

The Independent Review Committee for the University of Chicago Police Department

Committee Charge:

The University of Chicago Police Department (UCPD), under the auspices of the University's Department of Safety & Security (DSS), is a professional police department with regular police powers while on duty on the University of Chicago's Hyde Park campus and in its extended patrol area in Hyde Park, Kenwood, North Kenwood, and Woodlawn. Over the years, University police officers have performed a valuable service and demonstrated a commitment to the University community and surrounding neighborhoods.

From time to time, however, complaints have been made about individual incidents or policies. The University has established the Independent Review Committee to help maintain the community's confidence in UCPD. The Committee reviews complaints brought against University police by members of the University community and the public whom UCPD serves if those complaints relate directly or indirectly to issues of excessive force, violation of rights, abusive language, or dereliction of duty. The Committee evaluates UCPD's actions and, when necessary, makes recommendations regarding UCPD's policies and procedures. Each year, the Committee provides a report of all incidents and any recommended changes to policies or procedures for the Provost, President, Vice President and General Counsel, and Vice President for Civic Engagement. The Committee's annual report is public and made available to the campus and community.

The Committee has regularly scheduled meetings to review all UCPD complaint reports and related policy, procedural, and communication issues. The Committee Chair may call additional meetings to review individual incidents or as necessary to produce the annual report.

The Committee is independent from UCPD and DSS. It is in addition to and does not replace DSS/UCPD's internal review and discipline procedures.

UCPD Complaint Review Process:

Members of the University community and the public whom UCPD serves may bring complaints about UCPD's actions to UCPD, to DSS, to the Committee, to the Office of Campus and Student Life, to any member of the Dean-on-Call Program, to the Office for Civic Engagement, or to the Office of the Student Ombudsperson. All complaints will be referred to the DSS's Professional Accountability Unit for investigation.

For each allegation within a complaint, DSS determines whether the allegation is:

1. Unfounded—the allegations are not factually accurate; the alleged conduct did not occur.
2. Exonerated—the alleged conduct did occur but was justified under the circumstances.
3. Sustained—the alleged conduct did occur and was not justified under the circumstances.
4. Not Sustained—the written record of the investigation does not support a determination of whether the alleged conduct occurred. A classification of Not Sustained is used whenever a case involves conflicting stories that are not clearly resolvable on the basis of evidence presented to the Committee.
5. Administratively Closed—no investigation was completed due to the fact that the complainant did not cooperate with the investigation and/or the accused employee was no longer employed at the time of the investigation.

Independent Review Committee Review Procedures:

In reviewing DSS's determinations, the Committee may:

1. Agree with DSS's disposition of the complaint.
2. Identify an issue not raised in the original complaint that is raised in the report record and ask that DSS investigate the issue; the identified issue will be labeled "supplemental."
3. Disagree with disposition of an allegation within a complaint and suggest an alternate disposition.
4. Suggest that DSS and/or UCPD consider different or additional sanctions for University officers involved in an incident.
5. Suggest that UCPD review its procedures and consider amending them to address a particular issue or concern.
6. Request information about an officer's prior record. As part of its review, the Committee may ask for a summary of past disciplinary action against an officer. Also, the Committee may ask for a summary of past commendations an officer has received.
7. Request UCPD procedures related to problems relevant to the complaint under review.

Composition of the Independent Review Committee:

The Committee is appointed by the Provost and consists of three faculty members, one of whom is designated by the Provost as Chair, three students, two staff members, and three community members. Individuals wishing to propose someone for membership to the Committee may contact the Associate Provost for Faculty Affairs.

More information on UCPD and the complaint process is available at http://safety-security.uchicago.edu/police/contact_the_ucpd/complaint_process/