

Albany Community Police Review Board (CPRB)

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

What is the CPRB?

The Albany Community Police Review Board (CPRB) independently reviews and investigates complaints of alleged misconduct committed by officers of the City of Albany Police Department (APD). The CPRB is staffed by civilians, and it is not part of the APD.

How do I file a complaint?

If you have experienced or witnessed potential misconduct by a member of the APD:

- Fill out the complaint form online or download a paper form at www.albanycprb.org. Click “File a Complaint.”
- Send your signed complaint form via email to cprb@albanylaw.edu or mail the paper copy to: Albany Community Police Review Board via Government Law Center, Albany Law School, 80 New Scotland Ave, Albany, NY 12208.

The Complaint Form is available in English and Spanish at www.albanycprb.org.

Where can I get a complaint form?

- The CPRB website: www.albanycprb.org
- Albany Public Libraries: visit www.albanypubliclibrary.org/locations
- Any Albany Police Station
- Albany Community Development Agency*
- Albany Housing Authority*
- Capital District Gay & Lesbian Community Council*
- Center for Law and Justice*
- Government Law Center of Albany Law School
- New York Civil Liberties Union*

Organizations marked with an asterisk (*) have agreed to provide assistance with filling out complaint forms.

Can I file an anonymous complaint?

You can file an anonymous complaint if you witnessed or were directly involved in an incident. If you choose to be anonymous, we will not be able to contact you with potential follow-up questions or provide you with any information about the case. If you would like our office to follow up with you, please be sure to provide your first and last name, phone number, and/or email or mailing address.

Can I file a complaint without the officer's name and badge number?

Yes. We often get complaints against unidentified officers. In most of these cases, our investigators or APD detectives are able to identify the officer using police department records and documents. We may need to interview you a second time and have you view officer photos to make a positive ID.

What happens after I file a complaint?

You will receive a letter from the Board notifying you that your complaint has been received.

Staff at the CPRB and APD Office of Professional Standards (OPS) will determine if it falls within the CPRB's jurisdiction. If your complaint is not in our jurisdiction, it is referred to the appropriate agency or entity to investigate the incident. If it is within our jurisdiction, you will receive a letter from the CPRB informing you of our next steps.

JURISDICTION

The CPRB has the authority to review or investigate complaints of alleged misconduct committed only by members of the APD.

Complaints against members of police departments other than the APD must be filed with the appropriate local or state authority.



www.albanycprb.org



518-445-2383



cprb@albanylaw.edu

How are complaints resolved?

The CPRB determines whether complaints are appropriate for monitoring, investigation, or mediation.

MONITOR

If the complaint is determined appropriate for review, the APD Office of Professional Standards (OPS) will lead the investigation. The CPRB can assign a monitor to observe and monitor the OPS investigation of a complaint if the allegation involves excessive force or civil rights violation.

INVESTIGATION

A CPRB investigation is a comprehensive way to gather evidence about allegations of police conduct within the CPRB's purview and prepare reports for action by the Board. The CPRB investigators gather as much evidence as possible, including obtaining video evidence and statements from witnesses and officers.

An investigation can take several months to complete. Your cooperation, which will involve answering questions and giving a complete statement about the incident, is vital. When the investigation is complete, the CPRB makes a determination of whether the officer violated APD policy.

MEDIATION

Mediation provides an opportunity for civilians and police officers to meet in a safe, quiet, and private space with a trained and impartial mediator to talk confidentially about what happened. Mediation is a voluntary process—all parties must agree to participate. You can request mediation on your complaint form.

Why is filing a complaint beneficial for the community?

Findings from your complaint can be used to address gaps in APD policies and procedures.

Does the CPRB discipline officers?

No. If the CPRB determines that an officer committed misconduct, it recommends discipline, ranging from verbal warning to termination from the APD for the most serious violations. Only the Chief of Police has the authority to decide the level of discipline and impose punishment on an officer.

Do complaints remain on an officer's record?

Yes. Regardless of the outcome, all complaints remain on an officer's CPRB history, which is part of their personnel record at the police department. This includes complaints that are resolved through our mediation program.

What if the police officer retaliates against me for filing a complaint?

If you believe the APD is retaliating against you for filing a complaint with the CPRB, notify us immediately. The CPRB refers all complaints of retaliation to the APD's Office of Professional Standards (OPS); however, if the conduct alleged in the retaliation complaint is determined to fall within the CPRB's jurisdiction, we will generate a new complaint and open an investigation into the alleged retaliation in addition to the OPS referral.

If I am in jail, do I have the right to file a complaint?

Yes, you have that right; it doesn't matter whether or not you are currently incarcerated. Our investigator can visit city or county jails in order to interview complainants.

Can the CPRB help me with a summons or arrest?

No, we do not have the jurisdiction. A summons or an arrest can only be resolved in court. We cannot provide any legal advice or assistance. You should seek guidance from a licensed attorney.



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