

Board Agenda Item
June 24, 2025

CONSIDERATION -

Fairfax County Police Civilian Review Panel Amended Bylaws

ISSUE:

Approval of an amendment to the Bylaws for the Police Civilian Review Panel (Panel) to establish the role of the Panel Liaison and codify the Panel's independence from the Office of the Independent Police Auditor.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the requested amendment to the Panel's Bylaws.

TIMING:

Board action is requested on June 25, 2025.

BACKGROUND:

The Board of Supervisors last amended the Panel Bylaws on July 19, 2022. After that amendment, the Office of the Police Civilian Review Panel was established and staffed by the Executive Director and an Analyst. In March 2024 the Executive Director's position was replaced with a Liaison. The Liaison, with the approval and vote of the Panel, amended the Bylaws to reflect the Panel's independence from the Office of the Independent Police Auditor. The amendments to the Bylaws also reflect the responsibilities of the Panel Liaison. The amendment also clarifies other administrative responsibilities and processes to be handled by Panel staff and changes the number of days Fairfax County Police must complete investigations of complaints from 60 days to 90 days.

EQUITY IMPACT:

The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors established the Police Civilian Review Panel (Panel) to enhance police legitimacy and to build and maintain public trust between the Fairfax County Police Department (FCPD), the Board of Supervisors, and the public. The Panel accomplishes this by reviewing completed FCPD investigations into complaints containing allegations of abuse of authority or serious misconduct to ensure accuracy, completeness, thoroughness, objectivity, and impartiality. Abuse of authority or serious misconduct may include use of abusive racial, ethnic, or sexual language or gestures; and harassment or discrimination based on race, color, sexual

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orientation, gender, religion, national origin, marital status, age, familial status, immigration status or disability.

The work of the Panel is directly in line with One Fairfax's goal of achieving community and public safety that are responsive to all residents. One Fairfax's Equity Driver of Community Safety and Justice states, "All people in Fairfax County are entitled to expect that their law enforcement and other public safety departments provide service consistent with the roles defined for them through community involvement and input, and that they should do so in a manner that is fully transparent and accountable to the public, ensures through implicit bias and cultural competency training that all persons are treated equally and that racial, cultural or other profiling does not occur." The Panel's work also aligns with the Countywide Strategic Plan community outcome area of Safety & Security.

After the creation of the Panel, the Board of Supervisors created the Office of the Police Civilian Review Panel (OPCRP) as its own agency to maintain its independence from the Office of the Independent Police Auditor (OIPA). Prior to the creation of the OPCRCP the Panel was supported by the OIPA and had no permanent staff of its own. The establishment of the OPCRCP with its own full-time staff amplifies the work the Panel does to further equity in the community. The full-time staff supports measures like increased training for Panel members, focused outreach to the community, and continuous discussion with FCPD, particularly as it relates to bias-related complaints by community members.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with this item.

ENCLOSED DOCUMENTS:

Attachment 1: Proposed Amendment to the Panel's Bylaws with Track Changes

Attachment 2: Proposed Amendment to the Panel's Bylaws without Track Changes

STAFF:

Thomas Arnold, Deputy County Executive

Craig A. Miles, Police Civilian Review Panel Liaison

ASSIGNED COUNSEL:

Kimberly Baucom, Deputy County Attorney