



2025

ANNUAL REPORT



**OFFICE OF THE
POLICE OMBUDS**
INDEPENDENT CIVILIAN OVERSIGHT

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MEET THE OPO



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OUR MISSION

The Office of Police Ombuds exists to promote public confidence in the professionalism and accountability of the members of the Spokane Police Department by providing independent review of police actions, thoughtful policy recommendations, and ongoing community outreach.

MESSAGE FROM THE OMBUDS

The Spokane Office of the Police Ombuds (OPO) is committed to promoting transparency, accountability, and public trust in policing through independent civilian oversight. The OPO experienced increases across all core functions, exceeding prior reporting periods and reflecting increased community engagement. In 2025, the OPO received 3,557 contacts, a 15% increase over 2024 and more than double pre-pandemic levels. The OPO generated 52 complaints, an 18% increase from the previous year.



The OPO continued to fulfill its responsibilities through review and certification of Internal Affairs investigations. In 2025, the OPO certified 110 investigations, declined to certify 4, and returned 8 for further investigation. The OPO also mediated one case, participated in 120 Internal Affairs interviews, conducted 144 special case reviews, and held over 700 meetings with SPD. The increase in cases the OPO declined to certify reflects concerns regarding investigative timelines and adherence to established Internal Affairs processes.

A significant event occurred on June 11, 2025, when the Spokane Police Department (SPD) responded to public demonstrations related to federal immigration enforcement activity. The response included the declaration of an unlawful assembly, the use of crowd control measures, and more than 30 arrests following escalation associated with property damage, obstruction, and failure to disperse. The scale of this event generated substantial public concern and resulted in 26 complainants submitting allegations to the OPO and Internal Affairs.

On June 13, 2025, the Mayor formally requested that the OPO conduct an independent investigative review of the Department's response. While the OPO initiated preliminary steps toward such a review, the OPO was unable to conduct an independent investigation due to restrictions contained within the collective bargaining agreements with the Spokane Police Guild and the Lieutenants and Captains Association, which limit the OPO's authority to observation, review, and certification of Internal Affairs investigations, rather than independent fact-finding.

Throughout 2025, the OPO continued discussions with stakeholders regarding the development of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that would allow for independent investigative authority under defined circumstances. No agreement was reached. After several months of effort, focus shifted to the closing report process, which occurs after all internal administrative functions are complete. The June 11 incident highlighted the practical implications of limitations in the OPO's authority, particularly in complex events involving multiple agencies, command-level decision-making, and significant public impact that would have benefitted from independent review.

As part of its core oversight function, the OPO issued multiple closing reports in 2025. These reports provide case-specific analysis of incidents of public concern, including evaluation of investigative thoroughness and adherence to policy. Closing reports serve as the primary mechanism through which the OPO issues recommendations related to policy, training, and investigative practices. In 2025, recommendations focused on investigative timelines, documentation, and consistency in Internal Affairs processes. While these reports are an effective tool, their impact is influenced by the current limitations on the OPO's authority set forth in the collective bargaining agreements.

The Spokane Police Department reported a reduction in officer-involved shootings during 2025. This decrease reflects continued emphasis on training and supervisory review, including the implementation of Integrating Communications, Assessment, and Tactics (ICAT) training focused on de-escalation and decision-making. Continued evaluation will be necessary to assess the long-term impact of these efforts. Notably, the department went over a year without an officer-involved death following 2024, which included six officer-involved shooting incidents involving SPD, five of which were fatal. The Spokane Police Department also implemented operational directives in response to protest-related concerns, including guidance related to interactions with federal agents and officer identification during public events.

During 2025, the City approved the addition of an analyst position to support the OPO's growing workload and data needs. The OPO acknowledges the support of City administration in recognizing the increasing demands placed on the Office and continues to work with Civil Service to finalize the classification and hiring process for this position. This additional resource will be important in strengthening the Office's capacity to manage increased activity and enhance data-driven oversight. The OPO also experienced personnel changes during 2025, including the departure of the Deputy Police Ombuds and the subsequent onboarding of a new Deputy.

In addition to these operational considerations, the OPO continues to face unresolved structural challenges related to privacy. The absence of a clearly defined privacy wall for the OPO remains an ongoing issue. This deficiency affects the Office's ability to balance access to sensitive information with appropriate confidentiality safeguards and is particularly relevant in the context of Criminal Justice Information Services (CJIS) requirements. Despite the identification of funding opportunities for several years, no progress has been made to date to establish a compliant privacy framework.

The OPO remains committed to working collaboratively with all stakeholders to strengthen oversight practices and to advance a model of civilian oversight consistent with national standards and responsive to community expectations.

OPO ACTIVITIES

2025	2024	Change	Highlight of Activities
3557	3091	15%	Citizen contacts
177	153	16%	Participation or attendance in community meetings and events
14	14	0%	Letters of officer appreciation / commendation
52	44	18%	OPO generated complaints
58	61	-5%	Referrals to other agencies / departments
1	0	100	Cases Mediated
4	1	300%	Cases declined to certify
110	78	41%	Cases certified
188	143	31%	OPO Interviews
120	101	19%	Oversight of IA interviews
144	186	-23%	Special cases reviewed
705	583	21%	Meetings with SPD
24	19	26%	SPD review boards



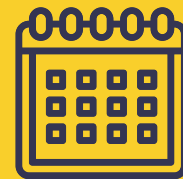
Citizen Interviews

+31%



Citizen Contacts

+15%



Community Events

+15%



OUTREACH

COMMUNITY MEETINGS & EVENTS

- OPOC meetings
- Public Safety & Community Health Committee meetings
- Leadership Spokane
- Leadership Lights the Way Gala
- National Night Out
- Unity in the Community
- Revive Center for Returning Citizens Gala
- NAACP Freedom Fund Gala
- People Who Care Luncheon
- Gabriel's Challenge Grand Opening
- Chief for a Day
- Youth Leadership Spokane Arts Day and Governance Day
- Community Assembly

OVERSIGHT RELATED

- NACOLE Meetings
- Review Boards
- WSCJTC Decertification panels
- IA Biweekly Meetings
- Seattle Office of Police Accountability Symposium
- WSCJTC K-9 Workgroup
- OPOC Annual Retreat
- BLEA Graduations
- WSCJTC Commission Meetings
- Meetings with the Chiefs
- Deadly Force ARP's



TRAINING

- SPD In-Service Training
- SPD Supervisor's Training
- Ride Alongs
- Axon Standards Training
- NACOLE Webinars
- CJIS Training
- Know Be 4 Security Awareness Training
- NACOLE Annual Conference
- International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) Annual Conference
- United States Ombudsman Association (USOA) Annual Conference
- ICAT Training
- Mediation Certification

FORMAL PRESENTATIONS

- Magnuson Club: Introduction to the City of Spokane Office of the Police Ombuds
- NACOLE: Strengthening Oversight Through Collaboration: Insights from Spokane and Boulder
- NACOLE: Use of Force Principles: Twenty-Three Core Elements to Ensuring an Effective Policy
- USOA: Climbing Your Mountain: Navigating Challenging Logistics Across Ombuds Models

OTHER

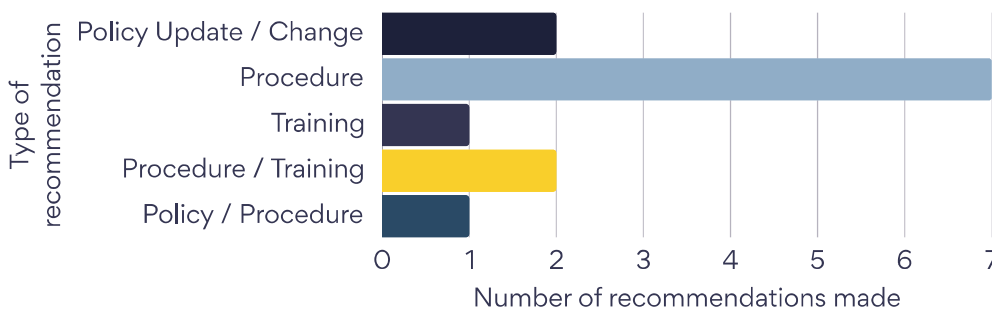
- Basic Law Enforcement Academy Mock Scenes
- SPD Annual Awards Ceremony
- Protest Response Meetings
- Monthly Meeting with Chief Hall



REPORTING

The OPO issued 12 monthly reports, one annual report, and two closing reports in 2025 with 13 recommendations. The reports covered uses of force. The common themes in the reports were force and review board analysis, supervisory review, de-escalation, and training on pursuits. The recommendations involved:

- **Body worn camera buffering**
- **Canine policy**
- **Communication prior to force being used**
- **De-escalation**
- **Officer discretion in charging decisions**
- **Duty to intervene**
- **Exceptional techniques**
- **IA investigation procedures**
- **Report writing**
- **Supervisory review**
- **Pursuits schemas**
- **Review boards**
- **Use of force**

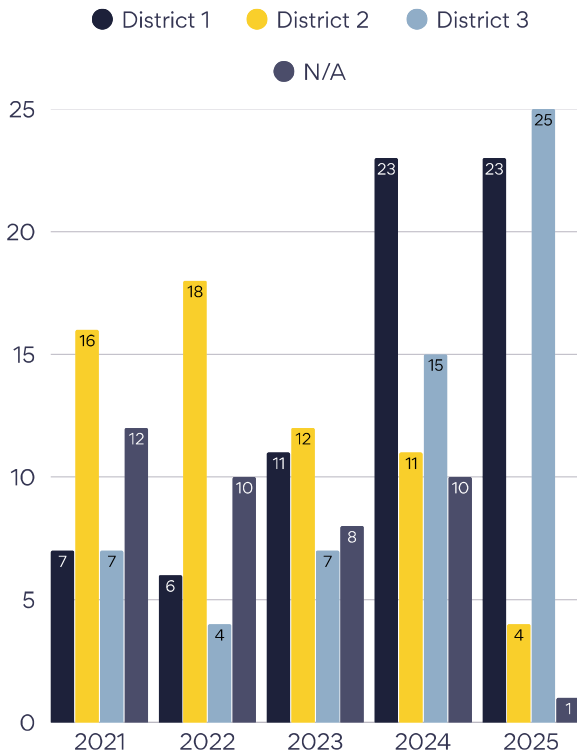


Of note, Police Ombuds Logue and Chief Hall jointly presented the OPO’s Policy and Procedures Report on F24-019 at the National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement Annual Conference in Minneapolis, Minnesota, highlighting collaboration beyond the recommendations made in the report. The most significant outcome was implementation of Integrating Communications, Assessments, and Tactics Training for SPD.

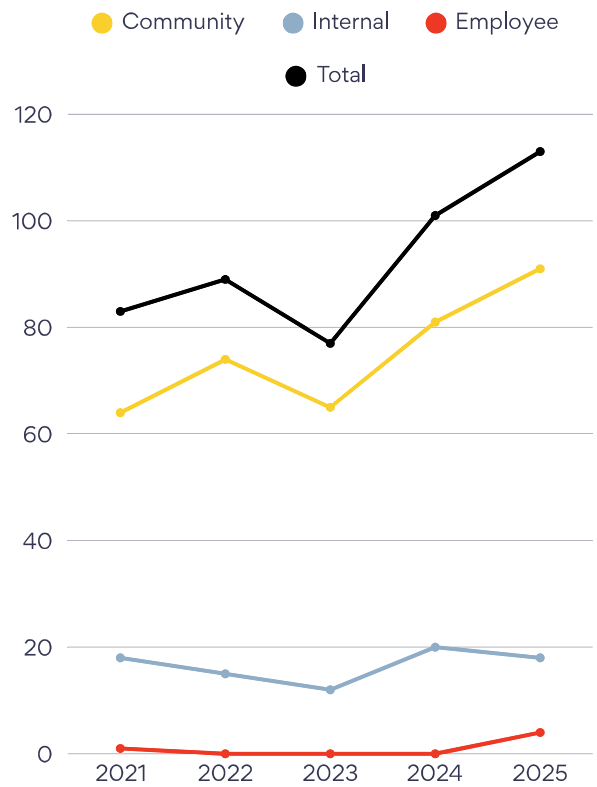
For more information on reports, visit <https://my.spokanecity.org/opo/documents>.

COMMENDATIONS, COMPLAINTS, & REFERRALS

The OPO forwarded 53 complaints to IA for investigation. District 3 generated the most complaints from the community. There were 282 total allegations made in 113 complaints combined between the SPD and OPO. The community made 91 complaints, 18 were internally generated and 4 complaints were submitted through the OPO by SPD employees.



Five year complaints by City Council district



Five year complaint trends

53

OPO complaints

91

Community complaints

18

Internal complaints

4

Employee complaints

11%

Increase in all complaints

COMMENDATIONS

The OPO submitted eight letters of appreciation for ride alongs that members of the OPO and Commission attended.

The community submitted six commendations to the OPO for either exceptional service by an officer or a positive interaction with an officer.

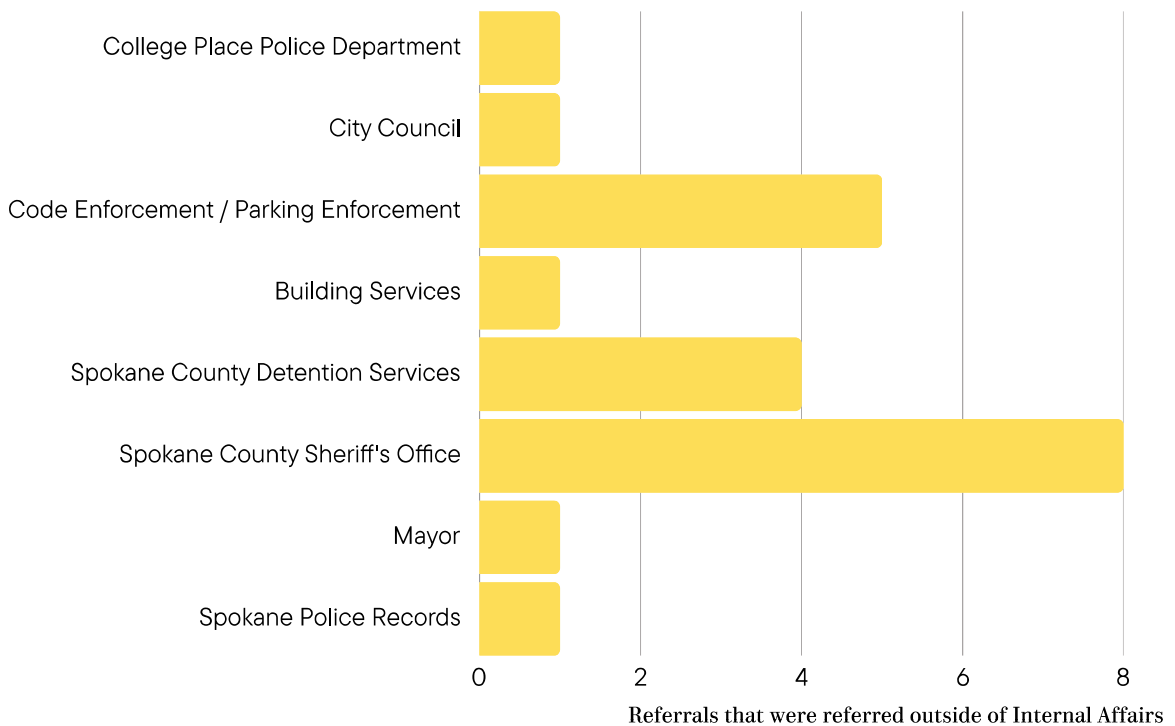


REFERRALS



The OPO submitted 58 total referrals with 35 internal referrals made. All internal referrals are sent to IA who then forwards them to the appropriate internal unit or department. Referrals were down 5% from 2024.

The majority of external referrals made were to the Spokane County Sheriff's Office.



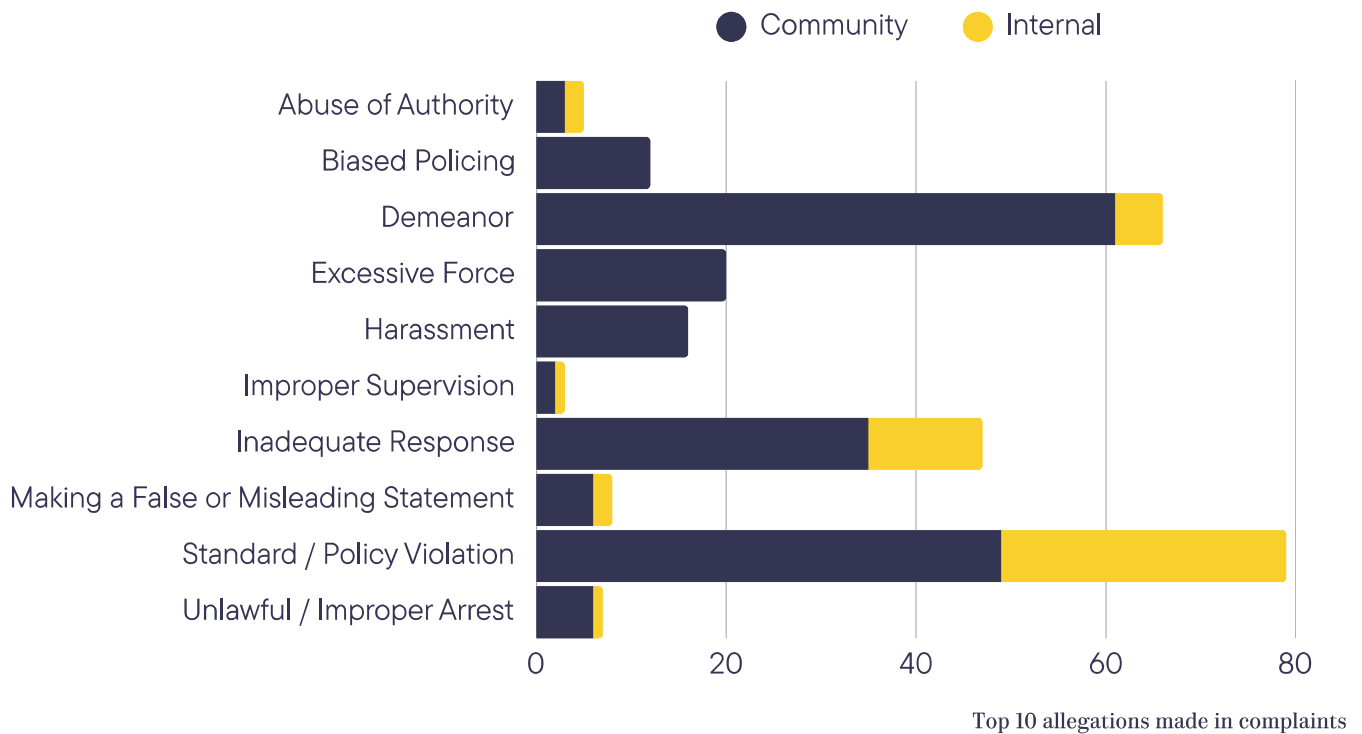
COMPLAINTS ANALYSIS

Standard / Policy Violation was the most common internally generated allegation. The most common types of allegations received from the community were Demeanor and Inadequate Response.

For full details on OPO complaints, visit: <https://my.spokanecity.org/opo/complaints>

Standard / Policy Violation

was the most common allegation overall



Examples of Standard / Policy Violation include but are not limited to:

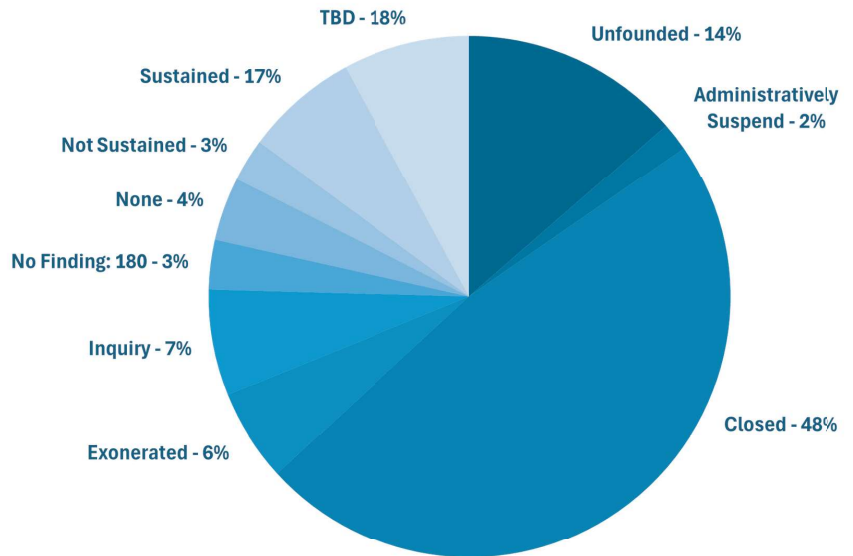
- When requested, officers will provide name and personnel number
- Report preparation
- Body worn camera violation
- Improper tactics
- Confidentiality of personnel files
- Refraining from developing or maintaining personal relationships with victims, witnesses, or suspects
- Failure to report
- Engaging in on-duty sexual relations
- Release of information
- Failure to take reasonable action
- Dereliction of duty
- Computer misuse
- Delayed report writing
- Misuse of cooperating individuals

OUTCOMES OF ALLEGATIONS

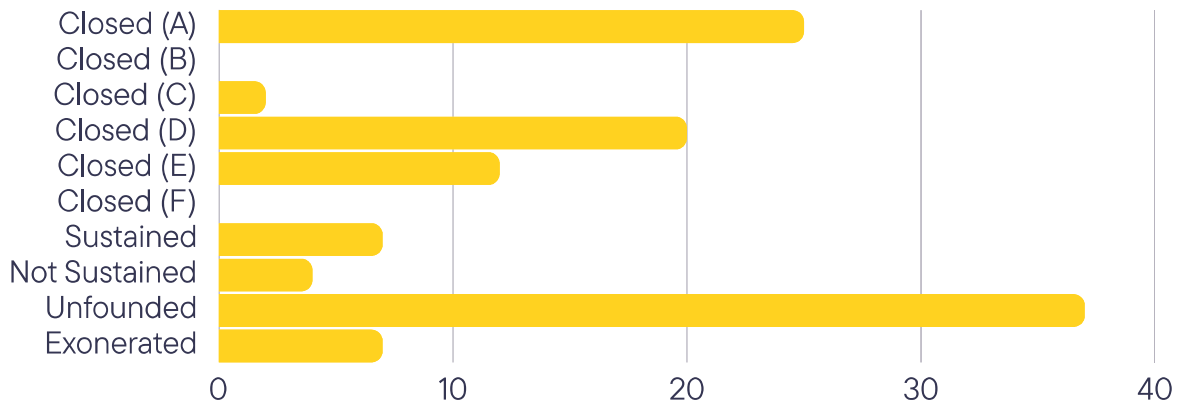
Community Complaints

The most common outcomes were:

- 37 Allegations were unfounded
- 25 Allegations were disproven upon initial review
- 20 Allegations were sent to a supervisor for informal follow-up.



● Outcomes of Community Complaints



The Closed category includes the following subsections:

- (A) an allegation of misconduct that is disproven upon initial review and
- (B) the complaining party refuses to cooperate to six subsections with findings.
- (C) The complaining party becomes unavailable and further contact is necessary to proceed.
- (D) A minor allegation sent to the employee’s supervisor for informal follow-up
- (E) All reasonable investigative leads were exhausted and no evidence of wrongdoing was uncovered.
- (F) The accused officer leaves employment and the allegations do not meet the criteria set forth in RCW 43.101.135(3). RCW 43.101.135(3) states that if the totality of the circumstances supports a conclusion that the officer resigned or retired in anticipation of discipline, whether or not the misconduct was discovered at the time, and when such discipline, if carried forward, would more likely than not have led to discharge, or if the officer was laid off when disciplinary action was imminent or pending which could have resulted in the officer's suspension or discharge, the employing agency shall conduct and complete the investigation and provide all relevant information to the commission as if the officer were still employed by the agency.