



End of Year Report 2018-2019



OFFICE OF
POLICE OVERSIGHT

(512) 974-9090 | www.atxpoliceoversight.org | 1520 Rutherford Lane

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A Note From Our Director



On November 15, 2018, the Office of Police Oversight was established via unanimous vote by the Austin City Council. This was a tremendous moment for Austin as the community, City of Austin management and staff, City Council, the Austin Police Department, the Austin Police Association, and many stakeholders came together to expand the scope of police oversight for the purposes of greater transparency and accountability.

We have taken a holistic approach to oversight that prioritizes communication, collaboration and a greater commitment to accountability. This new approach is a reflection of our culture and beliefs in Austin and I am confident that we are on the right path!

OPO has had an awesome first year, and there is much more to come. We aim to be a national model for civilian police oversight and proof that effective oversight can lead to systemic change and improved public trust of law enforcement.



OFFICE OF
POLICE OVERSIGHT

Who We Are

Our Vision: To enhance a culture of accountability and transparency within policing in Austin

Provide

OPO
Strategic
Direction

Create

Inform



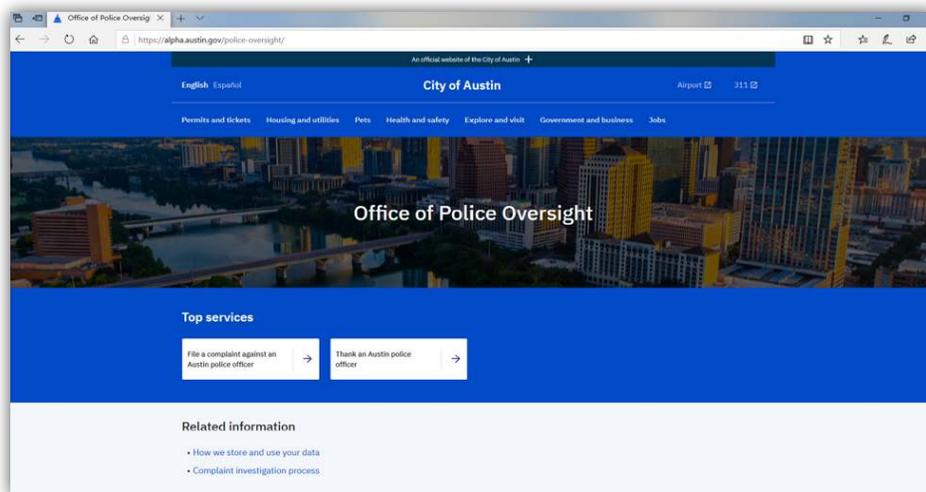
Mission Statement

Our new mission statement reflects input and feedback from the community

The mission of the Office of Police Oversight (OPO) is to provide impartial oversight of the Austin Police Department's conduct, practices, and policies to enhance accountability, inform the public to increase transparency, and create sustainable partnerships throughout the community.

Transforming Accountability Online Complaint/Thank You Form

One of the biggest advancements we made this year was creating a website where individuals can file a Complaint or Thank You about the Austin Police Department (APD). This service is for anyone who experienced or observed an interaction with APD and wants to provide feedback. Our online complaint form underwent detailed user accessibility testing to ensure it is easy to use. The form accepts anonymous complaints, and the only required information is what happened during the incident, the date, time, and location. The form is also available in Spanish.

A screenshot of the 'File a complaint' form on the City of Austin website. The form is titled 'File a complaint' and includes a sub-header 'OFFICE OF POLICE OVERSIGHT'. It contains a paragraph stating 'You DO NOT have to give personal information in order to file a complaint.' and another paragraph: 'By telling us about your experience, you help us better serve you and your community. Thank you.' Below this is a 'Select an option' section with a dropdown menu currently set to 'Online'. Underneath, there are sections for 'Required information' (What happened, Time) and 'Optional information' (Officer(s) involved, Witness(es), Your contact information for us to follow up with you (interpreters available)). A blue 'Start' button is located below the optional information section. At the bottom, there are three more options: 'Over the phone', 'In person', and 'By mail', each with a plus sign to its right.A screenshot of the 'Tell us what happened' form. The form is titled 'Tell us what happened' and includes a sub-header 'Description (*Required)'. It contains a text area for 'Describe your experience with the Austin Police Department.' Below this is a 'Date and time, if known? (*Required)' field. There is a checkbox labeled 'I received a ticket during this interaction.' Below that is a 'Location' section with the instruction 'Type in the location or drag the map to the location.' A map of Austin, Texas, is displayed with a search bar showing '436 W 8th St, Austin, TX 787' and a red pin on the map. At the bottom, there are two buttons: 'Back' and 'Continue'.

Complaint Process



OPO's improved complaint process ensures that from the moment a complaint is received, we oversee the investigation conducted by APD Internal Affairs. We update the complainant of the status of the investigation and the outcome to resolution.



Complaint Process Manual

We created a manual that streamlines the complaint process to enhance structure and consistency of impartiality.

OPO and Internal Affairs have memorialized current practices and agreements to create a Joint Standard Operating Procedure.

OPO Data Breakdown

December 1, 2018- December 1, 2019

802

Common Complaint Allegations

Responsibility to the Community

Impartial Attitude & Courtesy

Property and Equipment

General Conduct & Responsibility

Response to Resistance

Contacts to OPO were made. These contacts originate online, from phone calls, emails, in person, and by mail. Contacts may or may not result in an official complaint.

85%

of contacts had a preliminary review. This is an assessment OPO conducts in order to recommend potential policy violations and classification to APD Internal Affairs.

101

Thank You received for APD officers.

99 Anonymous Contacts Received

OPO Identified 10 Cases With Additional Potential Policy Violations

155 Supervisory Referrals to Internal Affairs

- Supervisory Referrals are handled directly by APD supervisors contacting complainants.

Building Partnerships

The Challenge



According to OPO survey results and conversations with community, fear of retaliation is a significant barrier to filing reports with our office. We recognize that fear and mistrust in policing and City government is a reality for some in our community. Our goal is to develop strategies to make our processes more accessible to the community, so that challenges and concerns can be properly addressed.



The Solution

Building sustainable partnerships is at the forefront of our goal to earn community trust. OPO works to utilize focused outreach in a manner that is equity-minded, empathetic, and prioritizes direct connection with community. The following page contains examples of our outreach work.

Community Engagement



Dove Springs Back to School Bash



*Presentation to Del Valle ISD
Parent Support Specialists*



*Know Your Rights Presentation for
People Experiencing Homelessness*



*Community Office Hours at Ruiz
Branch Library*



*National Night Out at Santa
Rita Court*



*Meeting with
Asian American Community
Leaders*

Transition Advisory Committee

The Transition Advisory Committee is made up of a diverse group of 10 community members that provided feedback on the direction of OPO during our critical first year.



Equity Space Summit

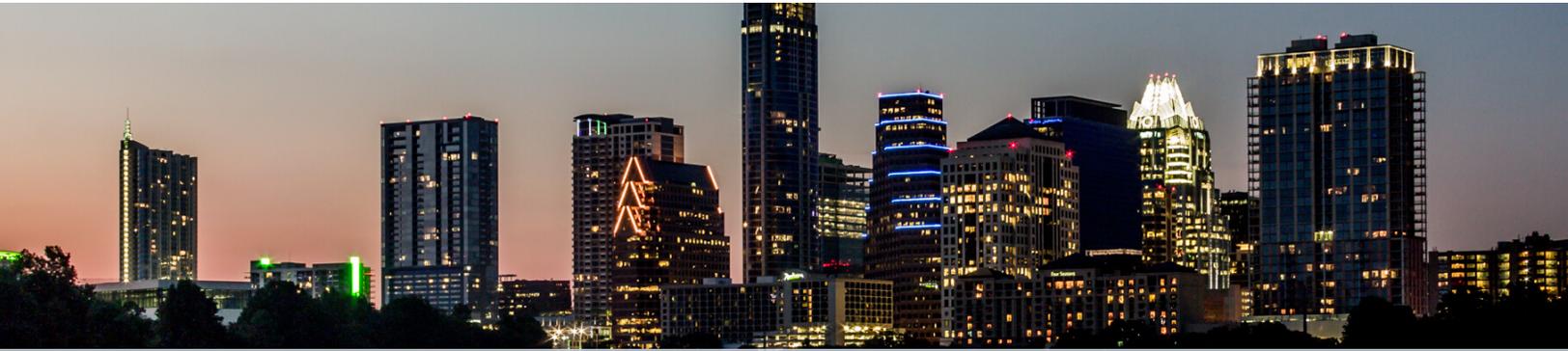
OPO presented at Equity Space, a solution-focused conference designed to advance a national dialogue and inspire action to improve the conditions for a socially equitable and inclusive community.

We focused on two key messages:

- The importance of generational and historical context to community fear with respect to law enforcement and police interactions.
- Exploring how focused outreach as a tool of community engagement can address fear and mistrust and bridge the gap between communities and institutions.



Community Leaders Breakfast



At this biannual event, OPO invites community leaders to learn more about the work the office has done to transform accountability and increase transparency as well as our upcoming projects. This event also provides a forum for community members to ask questions and address any concerns regarding policing and oversight.

February 2019 Community Leaders Breakfast



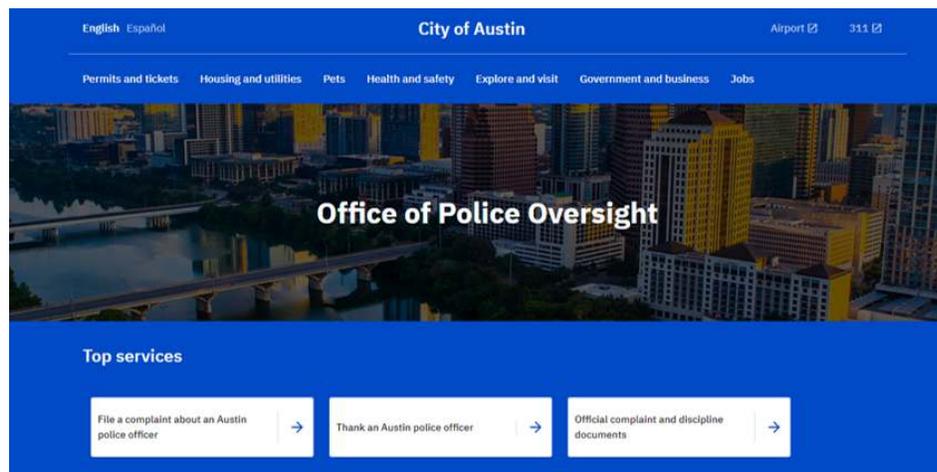
November 2019 Community Leaders Breakfast



Enhancing Transparency

New Website: atxpoliceoversight.org

By implementing a new website, we can now make external complaints OPO recommendations, reports, and formal discipline notices available to the public



Samples of Website Content

External Complaint

 OFFICE OF POLICE OVERSIGHT	NOTICE OF FORMAL COMPLAINT
September 10, 2019 ICMS #: 2019-0798 Date of Complaint: June 24, 2019	
Complaint Officer [REDACTED] may have violated department policy by using inappropriate language while taking an individual into custody.	
Additional information: A Complaint Contact Form was completed and is documented under ICMS #2019-0640. Administrative Policy to Review: 301.2 Impartial Attitude and Courtesy (c) Employees will make every effort to be courteous and respectful toward all persons.	
Recommended Classification: <i>The OPO is permitted to make a preliminary recommendation on the classification of administrative cases.</i> The OPO recommends that this allegation receive a B classification.	

External Complaint Led to Formal Discipline

	RECEIVED Civil Service Office 6-17-19 12:43 pm
MEMORANDUM Austin Police Department Office of the Chief of Police	
TO:	Joya Hayes, Director of Civil Service
FROM:	Brian Manley, Chief of Police
DATE:	June 17, 2019
SUBJECT:	Indefinite Suspension of Police Officer Jordam Wagstaff # 8229 Internal Affairs Control Number 2019-0220
Pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 143 of the Texas Local Government Code, Section 143.052, and Rule 10, Rules of Procedure for the Firefighters', Police Officers' and Emergency Medical Service Personnel's Civil Service Commission, I have indefinitely suspended Police Officer Jordam Wagstaff #8229 from duty as a police officer for the City of Austin, Texas effective June 17, 2019.	
I took this action because Officer Wagstaff violated Civil Service Commission Rule 10.03, which sets forth the grounds for disciplinary suspensions of employees in the classified service, and states:	
No employee of the classified service of the City of Austin shall engage in, or be involved in, any of the following acts or conduct, and the same shall constitute cause for suspension of an employee from the classified service of the City:	
L. Violation of any of the rules and regulations of the Fire Department or Police Department or of special orders, as applicable.	
The following are specific acts committed by Officer Wagstaff in violation of Rule 10:	
Officer Wagstaff was commissioned as a police officer by the Austin Police Department on October 28, 2016. On December 18, 2018, Officer Wagstaff was assigned to the Charlie Sector but was working an overtime assignment in George Sector. At approximately 10:22 am, Officer Wagstaff responded to a stalking call at a gym, where he spoke with the female victim, who for privacy reasons shall be referred to as Ms. M. Ms. M is 27-years old. Officer	

Social Media

By creating a presence on social media, we enhance transparency and provide the community with information and updates. Through social media, we aim to build relationships with community members and increase awareness of our office as a resource.



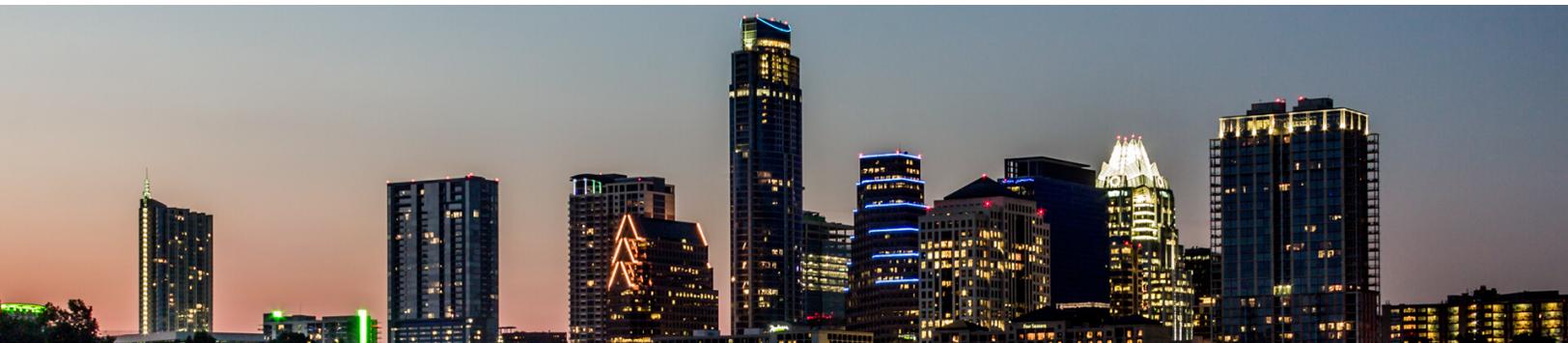
@ATX_OPO



ATX Police Oversight

Know Your Rights Video Series

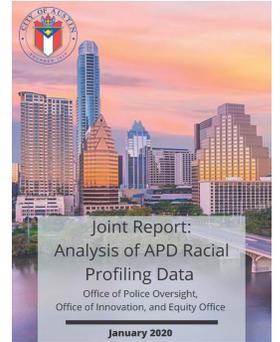
Know Your Rights is a long-term initiative designed to educate the community on their rights when interacting with law enforcement. Currently, the initiative consists of two segments: The Right to Remain Silent and Immigrant Rights. These videos are currently available in English and Spanish. With the help of community volunteers, these videos will soon be available in Hindi, Urdu, Vietnamese, Mandarin, and Korean. The videos can be found on the OPO Facebook page.



Looking Forward

Racial Profiling Analysis

To address the City of Austin Strategic Direction 2023 Safety Outcome of Fair Administration of Justice, the OPO, Office of Innovation, and Equity Office engaged a data analysis to understand how various ethnic/racial groups in Austin experience Austin Police Department (APD) motor vehicle stops and searches.



The report will examine APD motor vehicle stop data from 2015-2018 and will include recommendations to address racial/ethnic disparities.

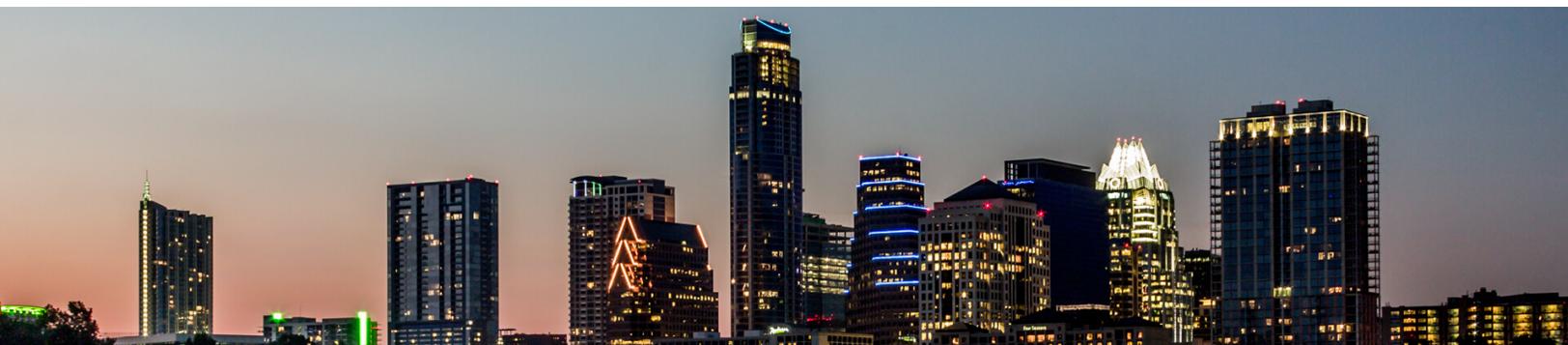
The report indicates an upward trend of disparity in motor vehicle stops for Hispanics/Latinos and Black/African Americans from 2015-2018. The full report will be released in early 2020.

Community-Police Mediation Program

In partnership with the University of Texas Law School, we are developing a new mediation program to help all parties feel safe, heard, and comfortable in order to work together to resolve complaints.

APD Training Academy Curriculum Project: The History of Race and Police in America

This course seeks to provide historical context to interactions between future and current Austin Police Officers and the communities they police. This proposal will trace policing in the United States back to its origins and demonstrate how police and race relations are inextricably intertwined.



Excellence is the Expectation

"The community is yearning for more. By listening to their needs and taking action, OPO is determined to provide the results and the excellence the community deserves."

-OPO Director, Farah Muscadin



Thank you to our wonderful staff who have contributed to this year's success.

W a y s t o C o n t a c t

A Complaint or Thank You may be submitted online, by phone, fax, mail, email, or in person.

Our office hours are:
Monday – Friday
8:00 am – 5:00 pm

 Website: ATXPoliceOversight.org

 512-972-2676/ 512-972-20PO

 TTY: 711

 512-974-6306

 PO Box 1088

 Austin, TX 78767

 policeoversight@austintexas.gov

 1520 Rutherford Ln, Building 1
Austin, TX 78754



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