



ST. PETERSBURG POLICE DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

**2024 ANNUAL
REPORT**



Chief's Comments

The St. Petersburg Police Department is a full-service law enforcement agency serving the 265,602 City of St. Petersburg citizens and the thousands who visit each year.



The police department is authorized to have 602 sworn employees and 227 full-time, non-sworn employees who contribute to daily operations. The department's full-time workforce is supplemented by the dedicated work of 40 citizen volunteers. Police services are provided for an area covering 62 square miles and traversed by 1,047.75 miles of roadway. The department also provides marine police services within 206 linear miles of shoreline.

When misconduct of an employee is reported, it is investigated by a supervisor or, in the case of serious allegations, by the Office of Professional Standards Division. The 2024 Office of Professional Standards Annual Report illustrates the number and type of concerns the community and department members raised and compares our efforts with previous years.

The St. Petersburg Police Department received 518,018 telephone calls from the public and responded to 164,603 calls for service. The department issued 24,240 traffic citations and made 10,862 arrests, which included 1,270 drug arrests. Citizens initiated twelve complaints against employees in 2024 that resulted in formal investigations by the Office of Professional Standards or as a Bureau Investigation, four more than in 2023.

During 2024, there were 135 cruiser crashes compared with 86 in 2023. Of those, 61 were found to be preventable. Also, in 2024, employees initiated eight pursuits; three of the pursuits were found to be compliant with departmental policies, and five were found to not be compliant with departmental policies. The department has a very strict policy governing when a pursuit can occur, and we require our employees to adhere to specific procedures.

The department welcomes community oversight and involvement. The newly rebranded Citizen Policy Review Committee (CPRC) reviews department policies and operations quarterly, with any recommended changes submitted directly to the chief's office. Also, in 2023, the department received 315 letters and calls of appreciation from citizens, thanking department employees for their service and consideration.

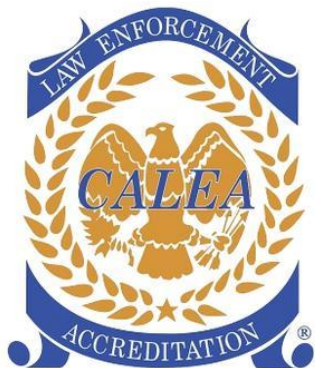
Each year, the police profession continues to evolve and change. The department must be prepared to adapt to these changes if we are to be successful in our goals to proactively address crime trends and traffic safety issues, implement new law enforcement technology and techniques, and attract and retain qualified and diverse professionals. The department is an outstanding organization; one that values our employees and community partners while working to improve the quality of life for the citizens it serves.

Philosophy

The St. Petersburg Police Department provides police services by adhering to the community policing model and working in partnership with the community to solve mutually identified problems. While engaged with and cognizant of the community's concerns, the department works to provide efficient, effective, and courteous police service that promotes public safety, protects the rights of all citizens, and improves the quality of life in St. Petersburg while upholding the highest standards of the law enforcement profession.

The mission of the St. Petersburg Police Department is to deliver professional police services, to protect and ensure the safety of the community, to enforce laws and preserve the peace, and to protect the rights of all citizens by policing with the tenets of loyalty, integrity, and honor

The St. Petersburg Police Department has been accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies since 1985 and by the Commission for Florida Law Enforcement Accreditation. The department is committed to law enforcement excellence and protecting the safety and rights of the citizens it serves.



I. Introduction

Police officers are expected to diagnose situations they encounter within a few moments and take the most appropriate course of action. Most encounters with citizens result in positive experiences, in part due to the police officer's training, experience, and ethical character. In the face of danger, the potential for complications increases; however, the majority of these encounters are resolved without complaint.

In a limited number of situations, officers clearly misuse their authority. In other situations, citizens may believe police officers have exceeded their authority or have simply not treated them properly. Therefore, it is of critical importance to have a system in place that allows citizens to bring these concerns to the attention of police managers. To be effective, this system must achieve at least three important objectives.

First, the system must create a sense of confidence among citizens that their complaints will be taken seriously, and properly investigated and corrective measures will be taken when needed. Most police/citizen interactions occur without witnesses who are directly involved in the encounters. Without an effective system for addressing citizen complaints or concerns, the police department will not receive the feedback needed to ensure that quality service is provided and that the department members are using their authority appropriately.

Second, the system must cultivate a sense of confidence for the police officers that complaints will be investigated within a reasonable time frame and that they will be treated fairly and consistently. Police officers have a very difficult job; to do it effectively, they must be supported when operating within the law and departmental policy framework. Although most complaints are lodged because of the sincere belief that an officer's behavior was not appropriate, the system will occasionally be used as revenge toward the officer or as leverage for criminal charges.

Third, the system must provide transparency to all involved stakeholders, including city officials, department members, and the community. This information is a critical measure of the department's responsiveness to the community and the efforts made to provide guidance and direction to police employees in their encounters with citizens. It is also valuable in identifying areas where policy and training changes might be made. The achievement of all these objectives is important to the successful functioning of a system designed to ensure that police employees are carrying out their responsibilities to the community in the most appropriate manner possible.

The St. Petersburg Police Department has established a method to meet these objectives through the Office of Professional Standards (OPS), which reports directly to the chief of police. This office consists of a major, four detective investigators, an operations analyst specialist responsible for Staff Inspections, and one administrative secretary. Under the direction of the chief of police,

the Office of Professional Standards is responsible for investigating complaints of employee misconduct from both inside and outside the department. The Office of Professional Standards also has the responsibility for monitoring investigations of reported employee misconduct that are conducted by an employee's supervisor.

The Staff Inspections Unit conducts various inspections based on different timetables, as required, of all department functions and applicable policies, procedures, administrative and operational activities, and resources in an effort to ensure accountability and maintain integrity. Through staff inspections, the chief of police is provided objective information regarding the efficiency and effectiveness of department components, recommendations for the modification, revision, or creation of policies, procedures, and practices, and an evaluation of available resources to meet agency goals.

This annual report has two purposes. First, it provides the community with information on the results of investigations of citizen and department initiated complaints. It contains information over a five-year period from 2020 through 2024 to provide a basis for comparison. Second, the report is designed to provide greater insight into efforts by the city, police department, and citizen volunteers to meet the objectives described above.

The report achieves its purpose by describing how a citizen can file a complaint or compliment with the department and illustrating the process of how the Office of Professional Standards functions. This report examines community oversight of police policies and operations. It addresses commendations and investigations conducted by the Office of Professional Standards and supervisory personnel over the past five years, and it reviews complaints from an organizational and employee perspective.

II. The Process

MAKING A COMPLAINT

Complaints against employees of the St. Petersburg Police Department can be made in several ways. All employees of the police department have the responsibility of receiving a complaint, so the process can be initiated any time a citizen chooses. A complaint may be lodged against the department or any employee, in person, by e-mail, by telephone, by mail, or via the online form on the police department's website using the information provided in Appendix D. When complaints are initiated outside the regular business hours of Monday through Friday, 7:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., an on-duty supervisor will usually take the information to the watch commander or manager. The watch commander or manager may direct a supervisor to investigate the complaint or refer the complaint to the Office of Professional Standards.

It is the policy of the St. Petersburg Police Department that complaints will be handled at the appropriate organizational level and as quickly as possible. If the supervisor who initially received the complaint can investigate it, they will do so upon the watch commander's approval and document the actions taken. This information will be forwarded to the Office of Professional Standards, and the citizen will be notified of the findings of the investigation. Examples of complaints commonly handled at the supervisory level include improper procedures and discourtesy. Investigations handled by the employee's supervisory chain of command are categorized as Bureau Investigations. If the complaint is of a more serious nature, it is forwarded to the Office of Professional Standards for investigation. The Office of Professional Standards will normally investigate all allegations of a serious nature, including unlawful or excessive force, the administrative aspects of criminal misconduct, bias-based allegations, and cases of officer-involved shootings. These investigations are categorized as Office of Professional Standards (OPS) Investigations.

OFFICE OF PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS (OPS) INVESTIGATIONS

All Office of Professional Standards Investigations must follow guidelines established by state laws and departmental policy. The Law Enforcement Officers' and Correctional Officers' Rights is a Florida State Statute, 112.532, that dictates how these investigations are conducted. These investigations are considered confidential until the investigation is completed. (See Appendix E for a copy of the Law Enforcement Officers' and Correctional Officers' Rights.) Anonymous complaints are handled at the discretion of the chief of police. When a complaint is investigated by the Office of Professional Standards, the following procedures are followed:

- A. The Office of Professional Standards Investigator contacts the complainant and arranges an appointment for an interview. Generally, the interview is conducted at the Police Department's Office of Professional Standards office. However, at times, interviews can be conducted at a complainant's home, business, or another neutral location. Interviews can also be conducted at the Pinellas County Jail; therefore, incarceration does not preclude a citizen's complaint from being heard.
- B. The complainant is placed under oath, and a sworn statement is taken from that person. This statement is audio recorded.
- C. After the recorded statement is transcribed, the complainant is given an opportunity to review the statement for accuracy and to sign it.
- D. The same procedure is used for all witnesses and officers/employees involved in the case. All statements are recorded, transcribed, and assembled in a case file to be reviewed by the chief of police.
- E. If the evidence indicates there might have been improper conduct, the chief of police can direct the matter to be reviewed by a Command Review Board. This Board consists of the three assistant chiefs and the chief of police
- F. Once the case has been reviewed by the Command Review Board, a decision is made as to whether the officer/employee acted properly or not. Each allegation will receive one of five possible findings by the Board:
 - 1) Exonerated – The acts that provided the basis for the complaint or allegation occurred; however, the investigation revealed they were justified, lawful, and proper.
 - 2) Not Sustained – The investigation failed to disclose sufficient evidence to prove the allegations in the complaint.
 - 3) Sustained – The investigation disclosed sufficient evidence to prove clearly the allegations in the complaint.
 - 4) Unfounded – The investigation conclusively proved the act or acts complained of did not occur.
 - 5) Not Involved – The investigation disclosed the affected employee was not involved in the reported misconduct.
- G. If the Board sustains the allegation, the second phase of the process is to decide on the appropriate disciplinary or corrective action. Disciplinary action is guided by the department's philosophy contained in General Order I-04; Discipline Authority.

- H. At the conclusion of the Board's action, the complainant and the accused officer/employee are notified in writing of the Board's decision on the allegation and the type of discipline or corrective action that was administered, if any.
- I. The complainant may come to the department to review the case once all criminal charges (if any) have been investigated and resolved and the administrative investigation has been completed.

BUREAU INVESTIGATIONS

Complaints investigated by the officer's or employee's supervisor (Bureau Investigations) generally follow similar steps, except the statements are typically not audio recorded and transcribed (unless the accused officer requests a live interview). In most Bureau Investigations, the supervisor interviews the complainant and witnesses and then provides written questions to the accused officer/employee who provides a written response. The supervisor determines the findings and then makes recommendations that are reviewed by the various levels of supervision and management in the officer's/employee's chain of command, with a final review by the chief of police.

INFORMATION ONLY

Another classification of cases is known as Information Only. An Information Only case is the documentation of an incident in which a citizen requests information regarding an employee's behavior and/or actions. These cases may require several hours of exploration in order to determine what occurred. Once it is determined the incident does not involve misconduct by an employee, it is filed for informational purposes after an explanation has been furnished to the inquiring party. Many inquiries include questions concerning the legality of an officer's/employee's actions that need to be dealt with within the judicial system.

The Office of Professional Standards also reviews and archives all vehicle crashes and pursuits, maintains a liaison with the City Legal Department, and conducts inquiries into incidents involving St. Petersburg Police Department employees that result in civil litigation.

III. Community Oversight

In addition to the Office of Professional Standards investigative process, there are additional means of oversight of police policies and operations.

A. The first is through the elected mayor and City Council. The chief of police reports to the mayor of the city. Department policy and issues are regularly reviewed by the mayor and council through the budgetary process, special reports that are prepared on department operations, and routine administrative oversight procedures. Citizens can raise concerns directly with the mayor and members of City Council.

B. A second means of community oversight is through the news media. The St. Petersburg Police Department is in constant contact with reporters from various news media outlets, providing official information concerning police activities.

C. A third means of community oversight is the police department's crime prevention program and regular interactions with the city's neighborhood associations. The department encourages employees to be in regular contact with citizens who are interested in police performance. Also, the State of Florida Public Records Law allows anyone to review completed internal and criminal investigative cases if there are no charges pending.

D. The **Civilian Policy Advisory Committee** (established in 1991; formerly called The Citizen Police Review Committee) provides input and some measure of oversight into department policy and operations.

1. The Civilian Policy Advisory Committee updates were adopted after legislative changes in the State of Florida created mandatory guidelines for civilian oversight of police. The CPAC reviews department policies and procedures related to cases involving policies addressing the use of force, pursuits, and other high-liability areas of the police department. Completed Office of Professional Standards Investigations and Bureau Investigations are provided to help inform their review of these policies.

2. The CPAC holds quarterly public meetings to discuss and analyze policies. They then provide recommendations for any policy changes to the chief of police. Any approved changes are forwarded to the Professional Compliance Unit for action. The CPAC model has changed dramatically from the previous version and will be evaluated on its effectiveness over the next year. Membership in the CPAC is voluntary, and the committee consists of three to seven members, appointed by the chief of police. At least one member is a retired law enforcement officer.

IV. Biased Policing

The Office of Professional Standards annually reviews agency policies and practices, including traffic stop procedures, searches, asset seizure and forfeiture, interviews and interrogations, and citizen concerns regarding biased policing, including any corrective measures taken. Any revisions or modifications needed regarding policy and procedure are submitted for consideration and appropriate action. This information is then documented in the OPS Annual Report.

In 2024, the policies reviewed and revised relating to OPS and/or biased policing were:

- GO II-02, Motor Vehicle Crash Review Process
- GO II-38, Unlawful or Improper Bias
- GO II-42, Use of Force
- GO II-43, Lethal and Less-Lethal Weapons
- GO III-40, Mobile Video Recording Systems
- GO III-17, Pursuit of a Vehicle or Boat
- V5-01, Persons Suffering From Mental Illness

Upon OPS review of these revised policies, it was concluded that they were compliant with the best practices identified.

The Office of Professional Standards received twenty-seven (27) bias-based complaints from citizens in 2024, compared to twenty-four (24) bias-based complaints investigated in 2023. Each incident was investigated, and the individuals were contacted by supervisors of the officers/employees involved or by detectives from the Office of Professional Standards. Based on the information gathered during the investigations and the circumstances surrounding these arrests/incidents, twenty-four (24) complaints of biased policing were unfounded or not sustained, and no corrective action was needed. In the remaining three (3) cases, the investigation determined there was bias on the part of the officer/employee. All three cases centered around race as the element of bias. In one case, two officers engaged in text messages that were reported to include racial bias. They both resigned but would have been terminated at the conclusion of the investigation. In a second case, an officer made racially sensitive statements in the police building that were overheard and reported by other officers. The officer who made the statements was terminated. In the final case, a detective made a statement in a common work area that offended other detectives. She was sustained for the complaint and issued a Memorandum of Counseling.

Appendix C of this report contains a comprehensive table of all biased-based complaints and investigations conducted in 2024

V. Personnel Early Intervention System

The Office of Professional Standards utilizes a Personnel Early Intervention System to monitor employees who receive multiple complaints, engage in multiple uses of force, and/or are involved in multiple vehicle crashes or pursuits. When employees are identified, the early intervention reports are referred to their chain of command to review the complaints. The employee’s supervisor reports their findings back to the Office of Professional Standards. During 2024, no employees required corrective action or additional training after a review resulting from the Personnel Early Intervention System.

During 2024, twenty-two (22) employees met the criteria for referral under the Personnel Early Intervention System (PIR). Each of those was a result of having ten (10) or more documented force incidents within a six-month period. The results of the supervisor review were documented and sent back to the Office of Professional Standards via their chain of command. In each of the reviews in 2024, the use of force used by officers/employees was approved and properly documented. There was a significant increase in the total number of referrals in 2024. This increase lines up with the increase observed in the use of force incidents for 2024 as well (see Table 6 in section VII – Use of Force). As would be expected, with an increase in use of force incidents, the likelihood of increased PIR referrals would also follow. In addition, the officers/employees being reviewed are generally in very active units like Downtown Deployment and Field Training or are in assignments where force is more likely to be used, as is the case for K-9 handlers.

The Personnel Early Intervention System is managed by the Office of Professional Standards major, which closely monitors alerts and subsequent reviews by the respective supervisors. At this time, it appears the system is working as designed.

TABLE 1

PERSONNEL INTERVENTIONS 2020-2024					
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Total	3	6	7	9	22

VI. Commendations, Complaints and Investigations

COMMENDATIONS

The St. Petersburg Police Department welcomes positive comments about the department and its employees. They can be received from citizens or initiated internally by a supervisor or other members of the department.

During 2024, the St. Petersburg Police Department received 315 documented unsolicited letters, emails, and telephone calls of appreciation from citizens, thanking department employees for outstanding service and consideration. The department initiated 418 commendations to employees for actions arising from heroism to outstanding investigations.

TABLE 2

COMMENDATIONS 2020 - 2024					
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Citizen Initiated Commendations	225	231	412	387	315
Departmental Commendations*	171	181	297	377	418

*Includes Departmental Award nominations

Beginning in 2022, commendation data reflects the number of employees receiving commendations compared to previous years, when a commendation for multiple employees would have counted as one commendation.

COMPLAINTS AND INVESTIGATIONS

Administrative Investigations

In 2024, the Office of Professional Standards coordinated and/or investigated 41 Administrative Investigations, which are classified as Bureau Investigations or Office of Professional Standards Investigations. Citizens initiated twelve of these cases. 29 cases were initiated internally, in which another employee reported misconduct by another member of the department. Misconduct was sustained in 45 allegations. All cases were reviewed by each employee's chain of command (See Table 3).

In 2024 there were four investigations of note investigated by the Office of Professional Standards.

- The first investigation involved a civilian supervisor sharing sexually explicit photos with other employees. The supervisor resigned prior to the Command Review Board. Otherwise, he would have been terminated.
- The second investigation involved an officer deploying his taser on a suspect already lying prone on the ground. The Command Review Board sustained him for improper procedures and suspended him for 1 day.
- The third investigation involved an officer discharging his firearm at a suspect, injuring him. The Review Board determined that the discharge of the firearm was justified.
- The fourth investigation involved the arrest of an officer for a domestic incident that occurred off-duty. Although the criminal case was dismissed, the officer was found sustained for unlawful conduct and improper procedures. He was subsequently suspended for 150 hours by the Command Review Board.

TABLE 3

ADMINISTRATIVE INVESTIGATIONS 2020 - 2024					
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Citizen Initiated Cases	4	3	5	8	12
Department Initiated Cases	25	31	27	21	29
Total Cases	29	34	32	29	41
Total Sustained Allegations*	25	25	42	23	45

*The total number of allegations is not the total number of cases. One case may have multiple allegations of misconduct. In addition, cases with sustained allegations may have been initiated in a prior year.

Citizen-Initiated Cases

Citizen-initiated complaints are assessed by the Office of Professional Standards and the Chief of Police. The cases are either investigated by the Office of Professional Standards or assigned for investigation by the employee's immediate supervisor at the Bureau level. In 2024, citizens initiated twelve complaints, four more than in 2023 (See Table 3 on the previous page).

The following table breaks down the specific allegations made in these cases by type, as well as the number of allegations that were sustained in 2024.

TABLE 4

CITIZEN INITIATED CASE ALLEGATIONS 2020 – 2024						
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Sustained in 2024
Conduct Unbecoming an Employee	3	2	0	2	2	1
Discourtesy	1	0	2	1	0	0
Improper Procedures	0	2	5	1	4	2
Inefficiency	0	1	2	4	5	4
Unlawful or Improper Conduct**	1	0	0	0	0	0
Unlawful Speed	-	-	-	1	0	0
Unnecessary Force	5	0	1	0	2	0
Total*	10	5	10	9	16	8

*The total number of allegations is not the total number of cases. One case may have more than one allegation of misconduct. Sustained allegations may have been initiated in prior years depending on the length of the investigation and scheduling of the Command Review Board.

** Conviction or Guilt of a Misdemeanor or Felony was replaced with Unlawful or Improper Conduct in 2024.

Department-Initiated Cases

Department-initiated cases are assessed and investigated in the same manner as citizen-initiated complaints. In 2024, the department initiated 29 complaints, which is eight more than in 2023 (See Table 2 above). The following table shows an individual breakdown of the specific allegations made within these 29 cases.

TABLE 5

DEPARTMENT INITIATED CASE ALLEGATIONS 2020 - 2024						
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Sustained in 2024
Absent Without Leave	0	0	2	0	3	3
Abuse of Sick Time/Chronic Absenteeism	2	1	2	4	1	1
Chronic Offender of the Code of Conduct	1	0	2	1	2	1
Conduct Unbecoming an Employee	3	7	2	3	10	6
Discharge of Weapon/Person	7	3	3	5	1	0
Discourtesy	1	1	1	0	1	0
Falsification	1	4	3	0	5	1
Improper Procedures	9	8	5	5	10	6
Improper Pursuit	-	-	-	2	4	1
Inefficiency	8	9	9	4	15	7
Insubordination	2	1	0	1	0	0
Negligent Loss/Damage to City Property	1	0	2	1	0	0
Proficiency Failure	-	-	-	1	0	0
Tardiness	9	0	1	0	0	0
Unnecessary Force	2	2	0	1	2	1
Unlawful or Improper Conduct***	3	2	2	2	7	6
Violation of the Code of Conduct	1	4	0	0	1	1
TOTAL*	41	42	29	30	63	34

*The total number of allegations is not the total number of cases. One case may have more than one allegation of misconduct

** Sustained allegations may have been initiated in prior years depending on the length of investigation and scheduling of the Command Review Board.

*** Conviction or Guilt of a Misdemeanor or Felony was replaced with Unlawful or Improper Conduct in 2024.

VII. Use of Force

The St. Petersburg Police Department provides training for all members in the many varied methods of force that could be utilized when affecting an arrest or defending oneself or another. Use of force may range from a simple takedown maneuver to the discharge of a firearm. General Order II-42, *Use of Force*, states, “It is the policy of the St. Petersburg Police Department that the use of force in any situation will follow applicable laws and is limited to the force which is needed to halt aggressive actions and/or to overcome specific resistance by the subject in order to accomplish a lawful objective.” The use of force is divided into two categories: deadly and non-deadly.

Officers are trained and issued weapons for use in the protection of themselves and others from death or injury. These weapons include a Glock handgun, an ASP baton, an ASR chemical spray, a Taser Energy Weapon (TEW), and the non-lethal PepperBall system. Other methods of force include weaponless physical force. Whenever force is used beyond simple handcuffing and/or when an injury occurs, including the use of the issued weapons, a *Use of Force Report* is completed and sent through the chain of command up to and including the district major.

In 2024, there were 1,418 use of force incidents which were reviewed by the officer’s chain of command and filed in the Office of Professional Standards. This is an increase from 1,147 use of force incidents in 2023.

Each TEW deployment, just like other types of force, is reviewed by the officer’s chain of command as well as the Office of Professional Standards, and each of the deployments was determined to be within department policy. Use of Force Reports are also completed for pointing the Taser Energy Weapon (TEW) or a firearm at a person. TEW use was up 85% compared to 2023, and the pointing of a TEW was up 73% compared to 2023.

In 2024, there were 251 incidents in which an officer pointed a firearm at an individual and one (1) discharge of a firearm at a person. Also, in 2024, there was only one (1) incident in which an ASP baton was used and 74 incidents in which ASR spray was utilized. The ASP baton continues to be seldom used, and it is no longer being issued to new officers. The use of ASR spray decreased by 11% compared to 2023.

An analysis of the use of force statistics for St. Petersburg Police Department for 2024 was compared to the same statistics for 2023. This review was conducted to evaluate the effectiveness and appropriateness of the force being used and to address any training needs for the officers of the St. Petersburg Police Department.

TABLE 6

TYPE OF FORCE USED COMPARISON 2020 - 2024									
	2020	var	2021	var	2022	var	2023	var	2024
ASP Baton	2	100%	4	-50%	2	50%	3	-67%	1
ASR Spray	70	-21%	55	36%	75	11%	83	-11%	74
Firearm Pointed	126	68%	212	10%	234	6%	247	2%	251
Firearm Discharge	10	-40%	6	17%	7	43%	10	-90%	1
PepperBall Discharge							1	100%	2
PepperBall Pointed							2	-50%	1
Hobble Restraint	29	28%	37	-59%	15	167%	40	-55%	18
K-9 Bite	30	13%	34	-12%	30	17%	35	-37%	22
Kick	0	%	0	%	0	100%	1	0%	1
Knee Strike	7	-57%	3	33%	4	-50%	2	0%	2
Pressure Point	6	0%	6	17%	7	-14%	6	-17%	5
Punch	8	-38%	5	-40%	3	-33%	2	0%	2
Take Down	142	19%	169	-9%	153	-7%	143	20%	172
TEW Pointed	49	49%	73	-33%	49	120%	108	73%	187
TEW Discharge	93	2%	95	-22%	74	58%	117	85%	216
Use of Force Totals	729	39%	1014	3%	1040	10%	1147	24%	1418
Firearm Discharge									
	2020	var	2021	var	2022	var	2023	var	2024
Accidental	0	%	2	-50%	1	0%	1	-100%	0
Intentional/Animal	3	-67%	1	200%	3	33%	4	-75%	1
Intentional/Person	7	-57%	3	0%	3	67%	5	-80%	1
Discharge Total	10	-40%	6	17%	7	43%	10	-80%	2

Note: Use of Force Incidents may include more than one type of force used.

KEY POINTS

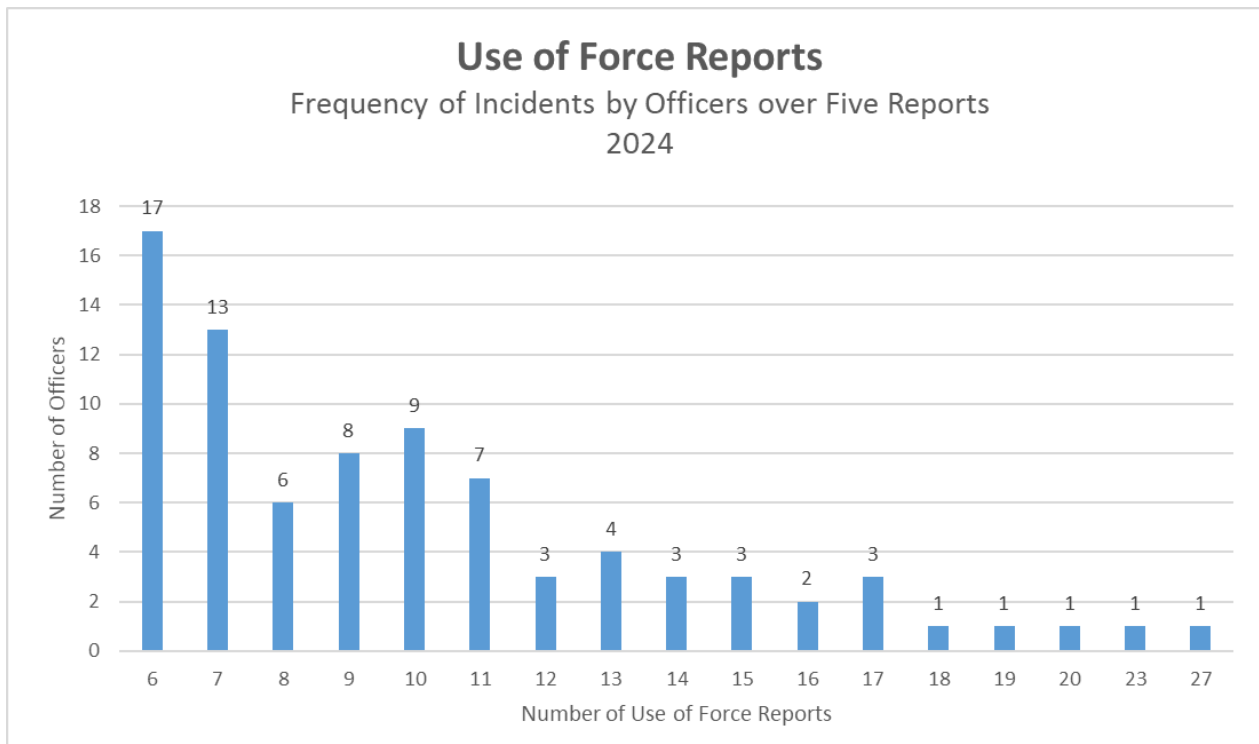
Overall, use of force totals increased by 24% year over year. Officers are trained annually in the use of force, and training emphasizes that using force is the last option, still recognizing that response to an active aggressor must be immediate and effective for the safety of the officers and others who may be involved. The most significant increase in force used over the past two years has been with the Taser Energy Weapon (TEW). The department transitioned to a new model of the weapon, as the lifecycle of the older model had ended. The new TEW model has been found to be more effective and easier for the officers to deploy when needed. Since the transition to the new TEW model, its use by officers has greatly increased over the past two years.

The department continues to reinforce the concept that punches are only to be used as a defensive measure if an officer is under attack or, on rare occasions, utilized as strikes to forearms or shoulders in accordance with training to encourage a suspect to release their grip on an object. As can be seen in the chart above, the use of punches as a use of force continues to remain very low, with two (2) in 2023 and 2024.

The department also continues to implement and encourage the “Park Walk and Talk” concept throughout the city to build better relationships with the citizens we serve.

The Office of Professional Standards investigated two Department-initiated complaints of unnecessary or improper use of force in 2024, one more investigation than in 2023. In both cases, the allegation of unnecessary force was not sustained; however, one officer was sustained for the improper use of the TEW during the Command Review Board. A review of use of force statistics in 2024 indicates officers are using the appropriate level of force, as they have been trained, and are properly documenting said use of force.

The following graph illustrates the number of times officers completed Use of Force Reports more than five (5) times during 2024. 83 officers completed a Use of Force Report more than five times during 2024, compared to 65 officers in 2023. Thirty officers completed a Use of Force Report more than ten times (compared to eleven officers in 2023).



USE OF FIREARMS

The St. Petersburg Police Department provides firearms training on a semiannual basis, and the officers are provided with the resources to practice every month. The use of firearms is authorized when all other means of defense have failed, and there is a reasonable belief that action is necessary to defend human life or to prevent great bodily harm. All discharges of firearms, either intentional, accidental, or at a dangerous animal, will be investigated/reviewed by the Office of Professional Standards. They are broken down as follows:

TABLE 7

FIREARM DISCHARGE INCIDENTS 2020 - 2024					
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Accidental	0	2	1	1	0
Intentional/Vicious Animal	3	1	3	4	1
Intentional/Person	2*	3	3	5	1
Total Discharge Cases	5	6	7	10	2

*Involves more than one officer firing their weapon during an incident

Intentional/Vicious Animals (1 incident/1 officer)

1. On January 20th, 2024, officers responded to an in-progress residential burglary. Upon arrival, the officers observed a civilian fighting with multiple aggressive dogs. Officers attempted to use fire extinguishers and a pepper ball gun with no effect on two of the dogs. One of the officers shot a total of two dogs. The shootings were determined to be justified.

Intentional/Person (1 incident/1 officer)

1. On March 30th, 2024, officers responded to a call of two subjects exchanging gunfire at the Shadyside Market, 4200 15th Avenue S. While in the area, officers located one of the suspected shooters. The suspect ran and pointed a gun at the officers. One officer returned fire, striking the suspect. The shooting was determined to be justified.

USE OF FORCE TRAINING

In 2024, the Training Division provided the following training on various topics involving the use of force:

- **Active Assailant** - The division provided 1,656 hours of training to refresh the rapid response procedures in the context of an Active Assailant Event with a focus on solo officer response. Additionally, the training reviewed and practiced deliberate search techniques for an active assailant response. Students were introduced to the Pinellas Blue Box electronic lock system for gaining access to Pinellas County Schools in the event of a crisis.

- **Rifle Training** - The division provided 168 hours of training for new rifle carriers and 856 hours of re-certification training for the sworn officer in the use and deployment of the AR15 weapons platform.

- **Weapons Qualifications and Firearms Training** - The division provided 2,240 hours of training related to safe firearms handling, basic shooting skills, moving while shooting, using cover, and firearms qualification under the new 2023 FDLE Firearms Standards. Officers also trained in the use of hand-held and weapon-mounted flashlights during training.

- **Ti Force Simulator** - The division provided direct training to chosen individual officers on the Ti Force Simulator, a virtual and augmented reality training system. The simulator allows officers to face a wide variety of life-like scenarios employing realistic simulated weapons. The instructor can influence the outcome of the scenario based on verbal commands or other behavior demonstrated by the officer. After each scenario, a high-liability instructor debriefs the participating officer. The officer is expected to be able to articulate justification for any use of force.

- **Taser transition** - The Taser Energy Weapon is a less-lethal weapon supplied by the Department to reduce the potential for injury to an officer, a person the officer may be taking into custody, and innocent bystanders. The agency transitioned to a new model, the Axon Taser Energy Weapon 10. The agency conducted 4,504 hours of training to all officers.

ANNUAL ANALYSIS OF THE USE OF FORCE ACTIVITIES, POLICIES, AND PRACTICES

An analysis of the use of force activities, policies, and practices, including pursuit policies, pursuit reports, and reporting procedures, did result in changes of policy or procedure distributed to personnel during the calendar year 2024, as follows:

- II-42 Use of Force, and III-17 Pursuit of a Vehicle or Boat – Vehicular Intervention was added as a new term with guidelines on when it would be authorized.
- II-43 Lethal and Less-lethal Weapons – Taser 10 added as an approved less-lethal weapon.

An analysis of the Use of Force statistics for the St. Petersburg Police Department for the calendar year 2024 was compared to the same statistics for the calendar year 2023. This review was conducted to evaluate the effectiveness and appropriateness of the force being used and to address any training needs for the sworn officers of the St. Petersburg Police Department. At this time, there are no specific training needs identified that have not been addressed.

VIII. Pursuits and Department Vehicle Crashes

PURSUITS

The St. Petersburg Police Department is aware of the dangers of police vehicle pursuits. The department constantly evaluates departmental procedures, and every pursuit is investigated by the involved officer's chain of command to ensure compliance with policy. Officers must consider numerous factors before beginning a pursuit, such as pedestrian traffic, time of day, traffic conditions, weather conditions, and whether the identity of the subject being pursued is known. Authorization must be received from a supervisor to continue the pursuit after an officer initiates it.

In 2024, there were seven pursuits, four of which were not compliant with department policy, and the officers received discipline. The other three vehicles were pursued after committing crimes, including a shooting, carjacking, and aggravated assault on a law enforcement officer. All three pursuits were reviewed by the officer's chain of command and found to be justified.

TABLE 8

PURSUITS 2020 - 2024					
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
In Compliance	4	3	2	4	3
Not in Compliance	0	0	1	2	4
Total Pursuits	4	3	3	6	7

After a review of General Order III-17, Pursuit of a Vehicle or Boat, the term "vehicular intervention" was added to the policy. Outside of this change, the remainder of the policy was current and did not require any further revisions.

DEPARTMENT VEHICLE CRASHES

In 2024, St. Petersburg Police Department police vehicles were involved in 135 crashes. During this period, 61 of the crashes were found to be preventable. 19 of those preventable crashes resulted in formal discipline. The remaining preventable crashes resulted in counseling. Total cruiser damage was estimated at \$543,346. Other resulting vehicle and property damage was estimated at \$317,229. A review of the crashes in 2024 indicated a 56% increase in crashes compared to 2023 and an increase in preventable crashes from 31 to 61. The required review of the distracted driving video will continue.

TABLE 9

CRASHES 2020 - 2024					
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Preventable Crashes	45	33	34	31	61
Non-Preventable Crashes	57	38	38	50	59
Preventable/Excusable	2	0	1	0	0
Total Crashes	103	73	81	86	135
Formal Discipline (Preventable Crashes)	16	13	14	7	19

IX. Disciplinary Action

The discipline philosophy of the St. Petersburg Police Department is not necessarily punitive in nature. The intent of the philosophy is to modify an employee's behavior(s) when found in conflict with the policy of the department and the City. This is frequently accomplished by identifying unacceptable behavior and providing the employee with additional training. The police department has also instituted a procedure where employees create a lesson plan to instruct other officers on certain training issues, such as officer safety and deadly force issues. At times, training is not enough, and improper conduct recurs. In these instances, it may be necessary for the department to take some type of formal action to discourage improper behavior on the part of the employee. The department operates on a "progressive discipline" process in which discipline increases for similar violations within a specific time period. This action may range from verbal counseling, written reprimand, suspension from duty without pay, demotion, and/or termination of employment.

In 2024, three employees were terminated from the St. Petersburg Police Department (See Table 10 below.) One termination involved a civilian employee arrested for conduct outside of his duty hours, one for an employee who stopped coming to work (AWOL), and the last for Conduct Unbecoming of an Employee (Bigotry/Bias.)

A review of the disciplinary actions taken in 2024 reveals an increase of 65 actions compared with 2023. These increases can be observed in all disciplinary action categories in 2024 compared to the previous year.

TABLE 10

DISCIPLINARY ACTION 2020 - 2024					
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Termination	3	2	1	1	3
Resignation	0	3	3	0	6
Suspension	8	8	7	4	12
Employee Notice	23	24	37	19	28
Memorandum of Counseling	42	55	83	65	93
Verbal Counseling	53	62	71	73	85
Total	129	154	202	162	227

X. Organizational Complaint Profile

The St. Petersburg Police Department has 899 active employees who are assigned in the following manner:

TABLE 11

Organizational Profile			
	Sworn	Non-Sworn	Total
Office of the Chief of Police	6	14	20
Administrative Services Bureau	16	169	185
Investigative Services Bureau	150	126	276
Uniform Services Bureau	390	28	418
Total	562	337	899

*Includes part-time employees

The department analyzes all investigations to determine how they may relate to the organizational elements. Once a pattern has been identified, the department's administration can take corrective action to alleviate the potential problem. Table 12 below shows the breakdown of investigations by bureau within the department.

TABLE 12

INVESTIGATIONS BY BUREAU 2020 - 2024					
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Office of the Chief	0	0	0	0	0
Uniform Services Bureau	27	25	27	23	38
Investigative Services Bureau	9	5	3	4	7
Administrative Services Bureau	4	5	4	4	7
Other City Departments	0	0	0	0	0
Total	40	35	34	31	52

* Total number of cases does not necessarily reflect the total number of personnel involved.

The department's Uniform Services Bureau consistently receives a large majority of the total complaints. One would expect this to be the case for two reasons; first, 46% of all employees, 390 Sworn and 28 Non-Sworn, are assigned to this Bureau; secondly, uniform personnel are in a position of greater exposure to the public; therefore, making them statistically more prone to receiving internal and external complaints. They have the most direct contact with community members under the most stressful circumstances. In addition to being responsible for traffic enforcement, they are the first representatives of the department to respond to calls. Most encounters that patrol officers have with a citizen are under circumstances where the person is under the stress of being a crime victim, a traffic violator, or an arrested subject, or the person is involved in a dispute with another party, and each party expects the officer to side with them in resolving the dispute.

XI. Conclusion

The data in this report has been presented to more fully inform the citizens of St. Petersburg of a key aspect of a strong police/community relationship. The department believes an informed community will be more understanding of the difficult and critical role a police officer must fulfill. The overall goal of the St. Petersburg Police Department is to provide efficient and effective police service to our citizens. With the cooperation and confidence of the community, we will meet that goal.

Appendix

Demographics of Sworn Personnel	A
Total Number of Sworn Employees by Race and Sex	B
Biased Policing Complaints/Investigations	C
Complaint or Commendation	D
Law Enforcement Officers' and Correctional Officers' Rights	E

****Note**** Prior to the 2020 Annual Report, specific General Orders were included in the Appendix. However, all General Orders are now available to the public on the City of St. Petersburg Police Department website ([General Orders](#)). The most up-to-date versions will be available on the website.

Appendix A

Demographics of Sworn Personnel

Demographics Of Sworn and Non-Sworn Personnel

As Of December 31, 2024

Race & Sex	Sworn	Non-Sworn	Total
White Male	335	92	427
Black Male	51	28	79
White Female	76	135	211
Black Female	21	48	69
Hispanic Male	51	6	29
Hispanic Female	11	18	57
Asian Male	9	3	12
Asian Female	3	5	8
Indian Male	0	0	0
Indian Female	1	0	1
Two or more races Male	3	2	5
Two or more races Female	1	0	1
Total*	562	337	899

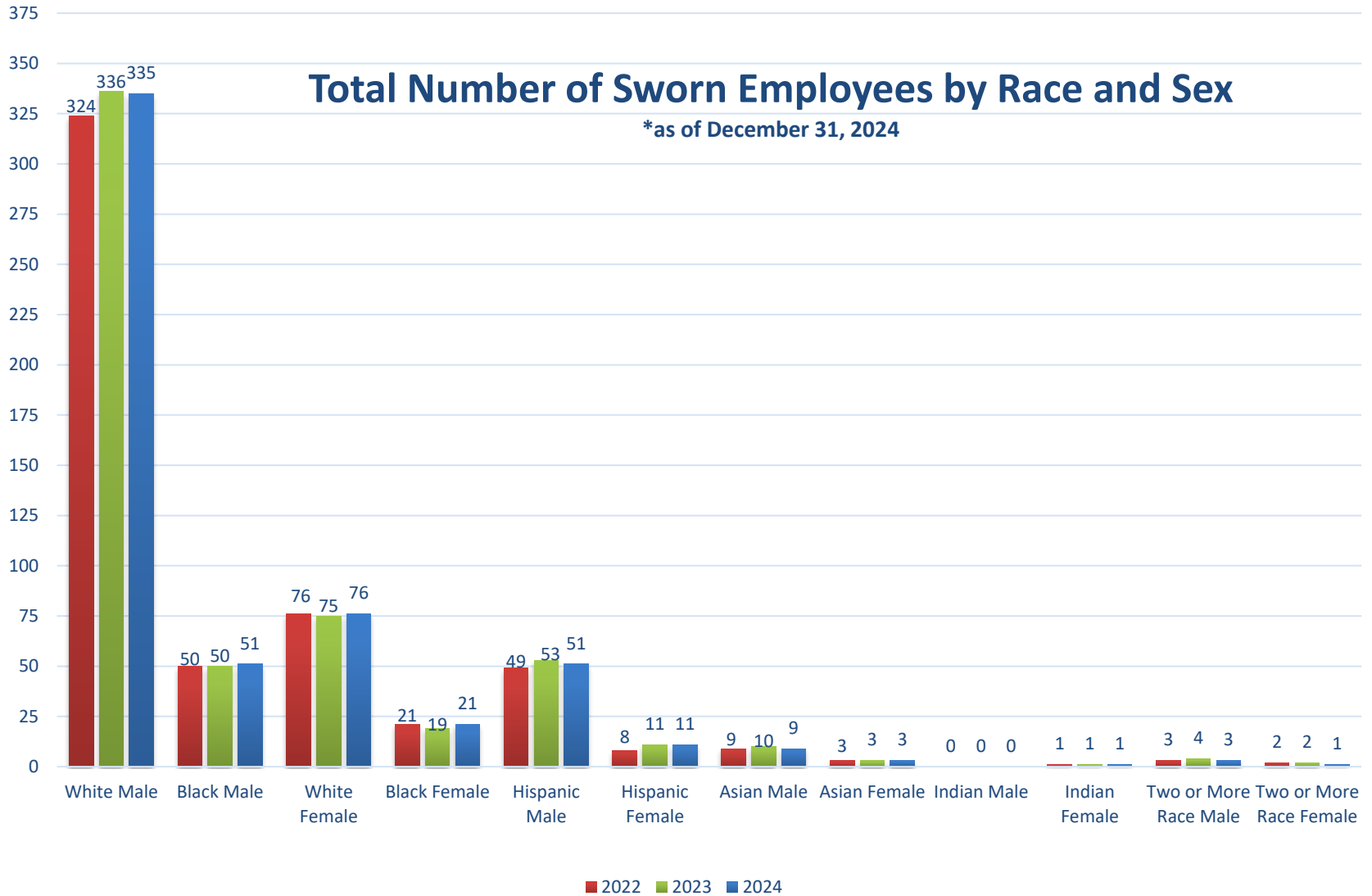
* Includes part-time employees

Appendix B

Total Number of Sworn Employees by Race and Sex

Total Number of Sworn Employees by Race and Sex

*as of December 31, 2024



Appendix C

Biased Policing Complaints and Investigations

Bias Claimed	Circumstance	Summary	Corrective Action Needed
Race	Simple Battery	A citizen alleged that if his wife was the victim of a simple battery and the officer did not arrest the suspect because she was white, but if his wife had fought back, she would have been arrested because she is black.	Unfounded by Body Camera
Race	Traffic Stop - Citation	A citizen stated that she was racially profiled during a traffic stop because the officer did not greet her and the feeling was escalated when a second officer arrived. She additionally stated that the officer continued profiling her by never sufficiently explaining the reason for the traffic citation, and she would like the officer investigated for reckless driving and for the citation to be rescinded.	Verbal Counseling for Improper Procedures
Race	Traffic Accident - Citation	A citizen made a complaint on behalf of her adult son stating that the officer's crash investigation was flawed and the traffic citations that were issued were based on bias.	Unfounded by Body Camera
Race	Traffic Stop - Arrest	A citizen alleged that he was harassed, racially profiled, battered and had his 4th Amendment rights violated by the officer when he made the traffic stop which resulted in the citizen's arrest.	Unfounded by Body Camera
Race	Call for Service - Noise	A citizen stated that a racist officer approached her aggressively regarding a noise complaint against her because of the type of music she was playing and that she received a warning citation as a hate crime and in retaliation for making a complaint against the officer when her neighbors, who she has an ongoing issue with, have not received a warning citation for the same offense.	No violation of policy or procedure
Religion	Work-related	A fellow officer reported that a Instagram video that was shared withing a work group chat was anti-Muslim, caused offense and was inappropriate for a work-related group chat.	Not Sustained
Race	Traffic- Hit and Run	A citizen stated that an arrest had not been made in her hit and run investigation and that the officer had not contacted her with enough updates because she needed a "black officer" assigned to her case.	No violation of policy or procedure

"Nationality"	Call for Service - Trespass	A citizen stated, in regards to officers responding to her complaint that she did not want to bring race into this, but the department should not have white officers that are not "sympathetic to the nationality". And further stated both responding white, female officers were clearly biased. When asked to please provide specific examples to her claims, she stated that they referred to another involved individual by his first name and sided with him.	Unfounded by Body Camera
Sex	Arrest- Disorderly Intoxication	Citizen stated that the outcome of the arrest for disorderly intoxication was a hate crime for them being transgender and they were "roughed up for no reason".	Unfounded by Body Camera
Race	Parking Citation	Citizen parked in a handicap parking place and went inside a restaurant for pickup and returned to find an officer behind the vehicle issuing a citation. He stated that the officer was rude toward he and his wife because she is Filipino and has a dark complexion and was alone in the vehicle and that the officer profiled his wife for being in the handicapped parking place.	Unfounded by Body Camera
Race	Internal Investigation	An officer alleged that another officer made insensitive and racially biased remarks.	Officer was sustained and received a memorandum of counseling
Race	Internal Investigation	An officer alleged that another officer made a racial comment and another officer repeated that comment in his presence.	
Race	Arrest	A citizen alleged that her arrest was racially motivated.	Unfounded by Body Camera
Race	Pedestrian Violation	A citizen alleged that his stop was racially motivated.	Unfounded by Body Camera
Race	Arrest- Disorderly Intoxication	A citizen alleged that his arrest was racially motivated.	Unfounded by Body Camera
Race	Call for Service- Trespassing	A citizen alleged that officers did not make an arrest because of the race of the accused.	Unfounded by Body Camera
Race	Traffic - DUI	A citizen alleged that officers did not appropriately charge another citizen with DUI because of his race.	Unfounded by Body Camera

Race	Civil/Traffic	A citizen complained that his car was damaged and his sunglasses were stolen at a local hotel by staff/valet. He stated officers were biased against him because they could not find evidence of any incident on security video to support his claims and they notified him how to proceed with civil action if he chose to since no criminal charges were able to be filed.	Unfounded
Race	Traffic Stop	A citizen stated that officers made a bad stop with no probable cause because of his skin color.	Unfounded by Body Camera
Race	Arrest- Strong Arm Robbery	A citizen stated that unnecessary force was used during his arrest because he was racially profiled.	Unfounded by Body Camera
Sex	Call for Service	A citizen claimed that an officer used homophobic slurs during a call for service.	Unfounded by Body Camera Officer was verbally counseled regarding an improper procedure unrelated to the complaint
Race	Call for Service	A citizen stated that he and his son were racially profiled by officers downtown as officers were searching for panhandling suspects.	Unfounded by Body Camera
Race	Internal Investigation	In the course of an internal investigation racially bigoted conversations, racial epithets and other disparaging language was found in text message evidence between two officers.	Officers both resigned. Had they not resigned, they would have been terminated
Race	Traffic Contact	Cyclist was swerving into the roadway to prevent vehicles from passing and an officer stopped to check on the cyclist and let him know his actions were a risk to his safety. Citizen stated that the officer only stopped because of his race and the incident was road rage.	Unfounded by Body Camera
Race	Arrest- Brawling	A citizen stated that he felt that charges were not pressed against the other individual in the brawl because of race.	Unfounded by Body Camera
Sex	Residential Burglary	A citizen stated that an officer investigating her burglary call was not taking her seriously and was staring at her chest.	Unfounded by Body Camera
Race	Call for Service.	Citizen stated the officer assisting her was rude and racist during their conversation when she was questioned regarding similar previous reports.	Unfounded by Body Camera

Appendix D

Complaint or Commendation



Commendation

It is the policy of the St. Petersburg Police Department to recognize employees for exemplary performance of their duties through the formal use of commendations. There are three categories: written acknowledgment (letters of recognition), departmental awards, and community-sponsored awards.

The police department sponsors a Medal of Valor for officers who distinguish themselves by an act of conspicuous bravery while consciously facing imminent, life-threatening peril. The Meritorious Service Award is presented to employees who demonstrate exemplary service of great importance to law enforcement.

Hundreds of letters of recognition and phone calls are received each year, by citizens expressing their gratitude for a job well done. You may compliment an employee by letter, phone call, email (OPS@stpete.org), mail or via the online form that is on the police department's website. A written compliment is preferred since it can be posted prominently within police headquarters and placed in the employee's personnel file.



For further information please contact:

**St. Petersburg Police Department
Office of Professional Standards
1301 First Avenue North
St. Petersburg, FL 33705
727-893-7596
Email: OPS@stpete.org**

It is the policy of the St. Petersburg Police Department to provide an environment for its employees and the citizens it serves that is free from discrimination and harassment.

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COMPLAINT OR COMMENDATION

Building Trust Between the Police
and the Citizens We Serve



Office of Professional Standards

St. Petersburg Police Department
1301 1st Avenue North
St. Petersburg, FL 33705

police.stpete.org



Committed to You

The St. Petersburg Police Department is dedicated to creating a safer environment and providing responsive police service through an aggressive, problem-solving partnership with the community. We will adapt to the changing future while maintaining our traditional values of integrity and professionalism. To achieve our commitment, we will provide, equally to all people, sensitive, fair, and courteous service which respects each individual's dignity.

Citizen involvement is vital to managing any public agency. Community members' feelings about police service are evaluated through commendations, suggestions, and complaints.

This brochure outlines the basic information necessary for you to let the department know your opinion about the quality of St. Petersburg police service.

Complaint

The purpose of reviewing complaints is to ensure the continued confidence of the community by upholding the integrity of the police department. The complaint procedure provides citizens with a way to make legitimate complaints regarding police employees. It also protects employees who perform their job in a reasonable, lawful, and impartial manner from false or unwarranted accusations.

Every complaint, if it appears there could be a violation of department policy or procedure, will be vigorously and impartially investigated. It is departmental policy that complaints be handled at the lowest appropriate organizational level and as quickly as possible. Minor breaches of regulations are assigned to the accused employee's supervisor. He/She will contact you by phone or in person.

Upon completion, these complaints are reviewed by the Office of Professional Standards. Many times, complaints can be resolved at this level. However, traffic citations, certain legal issues, or arrests that have not been adjudicated, must await the decision of a judge.

More serious violations are assigned to the Office of Professional Standards. Fact finding investigations of alleged improper or illegal conduct by employees are conducted by detectives. A report is prepared with the sworn, recorded statements of the complainant, witnesses, and accused employees.

Additional evidence or documents are included in the report which is evaluated by an Office of Professional Standards supervisor for thoroughness and objectivity. When completed, the report is presented to the Chief of Police who reviews it and decides whether to convene a command review board.

All cases remain confidential until a final disposition. If the allegation is sustained, the second phase of the process is to decide on corrective action which ranges from remedial training, reprimand, transfer, suspension, demotion, or termination. The employee and the complainant are notified of the case finding.

How to File a Complaint

You may file a complaint in person, by phone, email (OPS@stpete.org), mail or via the online form that is on the police department's website. It is preferred that individuals identify themselves. Anonymous complaints do not carry the same weight since employees have the same rights as other citizens to confront their accusers. However, anonymous complaints are accepted at the discretion of the Chief of Police.



Appendix E

Law Enforcement Officers' and Correctional Officers' Rights

OFFICE OF PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS
LAW ENFORCEMENT AND CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS BILL OF RIGHT'S
(Updated September 2024)

112.531

Definitions.

112.532

Law enforcement officers' and correctional officers' rights.

112.533

Receipt and processing of complaints.

112.534

Failure to comply; official misconduct.

112.535

Construction.

112.536

Requirements for maintaining a Brady identification system.

112.531 Definitions.—As used in this part, the term:

- (1) “Brady identification system” means a list or identification, in whatever form, of the name or names of law enforcement officers or correctional officers about whom a prosecuting agency is in possession of impeachment evidence as defined by court decision, statute, or rule.
- (2) “Correctional officer” means any person, other than a warden, who is appointed or employed full time or part time by the state or any political subdivision thereof whose primary responsibility is the supervision, protection, care, custody, or control of inmates within a correctional institution; and includes correctional probation officers, as defined in s. [943.10\(3\)](#). However, the term “correctional officer” does not include any secretarial, clerical, or professionally trained personnel.
- (3) “Law enforcement officer” means any person, other than a chief of police, who is employed full time or part time by any municipality or the state or any political subdivision thereof and whose primary responsibility is the prevention and detection of crime or the enforcement of the penal, traffic, or highway laws of this state; and includes any person who is appointed by the sheriff as a deputy sheriff under s. [30.07](#).
- (4) “Prosecuting agency” means the Attorney General or an assistant attorney general, the statewide prosecutor or an assistant statewide prosecutor, a state attorney or an assistant state attorney, a city or county attorney, a special prosecutor, or any other person or entity charged with the prosecution of a criminal case.

History.—s. 1, ch. 74-274; s. 1, ch. 75-41; s. 34, ch. 77-104; s. 1, ch. 82-156; s. 1, ch. 89-223; s. 1, ch. 93-19; s. 3, ch. 2000-161; s. 2, ch. 2020-104; s. 1, ch. 2023-230.

112.532 Law enforcement officers' and correctional officers' rights.—All law enforcement officers and correctional officers employed by or appointed to a law enforcement agency or a correctional agency shall have the following rights and privileges:

(1) **RIGHTS OF LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS AND CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS WHILE UNDER INVESTIGATION.**—Whenever a law enforcement officer or correctional officer is under investigation and subject to interrogation by members of his or her agency for any reason that could lead to disciplinary action, suspension, demotion, or dismissal, the interrogation must be conducted under the following conditions:

(a) The interrogation shall be conducted at a reasonable hour, preferably at a time when the law enforcement officer or correctional officer is on duty, unless the seriousness of the investigation is of such a degree that immediate action is required.

(b) The interrogation shall take place either at the office of the command of the investigating officer or at the office of the local precinct, police unit, or correctional unit in which the incident allegedly occurred, as designated by the investigating officer or agency.

(c) The law enforcement officer or correctional officer under investigation shall be informed of the rank, name, and command of the officer in charge of the investigation, the interrogating officer, and all persons present during the interrogation. All questions directed to the officer under interrogation shall be asked by or through one interrogator during any one investigative interrogation, unless specifically waived by the officer under investigation.

(d) The law enforcement officer or correctional officer under investigation must be informed of the nature of the investigation before any interrogation begins, and he or she must be informed of the names of all complainants. All identifiable witnesses shall be interviewed, whenever possible, prior to the beginning of the investigative interview of the accused officer. The complaint, all witness statements, including all other existing subject officer statements, and all other existing evidence, including, but not limited to, incident reports, GPS locator information, and audio or video recordings relating to the incident under investigation, must be provided to each officer who is the subject of the complaint before the beginning of any investigative interview of that officer. An officer, after being informed of the right to review witness statements, may voluntarily waive the provisions of this paragraph and provide a voluntary statement at any time.

(e) Interrogating sessions shall be for reasonable periods and shall be timed to allow for such personal necessities and rest periods as are reasonably necessary.

(f) The law enforcement officer or correctional officer under interrogation may not be subjected to offensive language or be threatened with transfer, dismissal, or disciplinary action. A promise or reward may not be made as an inducement to answer any questions.

(g) The formal interrogation of a law enforcement officer or correctional officer, including all recess periods, must be recorded on audio tape, or otherwise preserved in such a manner as to allow a transcript to be prepared, and there shall be no unrecorded questions or statements. Upon the request of the interrogated officer, a copy of any recording of the interrogation session must be

made available to the interrogated officer no later than 72 hours, excluding holidays and weekends, following said interrogation.

(h) If the law enforcement officer or correctional officer under interrogation is under arrest, or is likely to be placed under arrest as a result of the interrogation, he or she shall be completely informed of all his or her rights before commencing the interrogation.

(i) At the request of any law enforcement officer or correctional officer under investigation, he or she has the right to be represented by counsel or any other representative of his or her choice, who shall be present at all times during the interrogation whenever the interrogation relates to the officer's continued fitness for law enforcement or correctional service.

(j) Notwithstanding the rights and privileges provided by this part, this part does not limit the right of an agency to discipline or to pursue criminal charges against an officer.

(2) COMPLAINT REVIEW BOARDS.—A complaint review board shall be composed of three members: One member selected by the chief administrator of the agency or unit; one member selected by the aggrieved officer; and a third member to be selected by the other two members. Agencies or units having more than 100 law enforcement officers or correctional officers shall utilize a five-member board, with two members being selected by the administrator, two members being selected by the aggrieved officer, and the fifth member being selected by the other four members. The board members shall be law enforcement officers or correctional officers selected from any state, county, or municipal agency within the county. There shall be a board for law enforcement officers and a board for correctional officers whose members shall be from the same discipline as the aggrieved officer. The provisions of this subsection shall not apply to sheriffs or deputy sheriffs.

(3) CIVIL SUITS BROUGHT BY LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS OR CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS.—Every law enforcement officer or correctional officer shall have the right to bring civil suit against any person, group of persons, or organization or corporation, or the head of such organization or corporation, for damages, either pecuniary or otherwise, suffered during the performance of the officer's official duties, for abridgment of the officer's civil rights arising out of the officer's performance of official duties, or for filing a complaint against the officer which the person knew was false when it was filed. This section does not establish a separate civil action against the officer's employing law enforcement agency for the investigation and processing of a complaint filed under this part.

(4) NOTICE OF DISCIPLINARY ACTION; COPY OF AND OPPORTUNITY TO ADDRESS CONTENTS OF INVESTIGATIVE FILE; CONFIDENTIALITY.—

(a) A dismissal, demotion, transfer, reassignment, or other personnel action that might result in loss of pay or benefits or that might otherwise be considered a punitive measure may not be taken against any law enforcement officer or correctional officer unless the law enforcement officer or correctional officer is notified of the action and the reason or reasons for the action before the effective date of the action.

(b) Notwithstanding s. [112.533](#)(5), whenever a law enforcement officer or correctional officer is subject to disciplinary action consisting of suspension with loss of pay, demotion, or dismissal, the

officer or the officer's representative must, upon request, be provided with a complete copy of the investigative file, including the final investigative report and all evidence, and with the opportunity to address the findings in the report with the employing law enforcement agency before imposing disciplinary action consisting of suspension with loss of pay, demotion, or dismissal. The contents of the complaint and investigation must remain confidential until such time as the employing law enforcement agency makes a final determination whether to issue a notice of disciplinary action consisting of suspension with loss of pay, demotion, or dismissal. This paragraph does not provide law enforcement officers with a property interest or expectancy of continued employment, employment, or appointment as a law enforcement officer.

(5) RETALIATION FOR EXERCISING RIGHTS.—No law enforcement officer or correctional officer shall be discharged; disciplined; demoted; denied promotion, transfer, or reassignment; or otherwise discriminated against in regard to his or her employment or appointment, or be threatened with any such treatment, by reason of his or her exercise of the rights granted by this part.

(6) LIMITATIONS PERIOD FOR DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS.—

(a) Except as provided in this subsection, disciplinary action, suspension, demotion, or dismissal may not be undertaken by an agency against a law enforcement officer or correctional officer for any act, omission, or other allegation or complaint of misconduct, regardless of the origin of the allegation or complaint, if the investigation of the allegation or complaint is not completed within 180 days after the date the agency receives notice of the allegation or complaint by a person authorized by the agency to initiate an investigation of the misconduct. If the agency determines that disciplinary action is appropriate, it shall complete its investigation and give notice in writing to the law enforcement officer or correctional officer of its intent to proceed with disciplinary action, along with a proposal of the specific action sought, including length of suspension, if applicable. Notice to the officer must be provided within 180 days after the date the agency received notice of the alleged misconduct, regardless of the origin of the allegation or complaint, except as follows:

1. The running of the limitations period may be tolled for a period specified in a written waiver of the limitation by the law enforcement officer or correctional officer.
2. The running of the limitations period is tolled during the time that any criminal investigation or prosecution is pending in connection with the act, omission, or other allegation of misconduct.
3. If the investigation involves an officer who is incapacitated or otherwise unavailable, the running of the limitations period is tolled during the period of incapacitation or unavailability.
4. In a multijurisdictional investigation, the limitations period may be extended for a period of time reasonably necessary to facilitate the coordination of the agencies involved.
5. The running of the limitations period may be tolled for emergencies or natural disasters during the time period wherein the Governor has declared a state of emergency within the jurisdictional boundaries of the concerned agency.
6. The running of the limitations period is tolled during the time that the officer's compliance hearing proceeding is continuing beginning with the filing of the notice of violation and a request for

a hearing and ending with the written determination of the compliance review panel or upon the violation being remedied by the agency.

(b) An investigation against a law enforcement officer or correctional officer may be reopened, notwithstanding the limitations period for commencing disciplinary action, demotion, or dismissal, if:

1. Significant new evidence has been discovered that is likely to affect the outcome of the investigation.
2. The evidence could not have reasonably been discovered in the normal course of investigation or the evidence resulted from the predisciplinary response of the officer.

Any disciplinary action resulting from an investigation that is reopened pursuant to this paragraph must be completed within 90 days after the date the investigation is reopened.

(7) RIGHTS OF LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS AND CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS RELATING TO A BRADY IDENTIFICATION SYSTEM.—

(a) A law enforcement officer or correctional officer has all of the rights specified in s. [112.536](#) relating to the inclusion of the name and information of the officer in a Brady identification system.

(b) A law enforcement officer or correctional officer may not be discharged, suspended, demoted, or otherwise disciplined, or threatened with discharge, suspension, demotion, or other discipline, by his or her employing agency solely as a result of a prosecuting agency determining that the officer's name and information should be included in a Brady identification system. This paragraph does not prohibit an officer's employing agency from discharging, suspending, demoting, or taking other disciplinary action against a law enforcement officer or correctional officer based on the underlying actions of the officer which resulted in his or her name being included in a Brady identification system. If a collective bargaining agreement applies, the actions taken by the officer's employing agency must conform to the rules and procedures adopted by the collective bargaining agreement.

History.—s. 2, ch. 74-274; s. 2, ch. 82-156; s. 2, ch. 93-19; s. 721, ch. 95-147; s. 1, ch. 98-249; s. 1, ch. 2000-184; s. 1, ch. 2003-149; s. 3, ch. 2005-100; s. 1, ch. 2007-110; s. 1, ch. 2009-200; s. 3, ch. 2020-104; s. 2, ch. 2023-230; s. 3, ch. 2024-86.

112.533 Receipt and processing of complaints.—

(1) It is the intent of the Legislature to make the process for receiving, processing, and investigation of complaints against law enforcement or correctional officers, and the rights and privileges provided in this part while under investigation, apply uniformly throughout this state and its political subdivisions.

(2) As used in this section, the term "political subdivision" means a separate agency or unit of local government created or established by law or ordinance and the officers thereof and includes, but is not limited to, an authority, a board, a branch, a bureau, a city, a commission, a consolidated

government, a county, a department, a district, an institution, a metropolitan government, a municipality, an office, an officer, a public corporation, a town, or a village.

(3) A political subdivision may not adopt or attempt to enforce any ordinance relating to either of the following:

(a) The receipt, processing, or investigation by any political subdivision of this state of complaints of misconduct by law enforcement or correctional officers, except as expressly provided in this section.

(b) Civilian oversight of law enforcement agencies' investigations of complaints of misconduct by law enforcement or correctional officers.

(4)(a) Every law enforcement agency and correctional agency shall establish and put into operation a system for the receipt, investigation, and determination of complaints received by such agency from any person, which must be the procedure for investigating a complaint against a law enforcement or correctional officer and for determining whether to proceed with disciplinary action or to file disciplinary charges, notwithstanding any other law or ordinance to the contrary. When law enforcement or correctional agency personnel assigned the responsibility of investigating the complaint prepare an investigative report or summary, regardless of form, the person preparing the report shall, at the time the report is completed:

1. Verify pursuant to s. [92.525](#) that the contents of the report are true and accurate based upon the person's personal knowledge, information, and belief.

2. Include the following statement, sworn and subscribed to pursuant to s. [92.525](#):

"I, the undersigned, do hereby swear, under penalty of perjury, that, to the best of my personal knowledge, information, and belief, I have not knowingly or willfully deprived, or allowed another to deprive, the subject of the investigation of any of the rights contained in ss. [112.532](#) and [112.533](#), Florida Statutes."

The requirements of subparagraphs 1. and 2. must be completed before the determination as to whether to proceed with disciplinary action or to file disciplinary charges. This subsection does not preclude the Criminal Justice Standards and Training Commission from exercising its authority under chapter 943.

(b) Any political subdivision that initiates or receives a complaint against a law enforcement officer or correctional officer shall within 5 business days forward the complaint to the employing agency of the officer who is the subject of the complaint for review or investigation.

Notwithstanding the rights and privileges provided under this part or any provisions provided in a collective bargaining agreement, the agency head or the agency head's designee may request a sworn or certified investigator from a separate law enforcement or correctional agency to conduct the investigation when a conflict is identified with having an investigator conduct the investigation of an officer of the same employing agency; the employing agency does not have an investigator trained to conduct such investigations; or the agency's investigator is the subject of, or a witness in, the investigation and such agency is composed of any combination of 35 or fewer law enforcement officers or correctional officers. The employing agency must document the identified conflict. Upon

completion of the investigation, the investigator shall present the findings without any disciplinary recommendation to the employing agency.

(5)(a) A complaint filed against a law enforcement officer or correctional officer with a law enforcement agency or correctional agency and all information obtained pursuant to the investigation by the agency of the complaint is confidential and exempt from the provisions of s. [119.07\(1\)](#) until the investigation ceases to be active, or until the agency head or the agency head's designee provides written notice to the officer who is the subject of the complaint, either personally or by mail, that the agency has concluded the investigation with either a finding:

1. Not to proceed with disciplinary action or to file charges; or
2. To proceed with disciplinary action or to file charges.

Notwithstanding the foregoing provisions, the officer who is the subject of the complaint, along with legal counsel or any other representative of his or her choice, may review the complaint and all statements regardless of form made by the complainant and witnesses and all existing evidence, including, but not limited to, incident reports, analyses, GPS locator information, and audio or video recordings relating to the investigation, immediately before beginning the investigative interview. All statements, regardless of form, provided by a law enforcement officer or correctional officer during the course of a complaint investigation of that officer must be made under oath pursuant to s. [92.525](#). Knowingly false statements given by a law enforcement officer or correctional officer under investigation may subject the law enforcement officer or correctional officer to prosecution for perjury. If a witness to a complaint is incarcerated in a correctional facility and may be under the supervision of, or have contact with, the officer under investigation, only the names and written statements of the complainant and nonincarcerated witnesses may be reviewed by the officer under investigation immediately before the beginning of the investigative interview.

(b) This subsection does not apply to any public record which is exempt from public disclosure pursuant to chapter 119. For the purposes of this subsection, an investigation is considered active as long as it is continuing with a reasonable, good faith anticipation that an administrative finding will be made in the foreseeable future. An investigation is presumed to be inactive if no finding is made within 45 days after the complaint is filed.

(c) Notwithstanding this section, the complaint and information must be available to law enforcement agencies, correctional agencies, and state attorneys in the conduct of a lawful criminal investigation.

(6) A law enforcement officer or correctional officer has the right to review his or her official personnel file at any reasonable time under the supervision of the designated records custodian. A law enforcement officer or correctional officer may attach to the file a concise statement in response to any items included in the file identified by the officer as derogatory, and copies of such items must be made available to the officer.

(7) Any person who is a participant in an internal investigation, including the complainant, the subject of the investigation and the subject's legal counsel or a representative of his or her choice, the investigator conducting the investigation, and any witnesses in the investigation, who willfully discloses any information obtained pursuant to the agency's investigation, including, but not

limited to, the identity of the officer under investigation, the nature of the questions asked, information revealed, or documents furnished in connection with a confidential internal investigation of an agency, before such complaint, document, action, or proceeding becomes a public record as provided in this section commits a misdemeanor of the first degree, punishable as provided in s. [775.082](#) or s. [775.083](#). However, this subsection does not limit a law enforcement or correctional officer's ability to gain access to information under paragraph (5)(a). Additionally, a sheriff, police chief, or other head of a law enforcement agency, or his or her designee, is not precluded by this section from acknowledging the existence of a complaint and the fact that an investigation is underway.

History.—s. 3, ch. 74-274; s. 3, ch. 82-156; s. 1, ch. 82-405; s. 1, ch. 83-136; s. 1, ch. 87-59; s. 2, ch. 89-223; s. 1, ch. 90-32; s. 31, ch. 90-360; s. 3, ch. 93-19; s. 722, ch. 95-147; s. 39, ch. 96-406; s. 2, ch. 98-249; s. 2, ch. 2000-184; s. 2, ch. 2003-149; s. 33, ch. 2004-335; s. 42, ch. 2005-251; s. 2, ch. 2007-110; s. 1, ch. 2007-118; s. 2, ch. 2009-200; s. 4, ch. 2020-104; s. 2, ch. 2024-86.

112.534 Failure to comply; official misconduct.—

(1) If any law enforcement agency or correctional agency, including investigators in its internal affairs or professional standards division, or an assigned investigating supervisor, intentionally fails to comply with the requirements of this part, the following procedures apply. For purposes of this section, the term “law enforcement officer” or “correctional officer” includes the officer’s representative or legal counsel, except in application of paragraph (d).

(a) The law enforcement officer or correctional officer shall advise the investigator of the intentional violation of the requirements of this part which is alleged to have occurred. The officer’s notice of violation is sufficient to notify the investigator of the requirements of this part which are alleged to have been violated and the factual basis of each violation.

(b) If the investigator fails to cure the violation or continues the violation after being notified by the law enforcement officer or correctional officer, the officer shall request the agency head or his or her designee be informed of the alleged intentional violation. Once this request is made, the interview of the officer shall cease, and the officer’s refusal to respond to further investigative questions does not constitute insubordination or any similar type of policy violation.

(c) Thereafter, within 3 working days, a written notice of violation and request for a compliance review hearing shall be filed with the agency head or designee which must contain sufficient information to identify the requirements of this part which are alleged to have been violated and the factual basis of each violation. All evidence related to the investigation must be preserved for review and presentation at the compliance review hearing. For purposes of confidentiality, the compliance review panel hearing shall be considered part of the original investigation.

(d) Unless otherwise remedied by the agency before the hearing, a compliance review hearing must be conducted within 10 working days after the request for a compliance review hearing is filed, unless, by mutual agreement of the officer and agency or for extraordinary reasons, an alternate date is chosen. The panel shall review the circumstances and facts surrounding the alleged intentional violation. The compliance review panel shall be made up of three members: one

member selected by the agency head, one member selected by the officer filing the request, and a third member to be selected by the other two members. The review panel members shall be law enforcement officers or correctional officers who are active from the same law enforcement discipline as the officer requesting the hearing. Panel members may be selected from any state, county, or municipal agency within the county in which the officer works. The compliance review hearing shall be conducted in the county in which the officer works.

(e) It is the responsibility of the compliance review panel to determine whether or not the investigator or agency intentionally violated the requirements provided under this part. It may hear evidence, review relevant documents, and hear argument before making such a determination; however, all evidence received shall be strictly limited to the allegation under consideration and may not be related to the disciplinary charges pending against the officer. The investigative materials are considered confidential for purposes of the compliance review hearing and determination.

(f) The officer bears the burden of proof to establish that the violation of this part was intentional. The standard of proof for such a determination is by a preponderance of the evidence. The determination of the panel must be made at the conclusion of the hearing, in writing, and filed with the agency head and the officer.

(g) If the alleged violation is sustained as intentional by the compliance review panel, the agency head shall immediately remove the investigator from any further involvement with the investigation of the officer. Additionally, the agency head shall direct an investigation be initiated against the investigator determined to have intentionally violated the requirements provided under this part for purposes of agency disciplinary action. If that investigation is sustained, the sustained allegations against the investigator shall be forwarded to the Criminal Justice Standards and Training Commission for review as an act of official misconduct or misuse of position.

(2)(a) All the provisions of s. [838.022](#) shall apply to this part.

(b) The provisions of chapter 120 do not apply to this part.

History.—s. 4, ch. 74-274; s. 35, ch. 77-104; s. 1, ch. 78-291; s. 4, ch. 82-156; s. 4, ch. 93-19; s. 3, ch. 2000-184; s. 8, ch. 2003-158; s. 3, ch. 2009-200; s. 5, ch. 2011-4; s. 6, ch. 2016-151.

112.535 Construction.—The provisions of chapter 93-19, Laws of Florida, shall not be construed to restrict or otherwise limit the discretion of the sheriff to take any disciplinary action, without limitation, against a deputy sheriff, including the demotion, reprimand, suspension, or dismissal thereof, nor to limit the right of the sheriff to appoint deputy sheriffs or to withdraw their appointment as provided in chapter 30. Neither shall the provisions of chapter 93-19, Laws of Florida, be construed to grant collective bargaining rights to deputy sheriffs or to provide them with a property interest or continued expectancy in their appointment as a deputy sheriff.

History.—s. 6, ch. 93-19.

112.536 Requirements for maintaining a Brady identification system.—

(1)(a) A prosecuting agency is not required to maintain a Brady identification system and may determine, in its discretion, that its obligations under the decision in *Brady v. Maryland*, 373 U.S. 83 (1963), are better fulfilled through any such procedure the prosecuting agency otherwise chooses to utilize.

(b) The employing agency of a law enforcement officer or correctional officer shall forward all sustained and finalized internal affairs complaints relevant to s. [90.608](#), s. [90.609](#), or s. [90.610](#) to the prosecuting agency in the circuit in which the employing agency is located to assist the prosecuting agency in complying with its obligations under the *Brady* decision. The employing agency of a law enforcement officer or correctional officer must notify the law enforcement officer or correctional officer of any sustained and finalized internal affairs complaints that are sent to a prosecuting agency as required under this section. If the law enforcement officer or correctional officer is no longer employed by the employing agency, the employing agency must mail through United States mail such notification to the officer's last known address on file with the employing agency.

(2) A prosecuting agency that maintains a Brady identification system must adopt written policies that, at a minimum, require all of the following:

(a) The right of a law enforcement officer or correctional officer to receive written notice by United States mail or e-mail, which must be sent to the officer's current or last known employing agency before or contemporaneously with the prosecuting agency including the name and information of the officer in the Brady identification system, unless a pending criminal case requires immediate disclosure or providing such notice to the officer would jeopardize a pending investigation.

(b) The right of a law enforcement officer or correctional officer to request reconsideration of the prosecuting agency's decision to include the name and information of the officer in a Brady identification system and his or her right to submit documents and evidence in support of the request for reconsideration.

(3) If, after a request for reconsideration is made under paragraph (2)(b), the prosecuting agency subsequently determines that the law enforcement officer or correctional officer should not be included in a Brady identification system, the prosecuting agency must do all of the following:

(a) Remove such officer from the Brady identification system.

(b) Send written notice by United States mail or e-mail to the law enforcement officer or correctional officer at the officer's current or last known employing agency confirming that the officer's name has been removed from the Brady identification system.

(c) If the name of a law enforcement officer or correctional officer was previously included in a Brady identification system and his or her name was disclosed in a pending criminal case, notify all parties to the pending criminal case of the officer's removal from the Brady identification system.

(4) If a prosecuting agency fails to comply with this section, a law enforcement officer or correctional officer may petition a court for a writ of mandamus to compel the prosecuting agency to comply with the requirements of this section. The court's scope of review in such matter is

limited to whether the prosecuting agency acted in accordance with the procedural requirements of this section and may not include a judicial review of the evidence or merits that were the basis for the inclusion of the officer's name in a Brady identification system. This section does not preclude a law enforcement officer or correctional officer from pursuing any other available administrative or judicial remedies.

(5) This section does not:

(a) Require a prosecuting agency to give notice to or provide an opportunity for review and input from a law enforcement officer or correctional officer if the information in a Brady identification system is:

1. A criminal conviction that may be used for impeachment under s. [90.610](#); or
2. A sustained and finalized internal affairs complaint that may be used for impeachment under s. [90.608](#), s. [90.609](#), or s. [90.610](#);

(b) Limit the duty of a prosecuting agency to produce *Brady* evidence in all cases as required by the United States Constitution, the State Constitution, and the Florida Rules of Criminal Procedure and relevant case law;

(c) Limit or restrict a prosecuting agency's ability to remove the name and information of a law enforcement officer or correctional officer from a Brady identification system if, at any time, the prosecuting agency determines that the name and information of the officer are no longer proper for identification; or

(d) Create a private cause of action against a prosecuting agency or any employee of a prosecuting agency, other than the writ of mandamus authorized in subsection (4).

History.—s. 3, ch. 2023-230.