



CITY OF OAKLAND

## ***INTER OFFICE MEMORANDUM***

**TO:** Office of Internal Accountability

**PREPARED BY:** Lisa Ausmus  
Deputy Chief of Police

**SUBJECT:** Department Response to An Inspection of the Oakland Police Department's Practices to Promote Racial Equity and Fairness in the Internal Investigation and Discipline Process, Academy and Training Programs, and Recruitment and Hiring

**DATE:** May 30, 2025

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### **PURPOSE**

The Department reviewed the Inspection Report titled "An Inspection of the Oakland Police Department's Practices to Promote Racial Equity and Fairness in the Internal Investigation and Discipline Process, Academy and Training Programs, and Recruitment and Hiring," completed by the Office of Internal Accountability (OIA). We appreciate the efforts of the OIA to complete this important review.

### **BACKGROUND**

The Oakland Police Department (OPD) remains committed to fostering a culture of fairness, equity, and accountability in every aspect of its operations. The inspection conducted by the Office of Internal Accountability (OIA) in 2024 provided valuable insights into OPD's ongoing efforts to uphold racial equity in internal investigations, discipline, training, and recruitment processes. The findings highlight both progress and gaps that must be addressed to meet equity commitments and ensure compliance with the Negotiated Settlement Agreement (NSA).

This inspection was initiated to assess whether OPD was consistently following the practices documented in its September 2022 Information Bulletin, titled "Oakland Police Department Race and Equity Team Implemented Equity Interventions." While OPD has demonstrated progress in certain areas, there remains room for improvement. In this regard, OPD has outlined a series of steps to prioritize and sustain efforts aimed at measuring and enhancing our initiatives regarding equity practices.

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS OF FINDINGS**

The inspection period, from October 1, 2022, through December 31, 2023, revealed several areas where OPD made meaningful progress in its commitment to racial equity and fairness, as well as several areas of opportunity where equity-promoting strategies were either ineffective, incomplete, or had lapsed. The findings for each theme are explored in detail below.

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**Areas of Strength**

- **Sustained Anonymization Practices:** OPD anonymized subject employee names, race, and gender during case presentations and discipline recommendation hearings to the Chief of Police or designee, as appropriate, thereby mitigating bias in decision-making processes.
- **Consistent Application of the Discipline Matrix:** OPD continued to utilize the Discipline Matrix, promoting fairness and consistency in disciplinary outcomes.
- **Tracking of Aggravating and Mitigating Factors:** The Department ensured that these critical factors were documented and considered during discipline recommendations, enhancing transparency and equity.
- **Holistic Candidate Evaluation:** The Whole Person Assessment remained a foundational element of OPD's recruitment process, providing a comprehensive and equitable evaluation of Police Officer Trainee candidates.
- **Ongoing Project: Reset Cultural Competency Training.** OPD consistently delivers this program, fostering meaningful dialogue around police culture, community service, and the history of race and policing in Oakland.
- **Active Local and Inclusive Recruitment Efforts:** OPD conducted extensive outreach within Oakland and at venues serving historically underrepresented communities to build a diverse candidate pool.
- **Policy Acknowledgment and Distribution:** OPD ensured widespread acknowledgment of the Department's Equal Employment Opportunity, Anti-Discrimination, and Non-Harassment Policy (DGO D-20) and the City's Race and Equity Policy (Administrative Instruction 580), reinforcing OPD's commitment to an inclusive and respectful workplace.

**Areas of Opportunity**

- **Incomplete Execution of Equity Strategies:** Key initiatives, such as the Race and Equity Board, formal mentorship programs, and quarterly discipline outcome reporting with racial analysis, were either inactive or not implemented as designed.
- **Training Gaps:** Only 68% of Sergeants and 57% of Police Officers completed the required racial equity training courses. Moreover, OPD lacked the infrastructure to verify city-mandated training completion through NEOGOV, rendering oversight impractical.
- **Data Deficiencies:** The Quarterly Complaint and Discipline Outcome Reports did not include racial data, undermining their effectiveness as equity tools. Similarly, recruitment and staffing reports failed to identify underrepresented groups or evaluate the outcomes of outreach efforts.

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- **Policy Shortcomings:** Several equity strategies, such as anonymization practices during case presentations and discipline hearings, were not codified in policy, reducing their enforceability and consistency.
- **Structural Failures:** The absence of a formalized Race and Equity Board and the inactivity of the Race and Equity Team left OPD without a centralized body to coordinate, monitor, and sustain equity initiatives.

The lack of a fully functioning Race and Equity Team contributed to the shortcomings identified in the inspection. The deficiencies were exacerbated by ongoing staffing challenges, leadership transitions, and the fiscal constraints faced by the City of Oakland. Although challenges related to staffing and budget are perennial concerns, the significant transition period experienced within key leadership roles of the executive team and senior management, due to terminations, retirements, and administrative leave, within a short timeframe, exposed a notable shortfall within the department.

Nevertheless, the Oakland Police Department acknowledges its duty to address these deficiencies with decisiveness and to implement sustainable corrective actions. In this response, the primary Bureau was identified, along with the currently assigned Deputy Chief or Deputy Director of that Bureau, to inform them that the findings or tasks fall under their jurisdiction. This should mitigate any further oversight, enabling the assigned Bureau Chief or Director to allocate responsibilities effectively within their respective Bureau.

## **CORRECTIVE ACTION PLAN**

Recognizing the importance of these inspection findings, OPD proposes the following strategic initiatives to prevent recurrence and ensure lasting compliance while streamlining or eliminating ineffective strategies.

### **1) Governance and Oversight**

- a) Revitalize and reimagine the Race and Equity Team: By July 2025, appoint a new Race and Equity Board (REB) comprising diverse departmental representatives and external partners, including the City's Department of Race and Equity (Recommendations #18 and #19). This board will meet quarterly and present annually to the Executive Command Staff.
- b) Institutionalize the Race and Equity Board: To ensure the Race and Equity Board's (REB) work remains a priority within the organization and is sustained through employee turnover, OPD should issue a special order mandating the board's meetings and activities, while establishing a clear line of succession for leadership. The special order should also require the Board Chair to document all meetings through official minutes and maintain a knowledge repository to support seamless transitions and provide continuity for incoming leaders. Finally, the Board Chair of the REB will also be responsible for tracking, implementing, measuring, and monitoring all Race and Equity Strategies identified by the Oakland Police Department.

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**2) Recruitment and Workforce Equity**

a) Targeted Recruitment Metrics:

- i) Collaborate with the City's Department of Race and Equity and HR to identify underrepresented groups and set measurable goals (Recommendations #14 and #15).
- ii) Enhance recruitment plans to include clear metrics for success, targeted outreach strategies, and outcome tracking.

**3) Policy Updates, Integration, and Formalization**

- a) Update Academy Policy Manual: Acknowledge the shift in the Academy's mentorship model and update the **Academy Policy Manual** and related documents to reflect the new support structure via Recruit Training Officers and peer support (Recommendation #10).
- b) Update Pre-Discipline Report (TF-3340): Add fields for serial numbers, additional signatures, and documentation of key attendees to ensure full traceability and compliance (Recommendations #4, #5, and #6).
- c) Update Internal Affairs Policy and Procedure Manual (23-01): Codify the anonymization of subject employee's identifying information during case presentations or discipline recommendation hearings (Recommendation #1).
- d) Discontinue Ineffective Strategies: Remove ineffective practices, such as anonymization before the Internal Affairs Bureau Captain (Recommendation #2), and eliminate unsupported references to state law regarding disciplinary history reviews (Recommendation #3).

**4) Data-Driven Equity Monitoring**

a) Enhance Complaint and Discipline Reporting:

- i) Modify quarterly reports to include racial demographics and analysis of disparities. (Recommendation #7).
- ii) Maintain transparency by continuing publication of these reports, even if redefined in scope (Recommendation #8).

b) Strengthen Annual PAS Meetings:

- i) Update DGO D-17 to mandate the inclusion of racial equity discussions and formal presentation of the Complaint and Discipline Outcome Report (Recommendation #9).

**5) Training Compliance and Accountability**

a) Training Completion Oversight:

- i) Ensure Training Division supervisors can monitor NEOGOV completion rates (Recommendations #12 and #13).
- ii) Redistribute critical policies (DGO D-20 and AI 580) every two years, with 100% acknowledgment required (Recommendations #16 and #17).
- iii) Issue supervisory directives to enforce training completion and integrate checks into annual evaluations (Recommendation #11).

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**Implementation Timeline Overview**

<b>Corrective Action</b>	<b>Plan of Action – Brief synopsis</b>	<b>Anticipated Completion Date</b>	<b>Responsible Bureau</b>
1. Race and Equity Board Appointment	The BRM Chief will monitor and ensure that the REB meets every quarter and direct the REB to send an update about each meeting. OPD is collaborating with the City's Race and Equity Division, led by Director Flynn, to enhance the effectiveness of the Racial Equity Board (REB).	BRM DC has identified the Chair and three additional members for the REB and reestablished a relationship with the City's Race and Equity Director, Director Flynn. The Chair has met with Director Flynn, and they are establishing a path to move the REB forward. The REB will meet every quarter and send an email to brief the BRM DC on their next steps.	BRM Deputy Chief
2. Recruitment Plan Update with Metrics	BOS Director or designee to meet with the City's Race and Equity Director to establish a plan to identify underrepresented groups during recruitment. Meet regularly, at the Deputy Director's discretion, to ensure that OPD continues to identify and focus recruitment efforts on underrepresented groups, by best practices and available resources.	Goal = Prior to the job posting for the 196 <sup>th</sup> Academy.	BOS Deputy Director
3. Policy Revisions (Pre-Discipline Report, D-17, Academy Manual)	1. BRM - Risk Assessment Unit (RAU) prepared 2024 complaint data for each Bureau, which was sent to the Chief of Police, Assistant Chief and each Bureau Chief. The Department will update policy to codify the annual preparation of complaint data.  2. The Training Division has established a mentorship process to mentor Police Officer Trainees utilizing the Recruit Training Officers.	1. 2024 Complaint Report completed April 2024. Include the requirement of annual complaint data review by Bureau Chiefs during the next revision to DGO D-17  2. Update the Academy Manual with the new process.	1. BRM Deputy Chief Annual Report, DGO D-17  2. BRM Deputy Chief Academy Manual

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<b>Corrective Action</b>	<b>Plan of Action – Brief synopsis</b>	<b>Anticipated Completion Date</b>	<b>Responsible Bureau</b>
	<p>3. IAB has begun the process of revising the Pre-Discipline Report by working with the Oakland Police Commission in an ad hoc group to rewrite the Discipline Matrix. Once the ad hoc review is complete, the Pre-Discipline Report will be written based on this inspection and the ad hoc recommendations.</p> <p>4. The Department will update policy to codify the anonymization of subject employees during case presentations or discipline recommendation hearings.</p>	<p>3. Pre-Discipline Report – Nov/Dec 2025 – BRM will conduct monthly check-ins to monitor progress.</p> <p>4. Include the anonymization requirements during the next revision of the Internal Affairs Policy and Procedure Manual.</p>	<p>3. IAB Deputy Chief Pre-Discipline Report</p> <p>4. IAB Deputy Chief</p>
1. Update Equity Reporting & Communication	The IAB has reinstated the practice of sending out quarterly trend reports. The 1st Quarter 2025 Information Bulletin (IB) was published to PowerDMS and distributed Department-wide, including training points regarding administrative investigations, as well as the race and discipline issued to the subject employee to provide transparency and understanding of the IAB process.	Completed - 1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter 2025	IAB Deputy Chief
2. Establish Training Compliance Monitoring	Training Division will work with the City HR to learn if/ how to track training through NeoGov and ensure that OPD is providing annual training either through NeoGov or PowerDMS.	January 2026	BRM Deputy Chief

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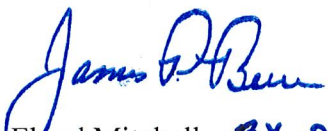
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## CONCLUSION


The Oakland Police Department recognizes that achieving lasting equity requires not only identifying areas of improvement but also committing to meaningful, systemic change. While the recent inspection highlighted strategies in need of course correction related to our equity practices, it also affirmed the foundation we have built through existing strengths, such as anonymization procedures, cultural competency training, and holistic recruitment strategies. These successes demonstrate OPD's capacity to implement sustainable reforms. The Department is dedicated to building on this progress by addressing structural gaps, enhancing oversight, and ensuring that our equity strategies are integrated into daily operations and decision-making.

Moving forward, OPD is committed to integrating equity as a permanent and measurable priority throughout the organization. Through revitalizing the Race and Equity Board, formalizing clear policies, enhancing our training and accountability processes, and renewing our focus on data transparency and workforce diversity, we aim to create lasting change that endures leadership transitions, staffing fluctuations, and budgetary challenges. These actions will reinforce our responsibility to serve the Oakland community with fairness, inclusivity, and integrity.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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