

Office of the Independent Police Auditor

Mission

The Office of the Independent Police Auditor (OIPA) bolsters trust between the residents of Fairfax County and the Fairfax County Police Department by providing accountability, fairness, transparency, and trust in the complaint system and investigative process. The OIPA also provides an accessible, safe, impartial, and responsive intake venue for complaints against the Fairfax County Police Department and its employees.

Connection to the Countywide Strategic Plan

The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors adopted the first-ever Countywide Strategic Plan on October 5, 2021. The Countywide Strategic Plan serves as a road map to help guide future work, focusing on the 10 Community Outcome Areas that represent the issues of greatest importance to the community, and uses our One Fairfax equity policy to invest in people and places that have limited access to opportunity. On February 20, 2024, the second Annual Report on the work of the strategic plan was released to the public. The report contains point-in-time progress highlights for each of the community outcome areas, plus three data dashboards and data stories that are being replicated across all of the outcome areas, and a number of additional initiatives to embed the elements of the plan within department-level work. The report also includes a Year Three Implementation Model, which will engage hundreds of County subject-matter experts to identify and champion the specific strategies that will move forward to implementation under the guidance of the Board of Supervisors. For more information on the Countywide Strategic Plan, please visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/strategicplan. The Office of the Independent Police Auditor primarily supports the following Community Outcome Areas:



Community Outcome Area	Vision Statement
Effective and Efficient Government	<i>All people trust that their government responsibly manages resources, is responsive to their needs, provides exceptional services and equitably represents them.</i>
Safety and Security	<i>All people feel safe at home, school, work and in the community.</i>

Focus

The OIPA was established by the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors (BOS) on September 20, 2016, in response to recommendations from the Ad-Hoc Police Practices Review Commission. In creating the OIPA, the BOS mandated that the Auditor shall review Fairfax County Police Department (FCPD) use of force investigations that involve serious injury or death, including officer involved shootings, or are the subject of a public complaint made to the FCPD or the Auditor.

The OIPA monitors and reviews internal investigations of all relevant use of force cases and in-custody deaths to determine the thoroughness, completeness, accuracy, objectivity, and impartiality of FCPD investigations. The OIPA issues a public report for each reviewed internal/administrative investigation. The OIPA also produces an annual report, as well as additional reports on FCPD policy recommendations or data reviews. Through these reports, the Auditor makes public recommendations concerning revisions of FCPD policies, training, and practices.

Another core function of the OIPA is to serve as an independent intake venue for complaints against the FCPD. The OIPA processes complaints regarding the use of force, and coordinates with Agency 43, the Office of the Police Civilian Review Panel (OPCRP), who processes complaints of serious misconduct and abuse of authority. The public may submit complaints to either the OIPA or the OPCR, in lieu of submitting them directly to the FCPD, and may request that the Auditor or the Police Civilian Review Panel review an already completed FCPD investigation if they are not satisfied with the results.

The OIPA coordinates with the OPCR to conduct outreach to the community and implement procedures related to the dual oversight structure in the County. In FY 2023, the OIPA transferred administrative support duties of the Police Civilian Review Panel to the OPCR, but still provides auxiliary support as needed to the office.

Budget and Staff Resources

Category	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Adopted	FY 2024 Revised	FY 2025 Advertised
FUNDING				
Expenditures:				
Personnel Services	\$276,977	\$336,829	\$336,829	\$325,577
Operating Expenses	25,122	32,675	32,675	32,675
Total Expenditures	\$302,099	\$369,504	\$369,504	\$358,252
AUTHORIZED POSITIONS/FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT (FTE)				
Regular	2 / 2	2 / 2	2 / 2	2 / 2

FY 2025 Funding Adjustments

The following funding adjustments from the FY 2024 Adopted Budget Plan are necessary to support the FY 2025 program:

Employee Compensation **\$16,460**
 An increase of \$16,460 in Personnel Services includes \$6,737 for a 2.00 percent market rate adjustment (MRA) for all employees and \$5,178 for performance-based and longevity increases for non-uniformed merit employees, both effective July 2024. The remaining increase of \$4,545 is included for employee pay increases for specific job classes identified in the County's benchmark class survey of comparator jurisdictions.

Reductions (\$27,712)

A decrease of \$27,712 reflects reductions utilized to balance the FY 2025 budget. The following table provides details on the specific reductions:

Title	Impact	Positions	FTE	Reduction
Reduce Funding for Vacant Temporary Position	The Office of the Independent Police Auditor was utilizing a temporary position to provide administrative support to the Office of the Police Civilian Review Panel. Now that the Office of the Police Civilian Review Panel is fully staffed, the administrative functions have been transferred and thus the funding associated with this workload in OIPA is no longer needed. It is not expected this reduction will have a negative impact on agency operations.	0	0.0	\$27,712

Changes to FY 2024 Adopted Budget Plan

The following funding adjustments reflect all approved changes in the FY 2024 Revised Budget Plan since passage of the FY 2024 Adopted Budget Plan. Included are all adjustments made as part of the FY 2023 Carryover Review and all other approved changes through December 31, 2023.

There have been no adjustments to this agency since approval of the FY 2024 Adopted Budget Plan.

Position Detail

The FY 2025 Advertised Budget Plan includes the following positions:

OFFICE OF THE INDEPENDENT POLICE AUDITOR – 2 Positions			
1	Independent Police Auditor	1	Management Analyst III

Performance Measurement Results by Community Outcome Area

Effective and Efficient Government

The number of complaints processed each year depends on the number of individuals who submit complaints through the OIPA for Auditor or Police Civilian Review Panel review, rather than filing complaints directly to the FCPD. The OIPA processed six individual complaints concerning the use of force in FY 2023. The OIPA estimates receiving four complaints that fall under the Auditor's authority in FY 2024.

The number of incidents reviewed by the Auditor depends on the volume and type of uses of force that occur within the County. The Auditor reviewed 25 investigations in FY 2023. These numbers reflect the number of investigations reviewed or under review during the fiscal year and include investigation reviews subject to a complaint made to the FCPD. Upon completion of a review, the Auditor issued 11 incident reports in FY 2023. It is anticipated the Auditor will conduct 50 investigation reviews and will complete at least 10 incident reports in FY 2024. The higher-than-average number of reviews anticipated in the next fiscal year is due to a backlog of investigations into complaints lodged with the FCPD.

The Auditor must issue a public report within 60 days of having access to the completed FCPD investigation file. The Auditor met this deadline with 72 percent of reports published in FY 2023, falling short as a result of pandemic-related delays in conducting in-person reviews of files. In addition to producing incident reports, the Auditor released an annual report in FY 2023. The Auditor anticipates publishing one ad-hoc report in FY 2024, in addition to the annual report.

Safety and Security

Through its reports, the OIPA makes public recommendations on revisions to FCPD policies, training, and practices. The OIPA tracks its recommendations and whether they are ultimately adopted by the FCPD. As it takes time and resources for the FCPD to memorialize and implement changes, OIPA anticipates the recommendations it makes in one fiscal year to not be adopted by the FCPD until a future fiscal year. The IPA has made 42 recommendations to date, 31 have been implemented or adopted by the FCPD, 7 have not been adopted by the FCPD, and 4 recommendations were directed to the BOS for review rather than actual implementation by the FCPD and, therefore, will not be implemented or adopted by the FCPD. It is anticipated that, should the OIPA provide any new recommendations in FY 2024, they will not be adopted by the FCPD until FY 2025 at the earliest.

Community Outcome Area	FY 2021 Actual	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Estimate	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Estimate	FY 2025 Estimate
Effective and Efficient Government						
Customer Satisfaction with County Services						
Investigations reviewed	19	16	14	25	50	25
Reports published ¹	11	7	11	12	12	17
Safety and Security						
Effective and Equitable Administration of Justice						
Policies/Practices/Training recommendations provided	7	16	3	2	2	5
Policies/Practices/Training recommendations adopted by FCPD	5	2	10	20	0	2

¹ Reports include incident-specific reports, the annual report, and other ad-hoc reports such as those summarizing policy or data review.

A complete list of performance measures can be viewed at
<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/budget/fy-2025-advertised-performance-measures-pm>