



Syracuse University Community Review Board Annual Report 2022

Letter From the Chair

Dear Syracuse University Community,

On Feb. 24, 2020, Syracuse University contracted with Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison LLP to conduct an independent review of its Department of Public Safety (DPS) following a series of bias-related incidents that occurred on campus in fall 2019 and student protests that followed those incidents in fall 2019 and spring 2020.

On Feb. 22, 2021, The Honorable Loretta E. Lynch of Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison LLP, submitted the "REPORT OF INDEPENDENT COUNSEL TO SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY REGARDING THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY" (Independent Counsel Report). The report recommended the creation of a Community Review Board (CRB) to provide community input and accountability for DPS. The recommendations were implemented by the University and resulted in the creation of the CRB.

This first annual report will review and highlight the findings and conclusions of our annual review in the following three parts:

Part I – Review appeals of Dispositions of Civilian complaints against DPS Employees: This part of the report will discuss the process the University community must follow to file an appeal.

Part II – Review of DPS Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), Trainings, and Key Community-Facing Functions: In this part, we will report on our

assessment of DPS's policies and procedures to ensure they conform with standards of community policing.

Part III – Community Review Board Composition and Overview: This part sets forth our final recommendations for the structure and procedures for the CRB, and outlines the tasks completed by the CRB in its inaugural year. This can serve as a model to other universities seeking to establish their own CRB or similarly situated board.

In closing, we would like to thank all of those who engage with and support our work to ensure transparent and equitable policing on campus. The CRB operates independently from DPS but has an important relationship to further build with DPS. The CRB looks forward to continuing to serve the entire University community in the next academic year.

Sincerely,



Brianna Sclafani

Chair, Community Review Board

Part I: Review Appeals of Dispositions of Civilian Complaints Against DPS Employees

DPS investigates complaints against its employees as part of its internal review process. If the employee or complainant is not satisfied with that outcome, an appeal of the disposition can be filed with the CRB. The CRB shall review the disposition as an independent review of the substantive matter. The CRB is independent from DPS and is not intended to replace DPS's internal review and disciplinary procedures. The following process, as described in the Independent Counsel Report, outlines the steps and procedures involved in an appeal.

1. A community member must file a complaint with the Department of Public Safety.

2. Once the complaint is investigated fully and reaches a final disposition, then an appeal can take place.
3. If either the DPS employee or the complainant is unsatisfied with the disposition, they may submit an appeal form ([found on the CRB website](#)) to the CRB within 14 days of the date they are notified of the results of the investigation. Any appeal not filed within 14 days shall be dismissed.
4. The CRB shall convene a confidential meeting to hear and deliberate on an appeal within 30 days of the date it receives the notice of appeal form.
5. The Chief of DPS or the Chief's designee shall address the CRB regarding the investigation and the basis for the disposition. The complainant and the DPS employee shall be permitted to address the CRB, should either desire to do so.
6. In reviewing a disposition, the CRB may:
 - a. agree with the disposition;
 - b. disagree with the disposition and recommend an alternative disposition; or
 - c. recommend reopening the investigation.
7. The CRB shall submit a brief written analysis of each complaint and investigation and its recommendation to the Chancellor or the Chancellor's designee for a final determination as to the disposition within 14 days of the appeal hearing. The CRB shall simultaneously notify the parties of its recommendation. If the CRB's recommendation is not unanimous, the recommendation shall state the number of members who dissented and the basis for the dissent.
8. The Chancellor or the Chancellor's designee shall review the CRB's recommendation and make a final decision within 15 days of receipt.

In 2021, the Department of Public Safety conducted one internal investigation involving a non-sworn member of the Department. The complaint was sustained by DPS, resulting in the termination of the non-sworn employee. The CRB also received one notice of an appeal that was submitted to the CRB via the online form. However, the complainant failed to file an initial complaint with the Department of Public Safety. This is the first step in the appeal process. The complainant was directed to the Department of Public Safety to file an initial formal complaint; however, no complaint was filed with DPS.

Part II – Review of DPS Standard Operating Procedures, Trainings and Key Community-Facing Functions

The CRB also has the power to review and comment on any prospective SOP's and trainings. At the CRB's discretion, topics of review can include: DPS investigations completed during the CRB's annual term (July 1-June 30), including any patterns of conduct that may be observed in those complaints and investigations; DPS files regarding public comments from civilian members of the University community concerning DPS employees, including any patterns of conduct that may be observed in those files; DPS Weapons Use Reports that were filed during the CRB's term; Bias-Related Incident Reports for investigations completed during the CRB's term; as well as additional topics of concern that the CRB identifies or that are raised by the University community.

The topics outlined above were not given substantive focus this year, as the CRB was in its inaugural year and focused on establishing policies and procedures for proper review of an appeal. In the CRB's next term, it will focus more broadly on some of the topics referenced above.

Part III – Community Review Board Composition and Overview

CRB STRUCTURE AND MISSION:

The mission of the CRB is to ensure transparency and increase an equitable approach to safety and security on campus. The CRB is independent from DPS and is not intended to replace DPS's internal review and disciplinary procedures.

The CRB comprises 11 members: three undergraduate students, one graduate student, one law student, two faculty members, two staff members and two administrators.

CURRENT CRB MEMBERS:

Brianna C. Sclafani, Graduate Student, College of Law (chair)

Liz Green, Executive Director, Online Student Success (vice-chair)

Adia Santos, Undergraduate Student, College of Arts and Sciences and Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs

Alexandra Zoey Pollack, Undergraduate Student, Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs

Hunter Stanley Luke, Undergraduate Student, College of Arts and Sciences and Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs

Yusuf S. Abdul-Qadir, Graduate Student, School of Information Studies

Corrine B. Zoli, Research Faculty, Forensic Science Institute

Milton R. Laufer, Director and Associate Professor, School of Music, College of Visual and Performing Arts

Guilherme Maurell Costa, Interim Senior Vice President and University Secretary, Office of the Board of Trustees

Keith L. Henderson, Chief Compliance Officer, Office of University Counsel

Theresa A. Jenkins, Academic Advisor, Newhouse School of Public Communications

COVID-19 AND THE OPERATIONS OF THE CRB:

The COVID-19 pandemic created challenges in 2021 and 2022 as we worked to create the CRB. All meetings leading up to the Annual Forum were conducted via Zoom due to the pandemic. The CRB has met monthly to create a sound structure regarding the reporting and investigation of internal affairs complaints. Creating the foundational operations of the CRB has been impactful for each member. The CRB is confident that the structure that has been operationalized will help position it for sustainable success.

The CRB convened and held its first meeting on June 28, 2021. It has held monthly Zoom meetings since this first meeting (eight meetings total, not including the Annual Forum). Due to COVID-19, the Board met for the first time in person at the Annual Forum held on April 21, 2022.

ADVISORS:

The CRB has two advisors. Bethaida "Bea" González, former vice president for community engagement, former special assistant to the Chancellor and former Dean of University College, is the senior advisor to the CRB. Melvin "Tony" Perez,

former chief of public safety for Monroe Community College, serves as the CRB's expert law enforcement consultant.

TASKS COMPLETED BY CRB:

1. Created a webpage which outlines the DPS complaint process and subsequent appeal process performed by the Community Review Board.
2. Hosted regular monthly meetings to keep board members apprised of current issues.
3. Developed an online form for appeal submissions and a dedicated email account to facilitate communications regarding appeals filed with the CRB.
4. Drafted and implemented a confidentiality and conflict of interest policy for all CRB members.
5. CRB members were included in the Department of Public Safety's new chief interview and selection process.
6. Provided Chief Craig Stone and Deputy Chief John Sardino with recommendations to amended "Internal Affairs" language in it's SOP that clearly outlines the standard of proof for completed investigations.
7. Hosted Annual Forum on April 21, 2022, in the Melanie Gray Courtroom in the College of Law, where CRB members outlined their mission and role. The University community was able to ask questions in person or via Zoom chat.