements were divided into initial and annual training requirements.
 - New board members must complete at least 4 hours of ride alongs, 8 hours of civilian oversight training, and legal and ethical obligations prior to voting on any matter.
 - Annually, board members must complete an additional 4 hours of ride alongs, civilian oversight training, and police training, including simulated exercises.
- The board adjusted its quorum requirements for administrative actions, decreasing the required quorum from five to four voting members to allow the board to address administrative matters efficiently.
- To take any civilian oversight action such as reviewing investigations or inquiry intake, a quorum of five voting members is required.

KEY CHANGES TO THE AIPA ORDINANCES

(CITY CODE ART. § 4-1-5 THRU 4-1-7)

- AIPA will receive both complaints of police misconduct and commendations regarding members of the Alexandria Police Department.
- AIPA will conduct independent investigations and monitor investigations conducted by APD.
- AIPA will have access to all records, documents, and materials in APD's possession.
- AIPA will engage the community and stakeholders utilizing informational materials and events.
- The Chief of Police has a duty to compel employees to cooperate with AIPA investigations and ICPRB reviews.