

Governor Phil Murphy

ICYMI: Acting AG Platkin Launches New Dashboard Detailing Information on Police Internal Affairs Investigations Statewide

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TRENTON – Acting Attorney General Matthew J. Platkin today made a wealth of information about police agencies' internal affairs investigations available online, in a searchable dashboard capable of filtering data by law enforcement agency, the types of allegations involved, and what, if any, disciplinary action was taken. It is believed to be the most comprehensive compilation of statewide internal affairs information to be made accessible to the public by any state in the U.S.

The Attorney General's Office of Public Integrity & Accountability (OPIA) believes the dashboard will serve as a tool for both law enforcement and the public, revealing the prevalence of various accusations, where they are surfacing, and how they are being dealt with by the internal affairs review process.

The dashboard, available at www.njoag.gov/iapp (<https://www.njoag.gov/iapp/>), represents an unprecedented and ambitious effort by the Attorney General's Office to gather de-identified internal affairs information that had been scattered among hundreds of agencies – information that had not previously been collected in a uniform way, or shared with the public in a standardized format or central location.

"Fostering strong relationships between law enforcement and communities is essential to public safety. Transparency, fairness, and mutual respect are foundational to building that essential trust," said **Governor Phil Murphy**. "Our state's new dashboard testifies to the profound understanding of our law enforcement officers that such trust is forged by meaningful actions that reflect the crucial importance of this profession. Every effort to improve accountability among our esteemed law enforcement officers today will help better protect our community members tomorrow."

"Today we take another step toward greater transparency and accountability in law enforcement through the release of our Internal Affairs Dashboard," said **Acting Attorney General Platkin**. "The Office of Justice Data aggregated a tremendous amount of information to give New Jerseyans insight into internal affairs cases that no other state provides. Now for the first time in state history, the public will be able to see, all in one location, the allegations and disciplinary action taken in internal affairs cases across New Jersey."

Tom Eicher, Executive Director of the OPIA, said, "Not many agencies or states release this information. Bringing this data to light will enable the public to look with a broader lens to see if the internal affairs system is working the way it should be."

Eicher said the Attorney General's Office is committed to reviewing the data to identify any patterns that might raise concerns warranting further investigation.

"We are always looking at this data as a way to improve internal affairs policies, procedures and oversight," the director said.

Among the features of the new dashboard is the ability to filter the data by active and closed investigations, as well as by county, agency, the complaint source, and the race of the officers and the complainants involved. The dashboard will also enable users to do side-by-side comparisons of two agencies, so the viewer can see if there is a significant disparity between the internal affairs complaints of two otherwise similar entities. The names of the officers involved are not listed.

"The New Jersey State Police is committed to transparency and accountability which helps build trust within the communities we serve," said **Colonel Patrick J. Callahan, Superintendent of the New Jersey State Police**. "With this dashboard, the public will have additional insight into the internal investigations process that holds our troopers to the highest standards."

"A positive public perception of police accountability and trust is vital to ensure our citizens feel protected and our law enforcement officers are supported so they can do their jobs efficiently and safely," said **Jeffrey H. Sutherland, President of the County Prosecutors Association of NJ**. "Without the public's support by being the eyes and ears of law enforcement our officers would not be able to serve their communities and ensure public safety."

"The New Jersey State Association of Chiefs of Police (NJSACOP) stands firmly behind initiatives that promote transparency and build further public confidence in law enforcement," said **NJSACOP President Thomas Dellane, Chief of the Stafford Township Police Department**. "New Jersey's policing community remains the most effective in the United States. A searchable dashboard will further demonstrate how we protect and serve the public each day. We applaud Acting Attorney General Matthew Platkin for his latest program to create more accountability, while helping residents better understand how the internal affairs system works and why it is such an important tool in improving policies and procedures."

New Jersey Fraternal Order of Police President Robert Fox and Executive Vice President Robert Gries said the FOP supports transparency in policing.

"We commend the Attorney General's Office for supporting New Jersey Law Enforcement while establishing measures to ensure transparency for our citizens," they said in a statement.

Bishop Jethro James, President of the Newark-North Jersey Committee of Black Churchmen, said the dashboard "is a much-needed tool for all police departments and all communities. This tool will help identify the problem areas within police departments statewide. It will also identify issues dealing with racial profiling, excessive use of force and lack of sensitivity among all people."

"The internal affairs open-source portal developed by the Office of the Attorney General takes police transparency and accountability to a new level," said **Richard Rivera, Cofounder of the National Coalition of Latino Officers**. "It is a fair and open process where both the public and police officers can see the number of complaints and their outcomes for any police department. This creates additional dialogue on how police police themselves. For too long women and minority officers in New Jersey have claimed disparate or discriminatory practices by internal affairs. Now we get to see the outcome and compare officers in the same department. The portal forces police chiefs and county prosecutors to do a better job of understanding complaint trends and community needs."

Jiles H. Ship, President of the New Jersey chapter of the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives, said his organization “applauds Attorney General Platkin for making public the online dashboard to create more transparency in policing. It will be helpful in increasing and regaining trust and legitimacy in certain communities. It will improve police-community relations and enhances police legitimacy. This accountability is two-fold: Internally, it relates to the responsibility that officers have to the law, their supervisors, and their department.”

“This is likely the most detailed public facing dashboard/tool in law enforcement of its kind in the country,” said **Cuqui Rivera, Criminal Justice Reform Chair of the Latino Action Network**. “Last year’s data shows only 35 municipalities out of over 565 in New Jersey that report no issues at all in 2021. We need all municipalities to work toward the goal of decreasing internal affairs complaints. It is good to see correctional police officers included in this data in terms of internal affairs incidents, and correctional officers should be further and fully included in ongoing law enforcement data collection efforts. Another genuinely great and historic step forward for New Jersey in transparency and accountability.”

“We are encouraged to see New Jersey becoming more transparent about law enforcement internal affairs investigations. Transparency is a critical part of accountability,” said **Emily Schwartz, Senior Counsel in the Criminal Justice Reform Program at the New Jersey Institute for Social Justice**. “We hope the new dashboard will become even more robust and inclusive of additional identifying information.”

The numbers now listed on the dashboard show the internal affairs cases active in 2021. The Office of Justice Data will update the statistics on an annual basis as new information is submitted by police agencies around the state. Dashboard refinements are also being planned for 2022 that will enable a viewer to better understand how specific complaints are adjudicated, including whether an allegation started as one type of offense but was resolved as a lesser infraction.

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