

CCA Board Meeting Agenda

April 6, 2026

1. Call to order

2. Introduction by Chair John J. Williams

The Citizen Complaint Authority was established in 2003 under the Collaborative Agreement and a Memorandum of Agreement with the U.S. Department of Justice. We are a seven-member board with a professional investigative staff, headed by a director. Staff investigates allegations of misconduct by police officers and, through the director, forwards the findings and recommendations to the board. Our decisions are based upon a legal standard known as a "preponderance of the evidence." *Simply stated, the question is, "Does the greater weight of the evidence favor one side or the other?"* Our area of inquiry is solely whether the officer's actions conformed to Cincinnati Police Department policies, procedures and training.

Our findings generally will be one of the following: (1) Unfounded: where the investigation determined no fact to support that the incident actually occurred; (2) Sustained: where the allegation is supported by sufficient evidence to determine the incident occurred and the actions of the officer were improper; (3) Not sustained: where there are insufficient facts to determine whether the alleged misconduct occurred; and (4) Exonerated: where the greater weight of the evidence indicates the alleged conduct did occur but did not violate police department policies, procedures and training. Our findings and recommendations are forwarded to the City Manager for final determination.

3. Mission Statement

Per Article XXVIII., the Citizen Complaint Authority's (CCA) mission will be to investigate serious interventions by police officers, including but not limited to, shots fired, deaths in custody and major uses of force, and to review and resolve citizen complaints in a fair and efficient manner.

4. Approval of minutes from previous meeting

5. Director's report presented by Director John Kennedy

6. CPD response to CCA recommendations/observations presented by IIS Lieutenant

- **#R2601 (CCA #25124)**
 - CCA recommends that Officers Shack and Parker receive Customer Service training and De-escalation training. This recommendation comes after review of Officers Shack and Parker's BWC, which showed multiple concerning statements and behaviors by both officers during their interaction with a crowd. Customer Service and De-escalation training may provide these officers with better communication skills to de-escalate situations involving large and unruly crowds.
- **#R2602 (CCA #25124)**
 - CCA recommends that Officers Shack and Parker receive Customer Service training and De-escalation training. This recommendation comes after review of Officers Shack and Parker's BWC, which showed multiple concerning statements and behaviors by both officers during their interaction with a crowd. Customer Service and De-escalation training may provide these officers with better communication skills to de-escalate situations involving large and unruly crowds.

- **#R2603 (CCA #25124)**

- During this investigation, CCA observed a gap in CPD policy regarding the pointing of a CEW. Upon review of Officer Parker's BWC, when she pointed her CEW toward the crowd, the laser sights (two red dots) could be seen on the face, neck, and upper chest areas of Witness A and two unknown individuals. This occurred on multiple occasions between one and five seconds at a time.
- CPD Procedure § 12.545 Use of Force is clear about where to discharge a CEW, stating specifically that "frontal shots are prohibited except in situations of self-defense or defense of another," and "If a frontal shot must be taken, target the lower torso and legs." It also outlines the medical concerns regarding a CEW "deployed to the chest region causing sudden cardiac arrest." The CPD Tactical Patrol Guide – Utilizing Non-Lethal Options (Revised 07/22/2022) provides additional guidance on the utilization of a CEW, stating "the preferred target area of a CEW deployment is a subject's back. Officers should target the waistline in an attempt to place one probe above the waistline and one probe below the waistline." However, it is not specifically addressed where it is appropriate to point a CEW, specifically in reference to pointing a CEW toward areas of the body where officers are prohibited from discharging, such as the face, neck, or chest.
- Officer Parker's decision to display her CEW was within CPD policy; however, CCA recommends an update to CPD Procedure § 12.545 Use of Force to address where officers are permitted to point their CEW at an individual, and to specifically prohibit them from pointing the CEW at an individual's face, neck, or chest. Doing so would provide greater clarity about the appropriateness of CEW pointing, which would enhance officer and citizen safety, promote trust, and reduce citizen complaints. It should be noted that similar observations were made in CCA #22247 and #23023, and a similar recommendation was made in #R2418 in CCA #24080.

- **#R2604 (CCA #25124)**

- During this investigation, CCA observed a need for clarity regarding CPD Procedure § 12.545 Use of Force. That policy states that for "Hard hands' use of force with injury or complaint of injury," officers are required to notify a supervisor. It states, "The use of force will not be investigated by any officer who used force or chemical irritant, whose conduct led to an injury to a prisoner, or who authorized the conduct that led to the reportable incident."
- During Sergeant Spradlin's CCA interview, he stated that he completed a hard hands investigation regarding the leg sweep used by Officer Shack. He stated that he asked Lieutenant Jefferies if he should complete the investigation, citing concerns that it should be investigated by another supervisor since he was involved in the incident; however, he was ultimately instructed to complete the investigation by Lieutenant Jefferies since he was not the officer who used force.
- CCA interviewed Lieutenant Jefferies, who verified that he instructed Sergeant Spradlin to complete the investigation into Officer Shack's use of force. He advised that Sergeant Spradlin informed him that he was only escorting Ms. Thorne when Officer Shack used force, thus, Lieutenant Jefferies stated that it was not necessary for another supervisor to complete the investigation. CCA questioned Lieutenant Jefferies about the section of policy that indicated "The use of force will not be investigated by any officer ... who authorized the conduct that led to the reportable incident." He explained that if Sergeant Spradlin had instructed Officer Shack to take Ms. Thorne to the ground, then the investigation should have been completed by another supervisor. Since Sergeant Spradlin did not authorize or order the use of force, he was permitted to complete the investigation.
- This explanation led to different interpretations of this policy. CCA interpreted the policy to mean that a supervisor who authorized any part of the incident that led to the use of force, including the detainment of the suspect, should not be the one to investigate the use of force. Since Sergeant Spradlin initiated the detainment of Ms. Thorne, which ultimately led to Officer Shack's use of force, CCA believed that an uninvolved supervisor should have completed the investigation. However, Lieutenant Jefferies' interpretation of policy was that any supervisor who authorized or instructed the use of force should not be the one to investigate that use of force.
- CCA recommends clarification to CPD Procedure § 12.545 Use of Force, to more clearly articulate the level of involvement and/or conduct of a supervisor which would be appropriate for them to complete a use of force investigation.

- **#O2601 (CCA #25124)**
 - During this investigation, CCA observed Officer Shack's BWC disconnect from his person during two different arrests. First, Officer Shack's BWC fell to the ground when he was arresting Ms. Thorne. It was not reconnected to his person until after Ms. Thorne was secured in the cruiser, approximately one minute and 40 seconds later. His BWC disconnected from his person a second time when he was arresting Witness B and was not reconnected until approximately one minute and 30 seconds later. During Officer Shack's CCA interview, he recalled his BWC falling to the ground and stated, "It was probably knocked off in the midst of trying to get her into custody. As you can see, I have a magnet, so even if I brush it, it falls off."
 - Due to the important role BWC footage plays in evidence collection, accountability, and transparency, CPD should ensure that their officers are equipped with secure BWC brackets to limit the prevalence of the BWC becoming easily disconnected from an officer's person, especially during hands-on situations such as arrests and uses of force.
- **#R2605 (CCA #25157)**
 - CPD policy 12.700 requires a BWC Request Form to be completed in RMS, however CCA Requested this form and it was not completed. CCA found CPD staff notes from 03/14/2025 that updates policy 12.540 Body Worn Camera (BWC) System directive to say a BWC Request Form is no longer required. Policy 12.700 was not updated and CCA recommends that it should be.

7. Response to 3/1/26 Cincinnati Enquirer article

8. Public comment period (not to exceed 3 minutes)

9. New business

- | | |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. CCA #25258 Lauren Sellers | 6. CCA #25144 Kayla Bryant |
| 2. CCA #25030 Veronica Falodun | 7. CCA #25189 Nigel Agboh |
| 3. CCA #25205 Kelvin Miller | 8. CCA #25237 Tracy Gragston |
| 4. CCA #25160 Gerald Barnes | 9. CCA #25154 Tracy Gragston |
| 5. CCA #25234 Antoine Burrell | 10. CCA #26047 Deborah Jones |

10. Announcements

11. Adjournment to executive session (if required)

12. Reconvene if necessary (if required)

Thank you for viewing and attending the CCA Board meeting today.

Remember, CCA is here to help you address any concerns you have regarding interaction with a Cincinnati Police Officer. While CCA's primary purpose is to investigate specific allegations of serious misconduct by CPD, even if your concern does not fall within CCA's purview, CCA will send all concerns or commendations to CPD on your behalf.

The next Board meeting will be on **Monday, May 4, 2026**, at 5:00 pm. Copies of any of the investigation summaries discussed today are available on CCA's website at www.cincinnati-oh.gov/ccia.

13. Adjournment

bu