



# Portland's New Community-Led Police Oversight System

Comparing the current system to that proposed by the Police Accountability Commission.

## Background

In November, 2020, Portlanders voted on ballot measure 26-217 to establish a police oversight system in the City Charter (like the City's Constitution) to replace the current system with a more empowered, community-run board.

The Police Accountability Commission (PAC) spent 20 months from December 2021 to August 2023 designing how the new system will function.

In the PAC's plan, the new **Community Board for Police Accountability (CBPA)** will have 33 members who rotate through three-year terms and hear cases in panels of five or more people. The Charter requires the Board membership to represent diverse lived experiences, including those who experience systemic racism and/or mental illness, addiction, or alcoholism. The Charter also prohibits current and former officers and their families from Board membership. The CBPA will hire the Director of the new **Office of Community-based Police Accountability (OCPA)**.

**Portland City Council accepted the report on September 21, and has 60 days to forward it as written to the US Department of Justice** or make changes before sending it. The DOJ Settlement Agreement about Portland Police policies needs to be revised to match new system.

## Differences Between the Proposed and Current Systems

New System (PROPOSED)	Current System	Source
<u>Simplified Community-run System:</u> The new Board is <b>community-led</b> with investigations run by <b>non-police investigators</b> . The new Community Board for Police Accountability will hire the Director of the new Office of Community-based Police Accountability. <b>Cases will move through one system.</b>	In the current system, <b>cases are routinely shifted among four systems:</b> the City's Independent Police Review (IPR-conducts intake); the Police Bureau's Internal Affairs unit (IA- <b>investigates most complaints</b> ); the Citizen Review Committee (CRC-hears appeals), and the Police Review Board (PRB).	Charter Sections 2-1001 and 2-1005
<u>More Authority Over Police:</u> The new Board will <b>make decisions about whether officers violated policy and impose corrective action/discipline</b> if appropriate.	Currently, community members are the majority decision-makers <b>only in the appeals process</b> (at CRC). If the Chief disagrees with the CRC's findings, <b>City Council</b> makes the final decision.	Charter 2-1007, proposed code 35D.180
<u>Investigation of and Authority Over Police Shootings:</u> The new Board staff will <b>investigate deadly force incidents and the system will allow community members to appeal findings in those cases</b> if officers are not found "out of policy" by the original panel.	Currently, IPR can go to the scene of deadly force incidents, observe investigations, and vote on proposed findings at the PRB, but <b>cannot investigate</b> . The CRC has been told that they <b>cannot hear appeals by community members on deadly force cases</b> .	Charter Section 2-1008, proposed code 35D.240
<u>Advocates to Guide You:</u> The new system will <b>provide complaint navigators to community members from the beginning to the end of the process.</b>	Currently, a person who files an appeal (which excludes deadly force) <b>only gets access to an "Appeals Process Advisor" toward the end of the process.</b>	Proposed code 35D.090
<u>Policy Powers:</u> The new system will make recommendations about policy, training & practices. <b>If the Chief doesn't accept the recommendation, the new oversight board may send it to City Council</b> , and the Charter requires the Council to vote whether to approve the recommendation.	In the current system, IPR and CRC can make recommendations and <b>the Chief can decide whether or not to accept them, without City Council's involvement.</b>	Charter Section 2-1007b

## More Information Regarding the Police Accountability Commission's Proposal:

The PAC's Proposed City Code and Final Report are available on the City's Police Accountability Commission site ([portland.gov/police-accountability](http://portland.gov/police-accountability)) at the "PAC Final Recommendations and Report" link.

What do you think? Let City Council know: <https://www.portland.gov/help/contact-elected-official> or 503-823-4082.

This flyer was created by Portland Copwatch and is also available online at <https://tinyurl.com/PDXoversight2023>

For more information call Portland Copwatch at 503-236-3065 or email [copwatch@portlandcopwatch.org](mailto:copwatch@portlandcopwatch.org)

Disclosure: Portland Copwatch members Dan Handelman and Charlie Michelle-Westley served as members of the Police Accountability Commission.