



Commission on Police Practices

Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CPP Response to SDPD Complaint Investigation System Reforms

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On August 15th, 2025, the San Diego Police Department (SDPD) issued its formal response, agreeing to 11 of 14 recommendations made by the Commission on Police Practices (CPP) that focused on making the complaint process more transparent, accessible, and thorough. The CPP also advocated for several changes focused on modernizing SDPD's online complaint portal. SDPD moved quickly to make improvements as these changes significantly reduce access barriers and make it easier for the public to file and follow complaints. The complaint portal now supports multiple language translations and no longer limits the length of complaint narratives. Complainants also receive confirmation emails with links to upload additional media and track their case status, while mobile usability issues and evidence-upload barriers have been resolved.

Important Recommendations SDPD Agreed to:

1. **Limit informal complaint resolution** to Category II (less serious) allegations.
2. **Develop a standardized script** for Internal Affairs (IA) investigators to explain complaint options neutrally to complainants.
3. **Provide complainants and CPP copies of memos** when a complaint is classified as "frivolous."
4. **Notify complainants and CPP in writing** when complaints are classified as "miscellaneous."
5. **Make every effort to interview complainants**, even if the written complaint seems sufficient.
6. **Promptly secure and analyze all evidence**, including interviews and records, for complaint investigations.
7. **Conduct investigative interviews with open-ended, neutral questions** and require IA investigators to attend training on proper interview techniques.
8. **Use interviews to clarify discrepancies** and conduct credibility analyses of witness statements against other evidence.
9. **Prohibit conflicts of interest** by ensuring no officer investigates a case where they have a personal, familial, or professional connection.
10. **Develop and monitor timelines** for completing investigations, with audits to ensure deadlines are met and corrective action taken.
11. **Require IA investigators to confirm all allegations verbatim with complainants** at the close of interviews. (SDPD agreed to confirmation but declined a separate systemic audit, citing existing review layers.)

The Commission remains interested in a complaint system that is more transparent, accountable, and accessible to the public. We will continue advocating for stronger reforms and monitoring implementation to build lasting community trust. Together, these changes mark meaningful progress toward a more transparent, accountable, and accessible complaint investigation system.

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