



OFFICE OF POLICE OVERSIGHT

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August 23, 2024

Robin Henderson, Interim Chief of Police
Austin Police Department
715 E. 8th Street
Austin, TX 78701

RE: OPO's Policy Recommendation to Austin Police Department's General Order 211:
Response to Resistance Inquiry, Reporting, and Review

Dear Chief Henderson:

On June 27, 2024, the Office of Police Oversight (OPO) received notification of approved changes to the Austin Police Department (APD) General Orders policies. OPO has reviewed the approved changes, and OPO feedback and recommendations are attached to this memorandum.

The specific policies reviewed in this memorandum are as follows:

- 211.13 Chain-of-Command Responsibilities in Level 2, 3 and 4 Incidents

The OPO trusts that this policy can be improved and that it benefits APD sworn employees, supervisors, and the community. We look forward to addressing the issues identified and improving policies to enhance the Austin Police Department's transparency and accountability.

Sincerely,

Gail McCant, Director
Office of Police Oversight



211.13: Response to Resistance Inquiry, Reporting, and Review

Recommendation #1:

OPO objects to APD's removal of review power from the Force Review Unit.

OPO objects to the current policy language, which limits the Force Review Unit (FRU) review power. Previously, the FRU could notify a chain of command of any "training issues and potential policy violations."

Recommendation #2:

OPO recommends that APD provide a concise definition and explanation.

OPO analysis indicates a need to clarify and define what an "observation" made by the FRU constitutes within this policy. The policy should clearly articulate what an "observation" is and specify the process of documenting "observations" for the chain of command to review.

Recommendation #3:

OPO recommends that APD add clarification.

OPO recommends that APD's policy cite where, in the General Orders, the chain of command should reference the "appropriate actions according to policy" related to potential observations articulated by the FRU