

THE OFFICE OF THE INDEPENDENT POLICE MONITOR



MONTHLY REPORT

MARCH 2020

SUSAN HUTSON
INDEPENDENT POLICE MONITOR

Community Letter

Dear New Orleans community,

We are currently living through unprecedented times. The spread of COVID-19 affects all of us and the way we live and interact in our community. There are real public safety and health concerns that we are considering every day. As part of our police oversight work, we are monitoring how the New Orleans Police Department interacts with the public during this pandemic. For us, public safety is broader than just the COVID-9 precautions – it means looking out for everyone and ensuring safety during police interactions resulting from the public health mandates and beyond.

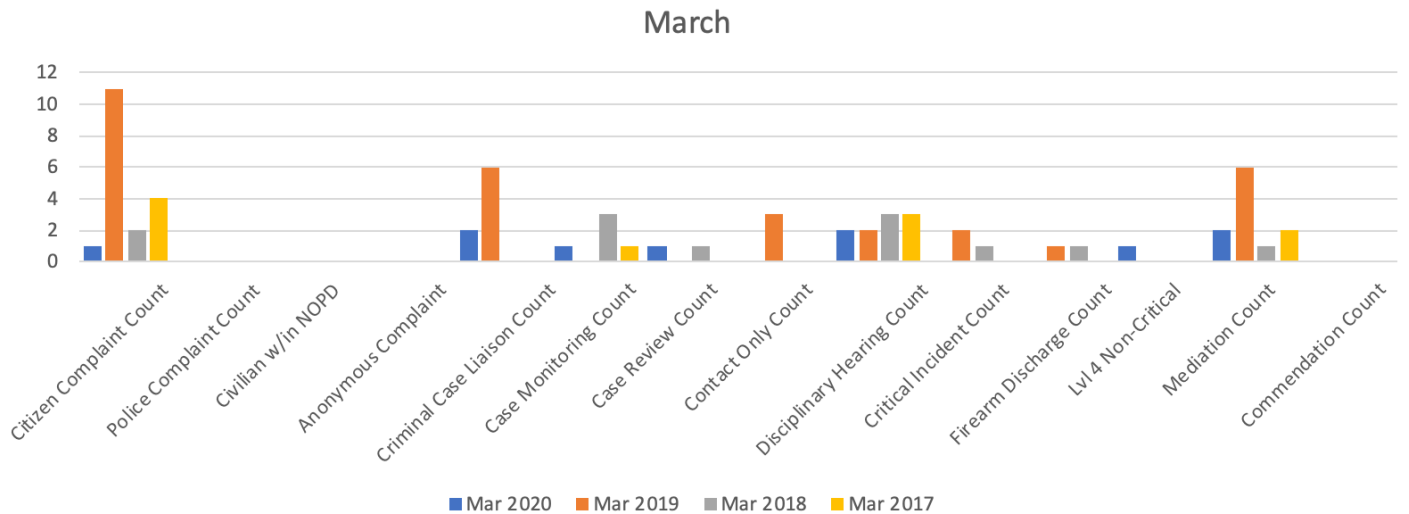
Just because we may be working remotely does not mean our work has ended. We are still taking feedback from the community regarding their interactions with the NOPD and submitting complaints of police misconducts and commendations of positive policing. We are coordinating our first round of online mediations and are processing more mediation requests each day. We are also interviewing potential new mediators through video conferencing. We are still attending and monitoring – in person or online – disciplinary proceedings conducted by the NOPD. We are still participating in outreach activities like Webinars with partners in New Orleans and all over the country. We are still reviewing Use of Force incidents, creating audit plans, conducting case reviews, and providing the NOPD with valuable oversight and feedback.

To that effect, we've expanded our work this month in a way that may be difficult to capture in our ordinary numbers. In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, we are making the necessary pivots to respond to the changing needs of our community and the NOPD. This month we started working with community and governmental organizations to reduce unnecessary exposure to the COVID-19 virus through changed police practice and policy. We are ensuring safety precautions for responding officers and recommending tactic changes to reduce unnecessary arrests. The OIPM is partnering with other agencies who are working with vulnerable populations, like incarcerated individuals, and our culture bearers, like musicians and Social Aid Clubs, to ensure we monitor police responses regarding the Shelter in Place Mandate. In the coming month, we are going to expand on this work. We are going to put forth policy recommendations to the NOPD to increase their ability to issue summons in lieu of arrests for nonviolent misdemeanor and felony offenses. We are answering the community's call that their health should come before handcuffs.

During this time, the health and safety of our community, the public and the officers, is our first priority and we will continue to serve everyone by ensuring all police interactions are both necessary and safe. Please follow all public health mandates and we look forward to continuing our work for the people of New Orleans.

Sincerely,
Susan Huston

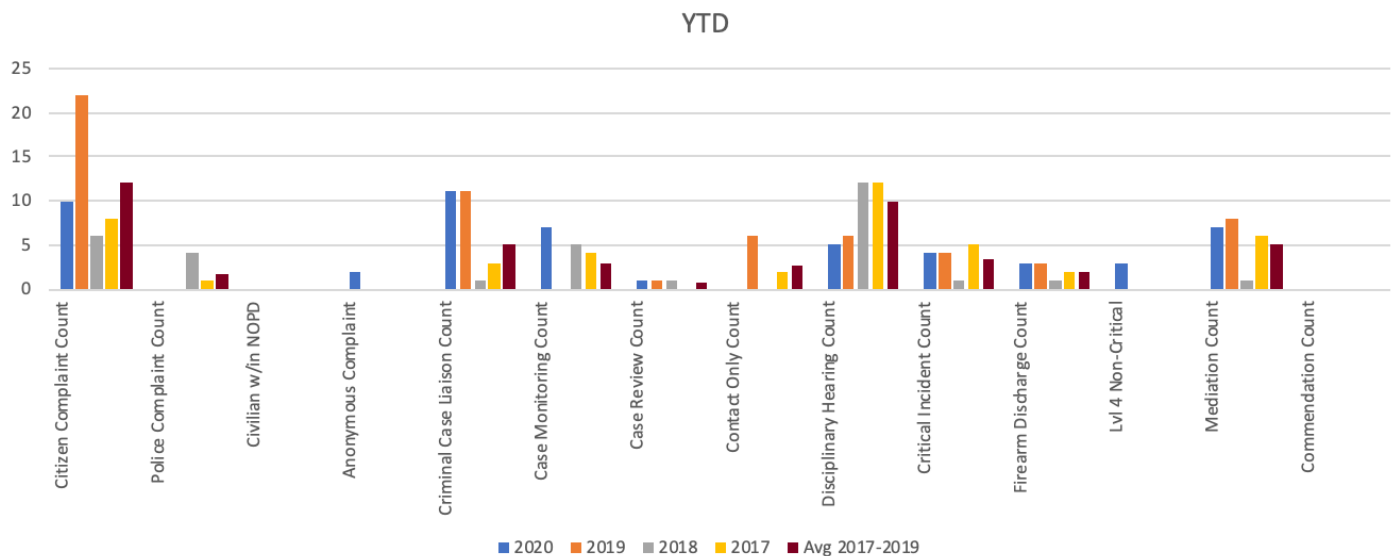
March Overview



	Mar 2020	Mar 2019	Mar 2018	Mar 2017
Citizen Complaint Count	1	11	2	4
Police Complaint Count*	0	-	-	-
Civilian w/in NOPD*	0	-	-	-
Anonymous Complaint	0	-	-	-
Criminal Case Liaison Count	2	6	-	-
Case Monitoring Count	1	0	3	1
Case Review Count	1	0	1	0
Contact Only Count	0	3	0	0
Disciplinary Hearing Count	2	2	3	3
Critical Incident Count	0	2	1	0
Firearm Discharge Count	0	1	1	0
Level 4 Non-Critical*	1	-	-	-
Mediation Count	2	6	1	2
Commendation Count	0	0	-	-
Grand Total	10	31	12	10

*indicates a new category

Year to Date Overview



	2020	2019	2018	2017	Avg 2017-2019
Citizen Complaint Count	10	22	6	8	12.00
Police Complaint Count	0	0	4	1	1.67
Civilian w/in NOPD*	0	-	-	-	0.00
Anonymous Complaint*	2	0	0	0	0.00
Criminal Case Liaison Count	11	11	1	3	5.00
Case Monitoring Count	7	0	5	4	3.00
Case Review Count	1	1	1	0	0.67
Contact Only Count	0	6	0	2	2.67
Disciplinary Hearing Count	5	6	12	12	10.00
Critical Incident Count	4	4	1	5	3.33
Firearm Discharge Count	3	3	1	2	2.00
Level 4 Non-Critical*	3	-	-	-	-
Mediation Count	7	8	1	6	5.00
Commendation Count	0	0	0	0	0.00
Grand Total	53	61	32	43	45.33

*indicates a new category

March Overview

Citizen Complaints	
CC2020-0012	Complainant alleges a member of her family was detained and arrested without probable cause. The complainant also alleges her family member was physically mistreated by the NOPD.
Citizen Complaints Count: 1	

Criminal Liasion	
CL2020-0017	Individual reached out to the OIPM requesting assistance with a domestic matter; specifically: (1) the allegations against their partner; (2) the low bond set; (3) the investigation conducted by the NOPD. OIPM reached out to the district and reviewed the investigation.
CL2020-0018	Individual filed a complaint with OIPM but upon review, the OIPM determined the officers involved are Louisiana State Troopers. The OIPM is referring the complaint to the correct state agency.
Criminal Liasion Count: 2	

Case Monitoring	
CM2020-0007	Complainant reached out to the OIPM for an update regarding the misconduct investigation being conducted by the criminal division of the PIB. OIPM reached out to the investigating officer and their supervisor regarding the progress of the investigation and provided an update to the complainant.
Case Monitoring Count: 1	

March Overview

Disciplinary Hearings	
DH2020-0004	Officer is accused of reporting to work while intoxicated. Officer was currently under investigation for a similar alcohol involved offense.
DH2020-0005	Officer is accused of operating his fully marked department vehicle while intoxicated and in possession of an open alcoholic beverage, driving recklessly, and being involved in a crash that resulted in injury to himself and to a civilian.
Disciplinary Hearings Count: 2	

Level 4 Non-Critical Use of Force	
UF2020-0003	The officer responded to a call regarding a mental patient attacking bystanders with a stick. The subject refused to comply to officer's commands to drop the stick and proceeded to break the police unit's window. The officer then tased the subject three times before he complied. He was apprehended and transported to a local hospital for psychiatric evaluation.
Level 4 Non-Critical Use of Force: 1	

Mediation	
Mediation cases are confidential.	
Mediations Held: 2	

Complaints and Discipline

The OIPM serves as an alternative site for civilians and police officers alike to file complaints of misconduct against the NOPD. These complaints and allegations are compiled into referrals by the OIPM and provided to the Public Integrity Bureau (PIB) for them to investigate. The OIPM monitors and reviews the classification and investigation conducted by PIB. If the complaint continues into a disciplinary proceeding, the OIPM will continue to monitor and review the disciplinary process. OIPM monitors and reviews disciplinary proceedings conducted by NOPD to ensure accountability and fairness. The OIPM reviews the disciplinary investigation and attends the subsequent disciplinary hearings where the OIPM will provide systemic and individualized findings and recommendations based on NOPD's investigation. The OIPM conducts a thorough review of the proceedings, findings, and recommendations that is available for review by both the NOPD and the New Orleans community.

- 1** CITIZEN COMPLAINT
- 2** DISCIPLINARY PROCEEDINGS
- 0** POLICE INITIATED COMPLAINTS



Community-Police Mediation

Mediation is an alternative to the traditional process of resolving complaints of police officer misconduct. Mediation is a process facilitated by two professionally-trained community mediators to create mutual understanding and allow the civilian and officer to be fully heard and understood in a non-judgmental way.

12

REFERRALS
FOR
MEDIATION

I liked the chance to talk
and that the mediators
were good listeners. The
process turned out good.”
- Officer Participant



2

MEDIATIONS
HELD

“ This was a good opportunity to
express my concerns of how things
were handled with the officer. I learned
not to categorize the entire department
because of one officer’s mistake. The
officer learned to take time to listen
before acting. This program should
continue. Please don’t stop!”

-Civilian Participant

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MEDIATIONS
PENDING

Use of Force

The OIPM is required by City Code 2-1121 to monitor the quality and timeliness of NOPD's investigations into use of force and in-custody deaths. If an incident occurs, the OIPM is notified and a member of the incident and will report immediately to the scene. The OIPM will stay engaged from the occurrence of the incident, through investigation, and Use of Force Review Board hearings.

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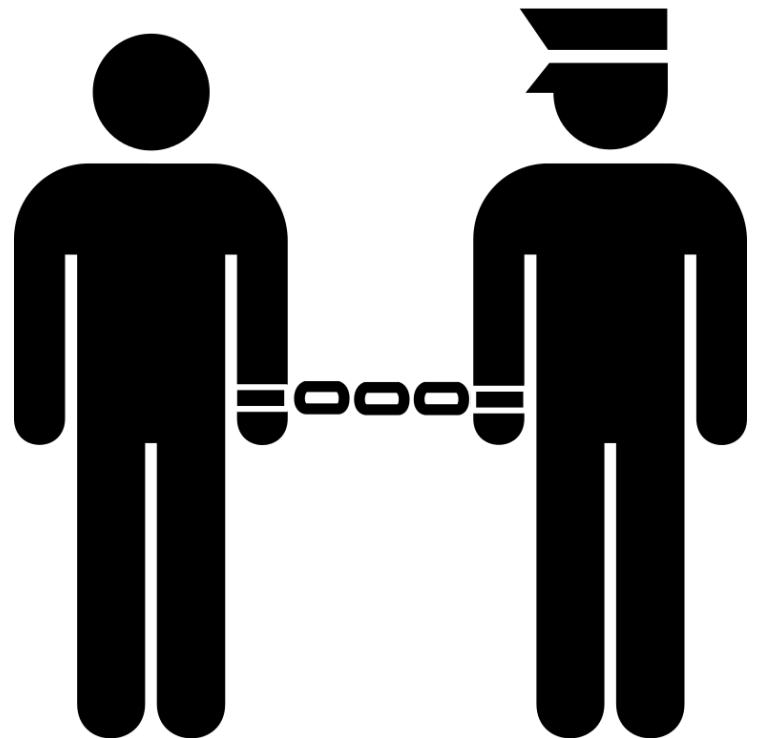
CRITICAL
INCIDENTS

0

FIREARM
DISCHARGES

1

LEVEL 4
NON-CRITICAL
INCIDENT



Community Relations

OIPM participates in community events to help extend the message of the OIPM and participates in activities to impact the nature of the relationships the community has with police officers. OIPM is committed to being present in the community, but also presenting helpful information to the public.

IN MARCH THE OIPM PARTICIPATED IN A PANEL DISCUSSION FOR A CARDOZO LAW SCHOOL WEBINAR CLASS.

The OIPM discussed with other legal organizations, including public defender offices and the Innocence Project, how technology and shared databases can be utilized in tracking police misconduct.

