

Annual Report

2024



**OFFICE OF THE
POLICE OMBUDS
COMMISSION**

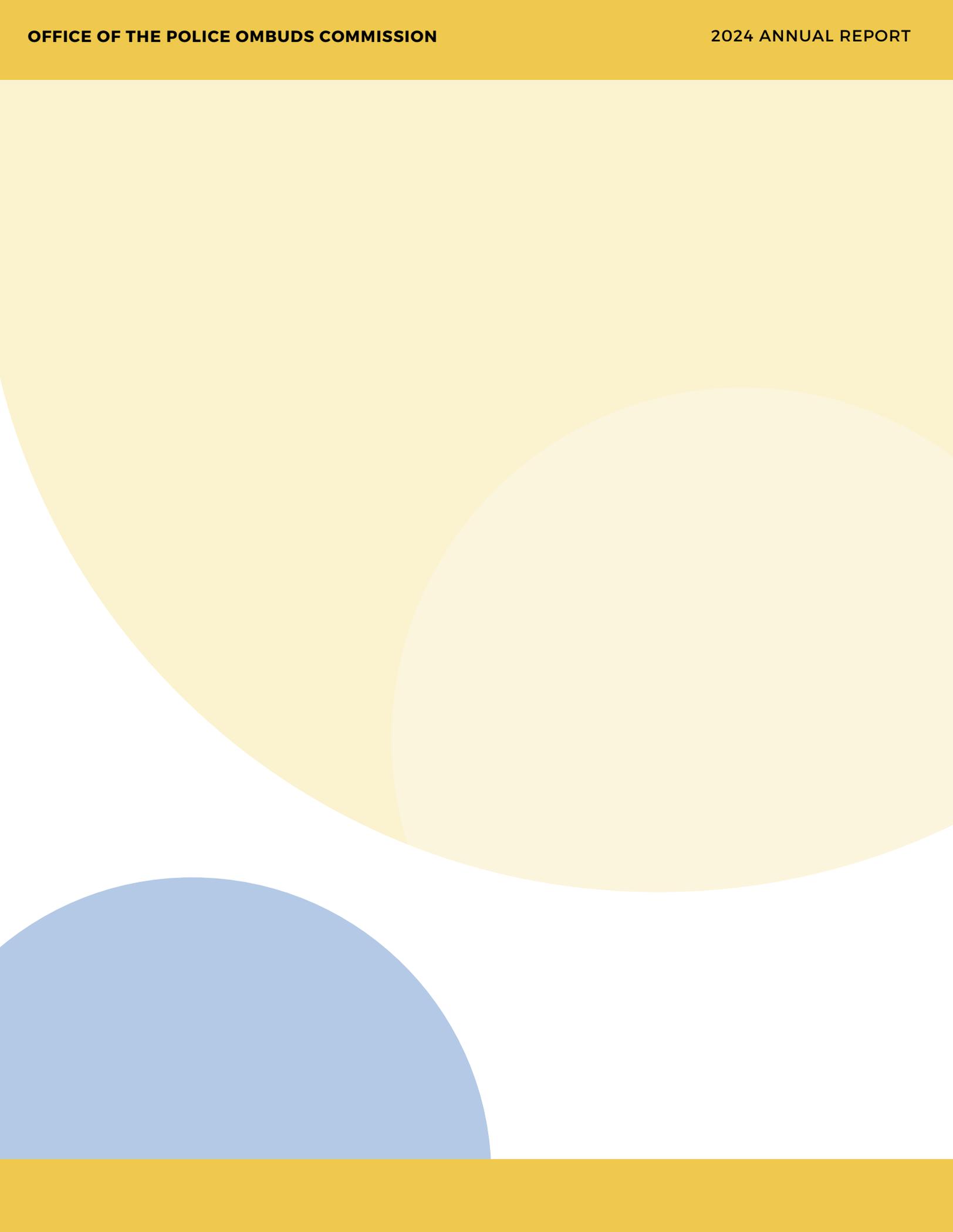


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OPO COMMISSION



Left to right: Ladd Smith, Vice-Chair; Jenny Rose; Amy McColm; Phillip Wetzel; bottom: Luc Jasmin III, Chair

Our Mission

The Office of Police Ombuds Commission exists to promote public confidence in the professionalism and accountability of the members of the Spokane Police Department by providing, through the Ombuds, independent review of police actions, thoughtful policy recommendations, and ongoing community outreach. The commission also assists the OPO in communicating with Spokane's diverse communities and the general public about the complaint filing and investigation process.

509-625-6755 (voicemail) | 509-625-6748 (fax)

opocommission@spokanecity.org

my.spokanecity.org/bcc/commissions/ombuds-commission

Monthly meetings every 3rd Tuesday at 5:30pm at City Hall

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR



Luc Jasmin III

The OPOC remains steadfast in its mission to support and advocate for true independent civilian oversight of the Spokane Police Department (SPD).

Policy and Budget Advocacy

In response to ongoing budgetary constraints, the OPOC has actively advocated for financial independence for the Office of the Police Ombuds (OPO). The reduction of funds in 2023 significantly impacted the office's ability to function effectively, highlighting the urgent need for a stable and predictable budget. The OPOC and OPO collaborated with the City Council and the Administration to pursue a shared objective of achieving budgetary independence. The OPOC fully supports tying the OPO's funding to a fixed percentage of the SPD budget,

ensuring its capacity to conduct comprehensive and independent oversight without external pressures.

As part of its ongoing efforts to promote inclusivity and align with Washington State, the OPOC prioritized updating the OPO's name to the term Ombuds. The OPOC collaborated with the City Council's Legal Advisor to amend the OPO's ordinance accordingly. This change ensures greater flexibility in personnel transitions and reflects a commitment to gender-neutral language in official titles.

Additionally, we approved 21 recommendations for SPD policies and training, addressing critical issues such as duty to intervene, Internal Affairs (IA) procedures, pursuit policies, and use of force review processes. While SPD has implemented some of these recommendations, others remain unaddressed, and we will continue to advocate for their adoption.

Community Engagement and Training

In 2024, the OPOC strengthened its engagement with the Spokane community. We invited key

stakeholders—including the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) President Lisa Gardner, City Council President Betsy Wilkerson, and SPD leadership—to participate in our meetings, fostering open dialogue and collaboration. Additionally, commissioners attended major community events, including the Martin Luther King Jr. March and National Night Out, reinforcing our commitment to community-centered oversight.

The OPOC actively encouraged and supported the OPO's collaboration with a local marketing firm to update outreach materials. This initiative aimed to incorporate the new name and enhance the logo's design, ensuring it is more engaging and accessible to the community.

Commissioners attended the National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement (NACOLE) Annual Conference, which centered on the theme of progress, preservation, and perseverance in civilian oversight. Additionally, they participated in the SPD's Fall In-Service training, which focused on active shooter response. With the addition of two new commissioners to the OPOC, we have recognized the need for a structured onboarding and training program for new commissioners to ensure continuity and effectiveness in our work.

Looking Ahead

As we move into 2025, the OPOC remains committed to ensuring true independent oversight of the SPD. We will continue advocating for:

- **Financial independence** to safeguard effective oversight
- **Expanded community partnerships** to strengthen public trust
- **Adequate staffing** to support the OPO's growing workload

Thank you to the Spokane community for your continued support and engagement. Your voices are essential in shaping a policing system that is fair, transparent, and accountable.

Summary of

OPOC ACTIONS & DEVELOPMENTS

The OPOC held a combination of six regular meetings and two special meetings. The OPOC continued use of the hybrid format of in-person and virtual meetings to provide greater public access to monthly meetings.

8*OPOC meetings***21 OF 21***OPO
recommendations
approved*

Approved OPO recommendations to SPD

1. In August, the OPOC approved nine recommendations based on two closing reports. One report was on an IA complaint, C23-070, and the other report was from an accident review, A23-047.
2. In December, the OPOC approved 12 recommendations based on three closing reports. One report was on a canine use review, K24-007, the second report was from a use of force review, F23-054, the third report was from a use of force review.

OPOC hired legal representation

Since 2022, the OPOC has operated under the guidance of the Legal Department. However, effective civilian oversight requires independent legal counsel. In November 2024, the OPOC retained outside counsel from Riverside NW Law Group PLLC.

Summary of

OPOC ACTIONS & DEVELOPMENTS

OPOC worked towards OPO budget independence

In 2024, the OPO/OPOC faced budget constraints following a significant reduction from an already limited budget.

This cut raised concerns about the organization's ability to effectively perform oversight functions, including staffing, equipment, training, and essential resources previously removed under past administrations.

To ensure stability amid administrative changes and maintain operational legislation, the OPOC concurred with the Ombuds initiative to link the OPO budget to the SPD budget, recommending a percentage allocation of the SPD annual budget moving forward; effectively establishing budgetary independence.

OPOC invited guest speakers to the OPOC meetings

The OPOC invited the following community leaders to speak at its 2024 meetings:

- Lisa Gardner, NAACP President
- Betsy Wilkerson, City Council President
- Detective Dave Dunkin, SPD Guild President
- Sergeant Trevor Winters, SPD Police Guild Vice President
- Maggie Yates, Deputy City Administrator
- Kevin Hall, Police Chief

These guest speakers provided valuable insights into their roles and helped foster community engagement. The OPOC aims to strengthen relationships and build meaningful partnerships across Spokane. The OPOC appreciates the willingness of these leaders to participate, as their thought provoking discussions continue to have a lasting impact on both the organization and the community.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



Commissioner Jasmin at the NAACP Freedom Fund Gala

In 2024, commissioners prioritized community engagement, attending key events such as:

- Martin Luther King Jr. march
- National Night Out
- Unity in the Community
- NAACP Freedom Fund Gala
- Spokane Alliance meetings
- Spokane Public Schools Equity Forum
- Neighborhood Council meetings
- NAACP meetings
- Quarterly Police Advisory Committee meetings
- City Council roundtable on homelessness
- Office of Independent Investigations meeting
- NAACP candidate forum
- Northeast Youth Family Services' Harvest on the Block

TRAINING

This year the OPOC saw two new commissioners join which put an emphasis not only on external training but also on how to effectively onboard future new commissioners to ensure that they understand the important role of a commissioner. During 2024, commissioners attended:

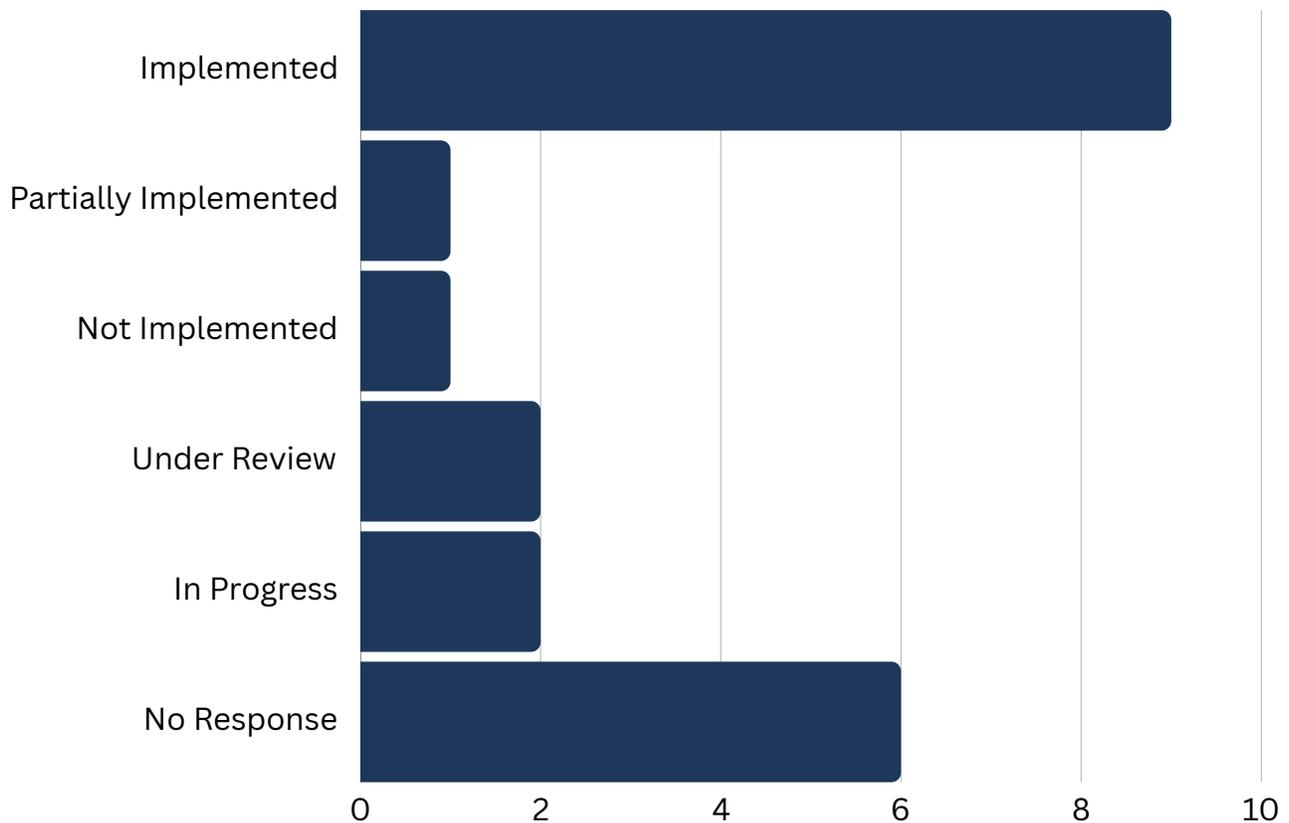
- NACOLE Annual Conference
- Daigle Law Group's Use of Force Summit
- SPD In-Service trainings
- 4 ride alongs with SPD officers in every district of Spokane

The OPOC also had access to numerous training webinars through NACOLE on topics such as: Building Community Engagement for Effective Community Relations, Constitutional Police-Community Encounters, The Importance of a Discipline Matrix in Policing and Civilian Oversight and Using Policing and Social Justice to Strengthen Stakeholder Relationships.

OPO RECOMMENDATIONS

The OPO wrote five closing reports and issued 21 recommendations. Closing reports are based on complaints, uses of force, collisions, and canine use. To view full recommendations and SPD's responses, please visit <https://my.spokanecity.org/opo/recommendations/2024/>.

Police Chief's Responses



Recommendations

Number	Recommendations	SPD Responses
R24-01	SPD should move the duty to intervene out of the use of force policy to remove confusion on its application and make it a standalone policy.	Implemented
R24-02	The OPO recommends IA investigators include the IA Checklist in every case and require other members of IA to fill out a conflict-of-interest form if they participate in any interviews.	Implemented
R24-03	The OPO recommends IA update its Standard Operating Procedures and Conflict of Interest Form to include whether an assigned investigator has knowledge or material information that would cause a conflict of interest.	Implemented
R24-04	There appears to be a discrepancy between the ARP's interpretation of what it means to keep personnel investigations confidential due to what item 8 in the R&R form says. IA should update the form to remove the conflicting statements so that the form complies with SPD Policy 1020.8.1's confidentiality requirements.	Implemented
R24-05	SPD should adopt a critical decision-making model or something similar regarding pursuits. The use of decision-making model can assist officers and supervisors in deciding whether to initiate a pursuit, gathering and evaluating information during the pursuit, and deciding when to discontinue. SPD should also develop specialized training for other personnel (e.g., supervisors, communications personnel, incident commanders) who may play a role in a pursuit review.	Implemented
R24-06	In-service training on the vehicle pursuit policy should occur at least once per year and could include both in-service and roll call components.	Implemented

Number	Recommendations	SPD Responses
R24-07	SPD should consider purchasing, sharing, or leasing a driver simulator that can incorporate scenario-based and decision-making training to provide practical refresher training.	Not Implemented
R24-08	SPD should use this incident to provide departmentwide scenario-based training in pursuits, specifically reminding officers to maintain hyperawareness of their surroundings and in radio discipline during pursuits.	Implemented
R24-09	SPD should ensure all supervisors who authorize pursuits write a report detailing their justification for the pursuit pursuant to SPD Policy 314.2.2.	Implemented
R24-10	SPD should update its canine policy to require all reasonable efforts to avoid unnecessary and unnecessarily injurious bites. When the location of the subject in hiding has been determined, handlers should not direct a direct apprehension if alternative tactics are available, safe, and feasible.	In Progress
R24-11	Supervisors should conduct separate tactical analysis for each function in which a canine is deployed. The factors that justify the use of a canine to search for an individual may differ from the factors in apprehending an individual. This would ensure that officers are exercising reasonable care and using the least amount of force necessary in apprehending subjects.	No Response
R24-12	Uninvolved supervisors should respond to every incident of force involving a canine to conduct an administrative investigation. A standardized list of questions should be used including: the factors requiring the canine use, determination of force options available, de-escalation tactics employed, and interviewing the subject.	No Response
R24-13	SPD should turn on audio during buffer mode of body worn camera recordings.	No Response
R24-14	SPD should train officers to determine whether to charge an individual purely based on whether the elements of the law are met. The victim's wishes should not be a determining factor.	In Progress

Number	Recommendations	SPD Responses
R24-15	SPD should include aggravation of pre-existing injuries as a type of reviewable force to have such as much documentation of the incident in the event the subject decides to pursue litigation.	No Response
R24-16	Review board members should receive specific guidance on force analysis and review board expectations. Greater emphasis should be placed on alternatives to force and de-escalation. The review boards should also provide an analysis of the supervisory review; and provide recommendations when supervisory reviews fall short.	Under Review
R24-17	The OPO recommends SPD safeguard the reputation of the Use of Force Review Board by only placing individuals who have a working knowledge of SPD policies and procedures on boards. Additionally, members of the review board should be individuals who are willing to critically analyze the different factors listed in SPD Policy 302.4.	Under Review
R24-18	The OPO recommends supervisors should clearly indicate in their reviews when a use of force is outside of policy should be considered exceptional. Exceptional techniques should be carefully reviewed to determine their necessity and appropriateness. Special care should be given to alternative and appropriate force options that were available at the time, if any.	Implemented
R24-19	SPD should amend its policy to evaluate the types of communication strategies that are more likely emphasize that the subject hears the order, understands it, and has enough time to respond prior to force being used.	No Response
R24-20	SPD should consider a comprehensive de-escalation training program that is evidence-based with measurable outcomes to determine the effectiveness of the tactics and training taught.	Partially Implemented
R24-21	Questions regarding uses of force should be investigated rather than reviewed. This is especially true in uses of force where an officer and the subject have conflicting recollections of the incident that create disputed facts that go to the heart of whether force was justified.	No Response

OPO EVALUATION

The OPO's engagement with community members continued to increase in 2024. The OPO responded to 3091 contacts and conducted 143 interviews with community members with ongoing or potential complaints. The Ombuds and the Deputy Ombuds attended and participated in 101 officer and complainant interviews in IA; attended 583 meetings in SPD; and attended 19 SPD review boards. The OPO oversaw 44 complaints against SPD brought through the OPO with oversight of 102 total complaints, and 61 complaint referrals to other agencies. The OPO has continued to stay engaged with oversight efforts on a statewide and national level.

The OPO continued writing closing reports in 2024. The OPO issued four closing reports, and a policy and procedure report with a total of 21 recommendations. The OPO issued closing reports on cases with opportunities to improve policy and training. The OPO's reports focused on creating uniform procedures for when a case should be sent to IA for investigation, the review the case would receive, and then communicating the department's feedback to supervisors.

This Commission is unanimous that Mr. Logue, Ms. Omana, and Ms. Coty are providing outstanding service to the citizens of Spokane.

They are working every day to ensure that independent civilian oversight is real and effective. The commission has participated in serious public meetings throughout the year in which we have heard the gritty details of IA investigations, official reviews of uses of force, and official reviews of police pursuits. These have all been thoroughly discussed and questioned by the Ombuds, his staff, the Commission, and the public. Improper political behavior by an on-duty police officer has been publicly reported and discussed. It has been publicly reported that the officer is no longer employed by the City of Spokane. It has been publicly reported and discussed that a use of force review board made up of senior officers minimized and effectively excused an SPD officer who threw a citizen to the ground injuring them.

The review board process has been changed and one of the reviewing officers is no longer assigned to the Use of Force Review Board. It is notable that Deputy Police Ombuds Omana was present at the meeting of this review board and challenged the statements and opinions of the reviewing officers. A higher level of review changed the process and the personnel of the board.

OPO EVALUATION (CONT.)

The statistics tell part of the story of the OPO's work, but effective independent civilian review begins in the daily drudgery of reviewing police reports, comparing statements of witnesses, reviewing audio and video recordings, the regular courageous assertion of civilian views at investigative interviews and review boards, the forthright reporting of disagreements on factual matters and judgments on compliance with policy. We emphasize that the Police Ombuds has authored five reports on investigations, uses of force, as well as pursuits and has publicly made 21 specific recommendations to improve the interaction of the SPD and the citizenry it protects and serves. Most recommendations have been approved by the Chief of Police and are in the process of being implemented.

Mr. Logue, Police Ombuds has forged a solid, trusting relationship with the City of Spokane Administration, the Spokane Police Department, and the Police Guild. He does not shy away from difficult issues or confrontation but always maintains his lodestar- timely, thorough and objectively independent investigation reporting to provide visible oversight and improvements to police policy training, and recruitment. Mr. Logue has achieved national leadership roles in civilian oversight. He was invited to attend a workshop at Harvard University on civilian oversight and also presented at the

NACOLE annual conference on police decertification.

Mr. Logue is a member of the Washington State Criminal Justice Training Commission and regularly sits on hearing panels which decide the continued licensure of Washington State police officers accused of misconduct. He currently serves on the Board for the NACOLE board. Commissioners have attended meetings between Mr. Logue, members of the Police Guild, and command members of the Police Department. We have always observed effective communication and mutual respect. Mr. Logue has performed admirably and is a credit to the City of Spokane.

Ms. Luvimae Omana, Deputy Police Ombuds, has taken several opportunities for advanced training, including SPD In-Service training, SPD ride alongs, 2 Roads Leadership Coaching, Labor Law and Arbitration conference, National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement annual conference, Use of Force Summit, International Associations of Chiefs of Police annual conference, United States Ombudsman Association annual conference and numerous webinars. She has demonstrated sophistication and incisiveness in penetrating police reports and understanding the relevance and

OPO EVALUATION (CONT.)

meaning of subtle pieces of evidence, recordings and witness statements and spends countless hours closely examining these materials. Ms. Omana has demonstrated the ability to assert independent civilian viewpoints in meetings where law enforcement opinions have been unanimously arrayed against her. She has not hesitated to fact check law enforcement statements and to persuasively report her findings. Ms. Omana has identified specific facts and entrenched procedures that have contributed to citizen complaints, and she has formulated and articulated specific recommendations for improvement, many of which have been accepted by the Chief of Police. She is a tireless, conscientious, talented member of the Ombuds' staff.

Ms. Christina Coty is the main public contact for the Office of the Police Ombuds. She is readily available in person, by phone or via email. Ms. Coty diligently and expertly fulfills all needs of this busy office and most importantly she engenders trust in citizen complaints and inspires confidence that their complaints are being heard and taken seriously. She is the OPO's complaint intake manager, receiving praise from IA investigators regarding the depth and quality of her intakes.

This Commission proudly and confidently reports that the Office of the Police Ombuds is performing admirably and is fulfilling its mission in every respect.

GLOSSARY

1. COMMENDATIONS

When an individual contacts the OPO and wishes to submit a compliment for an interaction or an incident involving an SPD officer.

2. COMMUNITY COMPLAINT

A complaint submitted by a community member.

3. INTERNAL COMPLAINT

A complaint generated within the police department officer involved shooting.

4. LETTER OF APPRECIATION

Letters submitted by the OPO or the OPOC to members of the SPD.

5. REFERRALS

Concerns received by the OPO that fall outside the scope of the complaint process and are sent to the police department for follow up. Internal referrals are sent to the appropriate city department or police unit that can address the concern. External referrals are sent to agencies outside of the city.

6. RIDE ALONG

SMC 04.32.150 4(e) states the OPOC shall complete a ride-along with the police within six months of appointment. A ride-along allows individuals to accompany a police officer on patrol, observing their work and gaining firsthand experience of law enforcement activities.

7. SPD REVIEW BOARDS

An administrative process after a disciplinary review aimed at improving police procedures, policies, and training. This includes the Use of Force Review Board; Collision and Pursuit Review Board; Administrative Review Board; and Deadly Force Review Board.

RESOURCES

Crime Check / 911:

509-456-2233

City of Spokane 311:

311 or 509-755-2489

SPD Tipline:

509-242-8477

SPDtipline@spokanepolice.org

Internal Affairs:

509-835-4588

spdinternalaffairs@spokanepolice.org

Police Headquarters:

1100 W Mallon Avenue

509-625-4100

North East Precinct:

5124 N Market Street

509-363-8281

Downtown Precinct

111 N Wall Street

509-622-5823

South Precinct:

524 S. Stone Street

509-625-3310

Northwest Precinct:

1100 W Mallon Avenue

Neighborhood Resource Officer Locations**C.O.P.S East Central**

524 S. Stone St.

509-625-3330

C.O.P.S Southwest

1403 W. 3rd. Avenue #B

509-755-2677

C.O.P.S Nevawood:

4705 N. Addison Street

509-625-3353

C.O.P.S North Central:

806 W. Knox Avenue

509-625-3348

C.O.P.S Northeast:

5124 N. Market Street

509-625-3343

C.O.P.S Northwest:

2215 W. Wellesley Avenue Suite D.

509-625-3336

C.O.P.S Southeast:

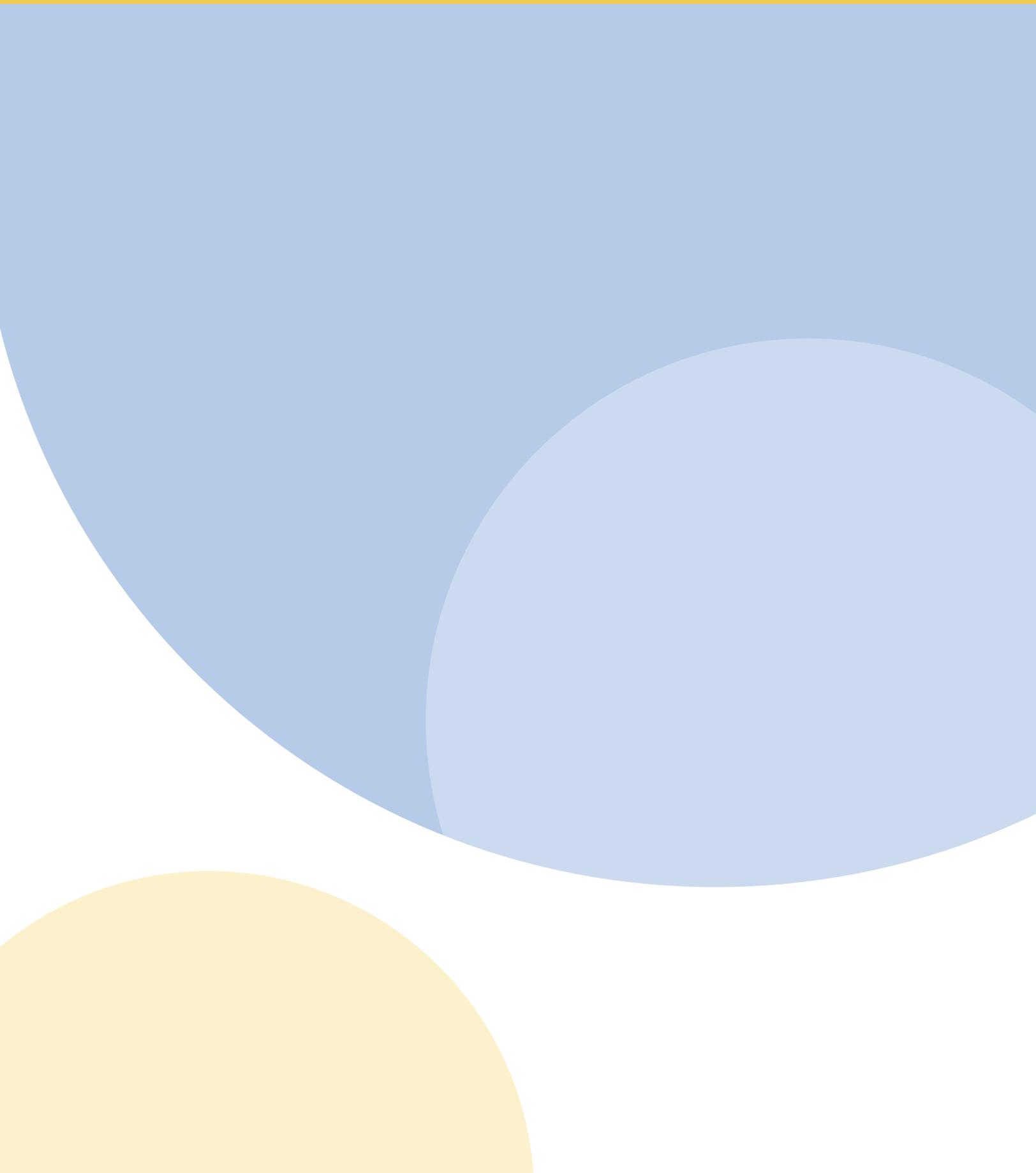
2727 S. Mount Vernon St. Suite 3C

509-622-3326

C.O.P.S West:

1901 W. Boone Avenue

509-625-3340





Online:
my.spokanecity.org/opo/forms/online



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Hours:

M-F, 8:00 AM – 4:30 PM

