



Coaching Process Analysis

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PENDING

Introduction

The Police Conduct Oversight Commission assures that police services are delivered in a lawful and nondiscriminatory manner and provides the public with meaningful participatory oversight of police policy and procedure. Commission members have a variety of responsibilities including shaping police policy, auditing cases, and engaging the community in discussions of police procedure. The Commission strives to be the citizen advisory group the community relies upon to openly discuss policy and procedures of the Minneapolis Police Department, to voice concerns regarding law enforcement/civilian interactions, and the organization that advances credible and meaningful feedback, without obligation to political influences, for the betterment of the City of Minneapolis. [For more information about the work of the Commission, meeting times and locations, and meeting minutes, please visit the Commission website.](#)

Additionally, in the Police Conduct Oversight Ordinance, the Commission has direction to conduct programs of research and study, "review police department policies and training procedures and make recommendations for change." To identify topics for review, a random sample of case synopses are selected for presentation to the PCOC in summary form. The PCOC looks for trends and ongoing problems to address. Additionally, commissioners, through outreach, receive feedback from the public on current problems they may be experiencing with MPD or OPCR.

In December of 2014, the PCOC asked the Office of Police Conduct Review to create and conduct a comprehensive study of the OPCR and MPD coaching process. This study represents a follow-up to the original study which covered October 2012 to October 2014.

Background

Upon receiving a complaint, the OPCR has four methods for resolution: (1) dismiss it, (2) send it directly to the focus officer's supervisor for action, (3) mandate mediation between the officer and complainant, or (4) send the complaint to an investigation involving a civilian or sworn investigator. The joint supervisor assessment is based on the seriousness of the allegations, the likelihood of a successful mediation, and evidence available for investigation. Method 2 is informally known as "coaching."

Coaching consists of sending a complaint directly to the precinct or unit of the officer that is the focus of the complaint to address the allegations contained within. Coaching is used only for lower level violations, and if a more significant violation is discovered during the coaching process, the complaint is referred back to the OPCR. Coaching documents will first be submitted to precinct inspectors or unit commanders. The inspector or commander will forward the coaching documents and attached material to the appropriate supervisor to handle. A sample coaching document can be found following this report.

The police supervisor will determine whether a policy violation has occurred based upon the information gathered and complete the coaching documentation form. The standard for this determination is preponderance of the evidence, a 51% likelihood that the allegation is true. A referral to the officer's supervisor does not denote that a policy violation has occurred. Policy violations or the lack thereof are noted in the completed documentation. Multiple policy violations in one year cause a lower level complaint to be treated as a more significant violation. Supervisors may also coach the officer on how to improve performance and customer service regardless of whether a policy violation occurred.

If the supervisor determines the allegation is supported by a preponderance of the evidence, he or she will determine the appropriate corrective action. This may involve coaching, counseling, training, or other non-disciplinary actions. The supervisor shall notify the officer of the recommendation but cannot disclose the outcome of the coaching session per the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act.

The expectation is that supervisors will address inappropriate behavior before it leads to more severe misconduct. Additionally, coaching represents an immediate opportunity to repair relationships between community and officers through supervisor action, as the OPCR has set an expectation that coaching complaints will be completed within a 45 day timeline. When a coaching supervisor completes the process, the completed coaching documents are reviewed and signed by the precinct inspector or commander and returned to the joint supervisors for review. If the joint supervisors find the coaching documents are incomplete, they are returned to the precinct inspector or commander for completion.

Study Goals

1. Report any changes to the coaching process since the original coaching study was completed.
2. Analyze coaching documents completed between October 2014 and October 2017.
3. Identify ways for complainants to have more input into the coaching process.
4. Identify any areas for improvement in the current practice.

Research Questions

1. How has the coaching process changed between 2014 and 2017?
2. What types of complaints are being referred to coaching?
3. What data is available to measure the success of the coaching process?
4. What measures are taken to ensure an effective coaching process?
5. Given the restrictions of the MGDPA, how can more information be provided to complainants about the coaching process?
6. How can the coaching process be strengthened or improved?