

Citizen Complaint Authority
Board Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, September 3, 2025

Attendees Present

CCA Board Members

Samuel Burbanks, IV, Chair
Clarice Warner, Member
Rosa Cama, Member
Randi Burlew, Member

Attendees Absent

John Williams, IV, Chair

Staff

Cathy Bailey, Assistant City Manager
John Kennedy, Director
Dena Brown, Division Manager
Andrew Alanis, Investigator
David Sturkey, Assistant City Solicitor, Law Department
Jessalyn Goodman, Investigator
Ronald Pugh, Investigator
Robert Stephens, Investigator
Arnie Slaughter, Investigator
Kaitlyn Streicher, Investigator
Joseph Vesper, Investigator
Mark Burns, Internal Investigation Section Captain, CPD
Brent McCurley, Internal Investigation Section Lieutenant, CPD
Steve Sobel, CitiCable General Manager
Tom Potter, CitiCable Production Manager
Darius Jones, CitiCable Programming Manager

Brandon Upchurch, Sr. Administrative Specialist

Chair Burbanks, IV. called the meeting to order at 5:02 p.m.

Minutes from Previous Meeting

Member Warner moved and Member Cama seconded a motion to accept minutes from the August 2025 meeting. (Agree 4 - Oppose 0 - Abstain - 0). **Motion passed.**

Director's Report

Division Manager Dena Brown presented the Director's Report to the Board.

The Board was presented with 6 new fully vetted CCA investigation reports.

CCA received more than 21 allegations from Mr. Romero Tyler and Mr. Daquan Brown. CCA decided to consolidate the related reports into a comprehensive report due to the repeated contact between CPD officers and Mr. Tyler and Mr. Brown and concerns of harassment.

Public Comment

Cincinnati Black United Front (CBUF) member and consultant to the City Manager Iris Roley stated CBUF didn't have any themes for the cases being presented.

CPD Responses to CCA Recommendations

Recommendation R2507 – Revamp of CPD's Mediation Program

The Citizen Complaint Authority (CCA) recommends that the Cincinnati Police Department (CPD) formally restructure its current complaint resolution system into a formal mediation-based program that emphasizes mutual understanding and common ground between officers and complainants.

Messers Tyler and Brown have had several interactions with CPD, some initiated by CPD and others self-initiated. In the review of these incidents, particularly those initiated by CPD, CCA has found CPD's actions were largely justified based on the circumstances and available evidence. However, regardless of justification, these interactions repeatedly left unresolved tensions and breakdowns in communication between the two parties.

This highlights the need for a mediation model that is not focused solely on procedural review or command oversight, but one that centers on dialogue, empathy, and understanding between the officer and the complainant. And one that will need to be able to include mental health professionals if necessary. The goal is not only to assist individuals directly involved in complaints, but also to provide a proactive resolution model that can de-escalate ongoing or future tensions.

CPD Procedure Manual 15.100 Citizen Complaints and Reports of Favorable Police Conduct outlines the Citizen Complaint Resolution Process (CCRP) process. Expanding these concepts to include a revamped formal mediation program would benefit both officers and the broader community.

This recommendation builds directly upon CCA Recommendation R2410, approved by the Board on October 7, 2024, which identified critical flaws in CPD's CCRP. These flaws included:

- Lack of impartiality in the mediation process.
- Meetings held in non-neutral settings (e.g., police districts).
- Inability of complainants to bring witnesses or support persons.
- Command staff mediating without formal mediation training.

A neutral third-party facilitator is critical to maintain focus and fairness in the discussion. We suggest involving experienced mediators such as those affiliated with the Cincinnati Human Relations Commission, Xavier University's Center for Mission and Identity, or professional mediators with prior experience. Their presence would help guide the conversation productively, ensure both voices are heard, and foster a resolution that is constructive and beneficial to all parties involved.

As with R2410, the goal of this recommendation is preventative and restorative. To help prevent continually escalated police interactions with members of the public. Mr. Tyler and Mr. Brown's cases, while unique in individual detail, represent a broader challenge CPD faces in handling the intersection of law enforcement and Community Care. A revised, compassionate, and better-informed mediation protocol will not only improve outcomes for individuals but also strengthen public trust.

Appendix:

CCA Recommendation R2410

For several years, CPD has implemented the Citizen Complaint Resolution Process as a means for citizens to have their concerns directly and immediately reviewed by command staff. It promotes communication and

feedback between the officers and consumer, while allowing for grievances to be addressed and redressed as needed. Furthermore, it ensures command staff are aware of their employees' behaviors in the community. However, as seen in the course of this investigation, there are several problems within the CCRP:

- The command staff are not trained mediators.
- The command staff are not an impartial party.
- Meetings are held at the local district, not in a neutral location.
- Witnesses/support are not eligible to be present.

In the current CCRP model, participants may not feel comfortable or even capable of expressing their genuine concerns related to their interaction. In recent months, CCA spoke with several law enforcement oversight agencies across the country who have employed mediation models with their local police departments to positive effect, from both officers and community members. While the individual models may have minor variances in their structures and design, the overwhelming consequence is positive resolutions and improved community-police relations. After significant research into modern methods that would best apply to Cincinnati, CCA recommends CPD restructure the CCRP to resemble a mediation-based model.

(As described earlier, CPD does not have a current definition for Abuse of Authority)

CPD Response – No response at this time.

New Business

1. **CCA Case Number 25040:** Member Burlew moved and Member Warner seconded a motion to accept CCA's findings and recommendations, if any. (Agree 4 - Oppose 0 - Abstain 0). **Motion passed.**

2. **CCA Case Number 24023:** Member Burlew moved and Member Cama seconded a motion to accept CCA's findings and recommendations, if any. (Agree 4 - Oppose 0 - Abstain 0). **Motion passed.**

3. **CCA Case Number 25033:** Member Burlew moved and Member Cama seconded a motion to accept CCA's findings and recommendations. (Agree 4 - Oppose 0 - Abstain 0). **Motion passed.**

4. **CCA Case Number 25021:** Member Warner moved and Member Cama seconded a motion to accept CCA's findings and recommendations, if any. (Agree 4 - Oppose 0 - Abstain 0). **Motion passed.**

5. **CCA Case Number 24237:** Member Warner moved and Member Burlew seconded a motion to accept CCA's findings and recommendations, if any. (Agree 3 - Oppose 0 - Abstain 1). **Motion passed.**

6. **CCA Case Number 24084:** Member Warner moved and Member Cama seconded a motion to accept CCA's findings and recommendations, if any. (Agree 4 - Oppose 0 - Abstain 0). **Motion passed.**

Recommendations

1. R2507: Member Burlew moved and Member Warner seconded a motion to accept CCA's recommendation. (Agree 4 - Oppose 0 - Abstain 0). **Motion passed.**

All CCA reports and recommendation R2507 will be forwarded to the City Manager for review and final disposition.

Announcements

CBUF member and consultant to the City Manager Iris Roley commented that it is time for CCA and CPD to do problem solving/a SARA around a policy involving a harassment definition.

CPD Internal Investigation Section Captain Mark Burns requested CCA report out on how many sustained harassment findings CCA has found with its investigations and suggested that those investigations could be used as a template for a harassment definition.

Closing

Member Burlew moved and Member Cama seconded a motion to adjourn the Board meeting. The meeting ended at 7:33 p.m. (Agree 4 - Oppose 0 - Abstain 0). **Motion passed.**

The next meeting will be held on **Monday, October 6, 2025 at 5:00 p.m.**

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