



# Duluth Police Department



## 2021 - 2023 Complaint Accountability Report



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## Mission Statement

To provide a safe Duluth for all by strengthening relationships and serving in a respectful, caring, and selfless manner.

## Core Beliefs

- We recognize that our authority comes from our social contract with the community.
- People will believe that we are there to serve them if we are kind, caring and compassionate, and our actions match our words.
- People will trust us if they believe we are protecting their rights.
- Every interaction leaves a lasting impression.
- The safety of both our community and officers are paramount.

## Values

Fair  
Accountable  
Caring  
Transparent

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# Introduction

The Duluth Police Department takes every complaint, both internal and external, very seriously. Every complaint is reviewed by the Professional Standards Unit and is investigated thoroughly. This Unit is responsible for all aspects of the internal investigation process. We use technology as part of our effort to be transparent and hold staff accountable for their actions.

An annual 'Complaint Accountability Report' is published externally on DPD's website for the public to review. This allows us to continue our commitment to building trust through transparency. This report provides our community with a comprehensive document detailing complaints at the Duluth Police Department.

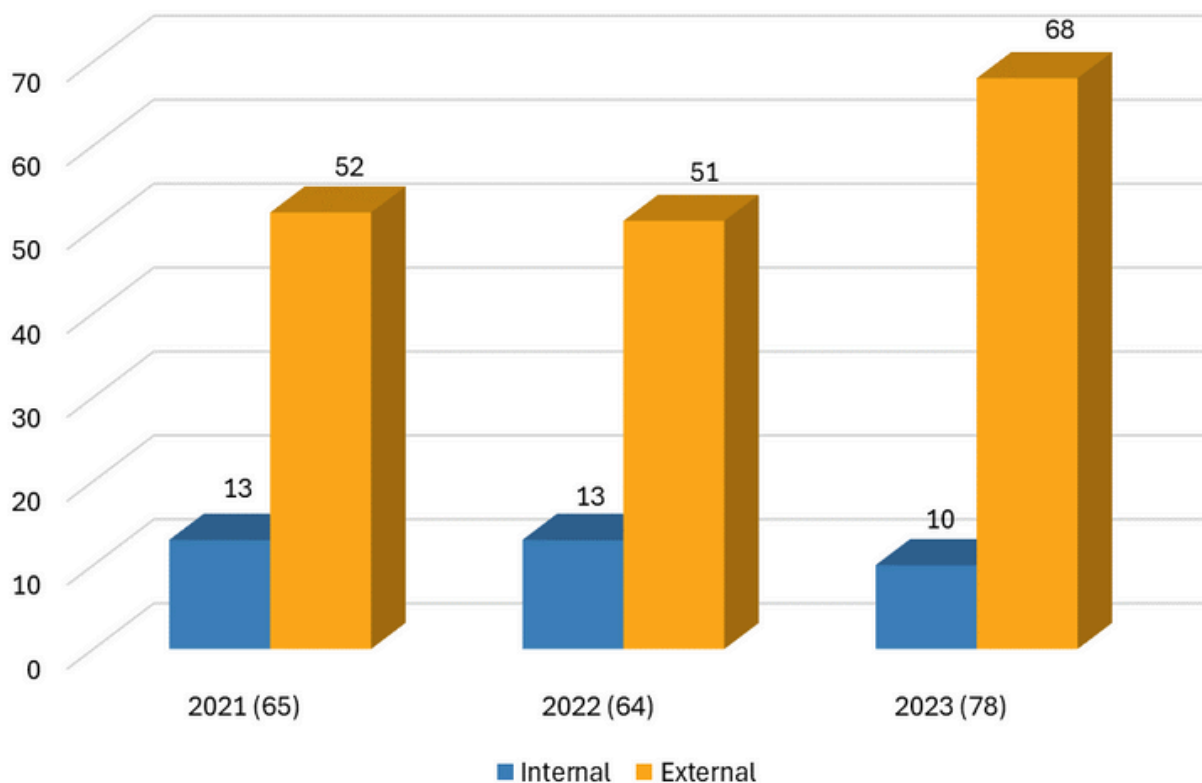
This report contains comparisons between 2021, 2022, and 2023 complaints received. This was done based on information that was compiled during the Racial Bias Audit.

\*A single complaint may have more than one allegation and may involve more than one staff member.

\*Complaints may involve a sworn officer or a member of professional staff.

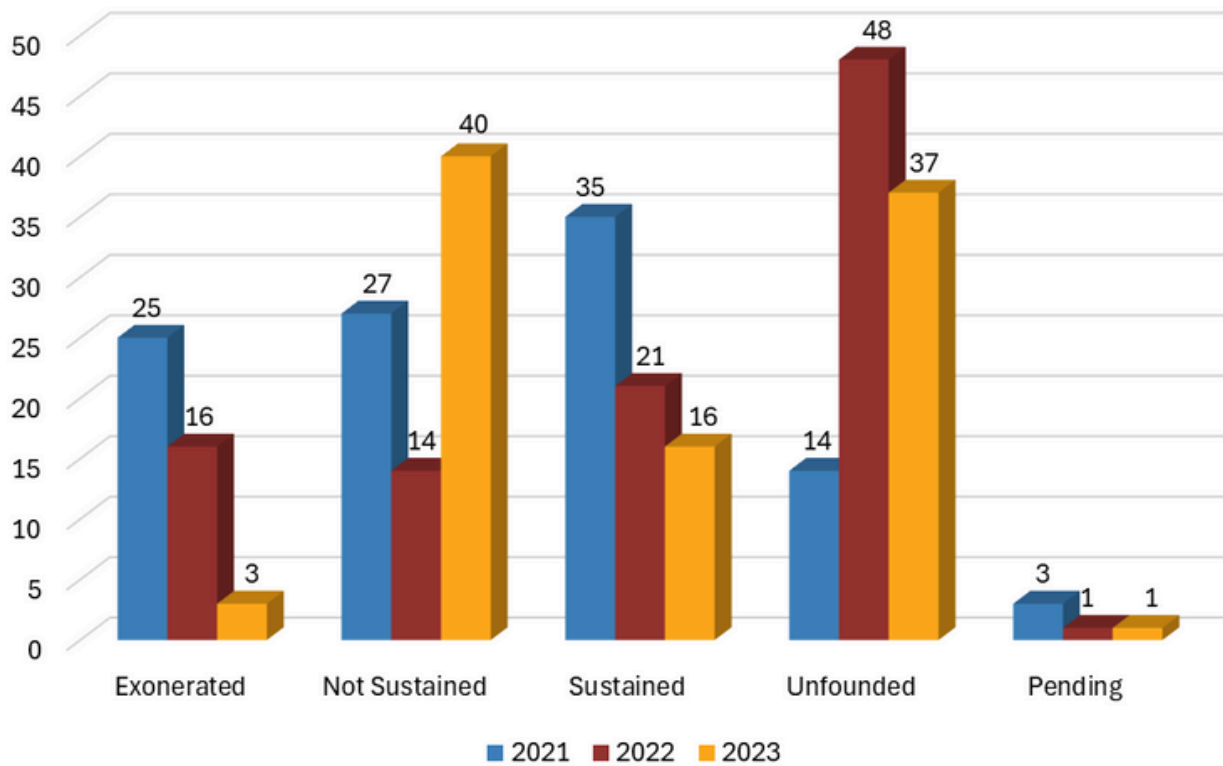
## Data/Analysis

**Complaint Comparable Data (2021 - 2023): Internal vs External**



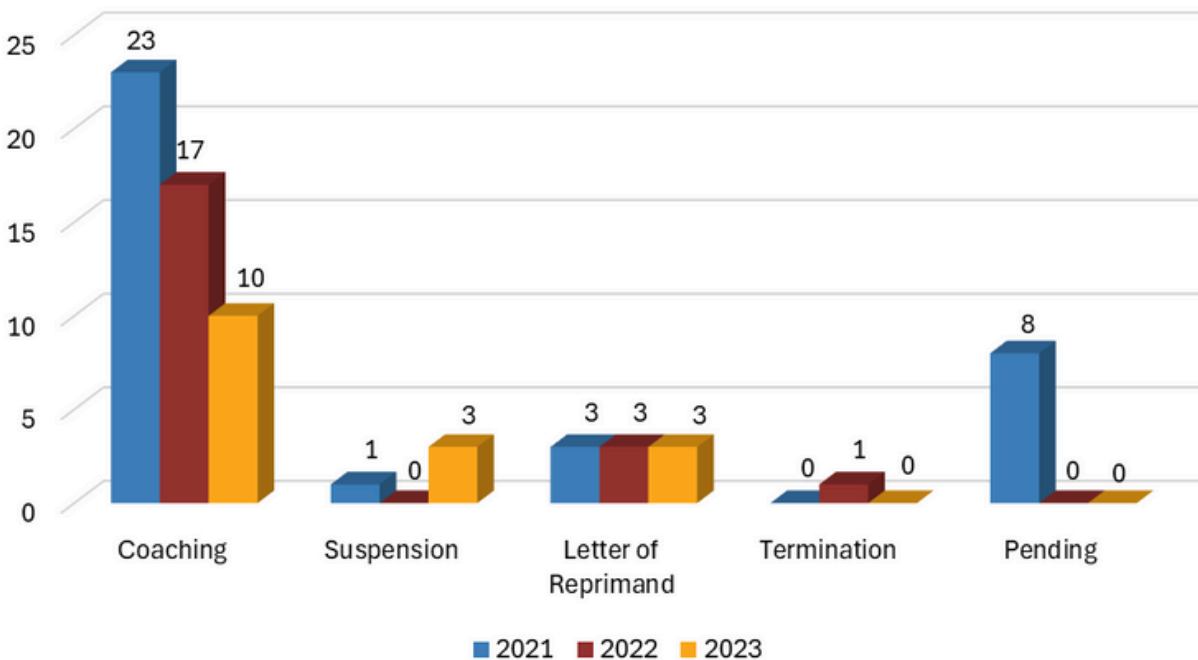
The above graph indicates the number of complaints received both internally and externally for the past three years.

### Dispositions Comparable Data (2021 - 2023)



The above graph details the findings from each complaint received for the past three years. \*Pending in this data set means that the employee left DPD prior to the investigation being concluded.

### Sustained Complaints with Disciplinary Action Comparable Data (2021 - 2023):



The above graph depicts the number of sustained complaints received for the past three years and the disciplinary action of each sustained complaint. \*Pending in this data set means that the employee left DPD prior to any disciplinary action occurring.



# Summary

## **2021 Complaint Statistics:**

- 65 total complaints received
- 47 employees involved
- 52 complaints from external sources
- 13 complaints from internal sources
- 25 exonerated complaints
- 27 not sustained complaints
- 35 sustained complaints
- 14 unfounded complaints

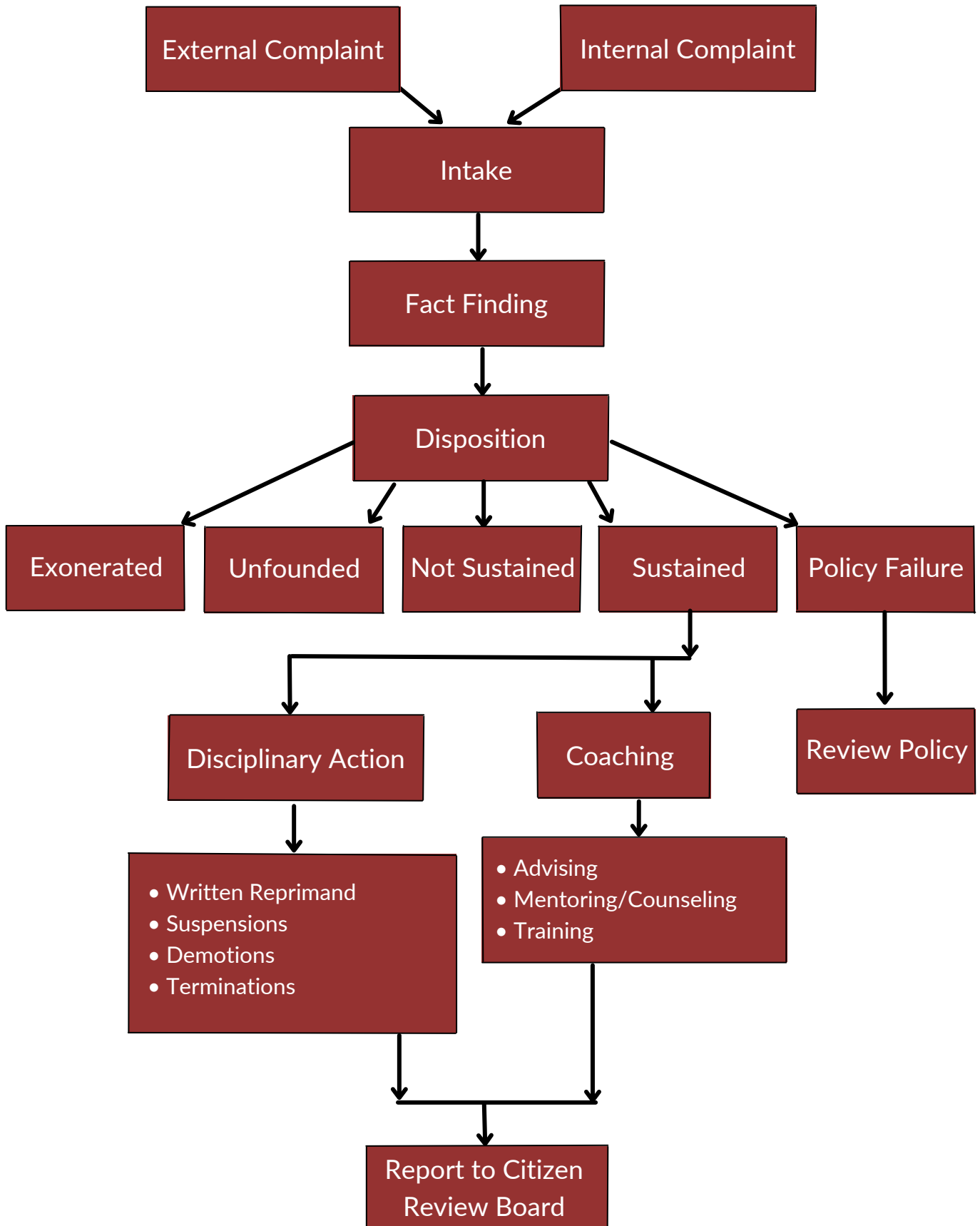
## **2022 Complaint Statistics:**

- 64 total complaints received
- 53 employees involved
- 51 complaints from external sources
- 13 complaints from internal sources
- 16 exonerated complaints
- 14 not sustained complaints
- 21 sustained complaints
- 48 unfounded complaints

## **2023 Complaint Statistics:**

- 78 total complaints received
- 53 employees involved
- 68 complaints from external sources
- 10 complaints from internal sources
- 3 exonerated complaints
- 40 not sustained complaints
- 17 sustained complaints
- 37 unfounded complaints

# Complaint Process



# Complaint Process

Complaints about DPD personnel can be submitted in person, in writing, over the phone, or online. Once a complaint is received, it is entered into an electronic tracking/monitoring software program and forwarded to the Professional Standards Unit (PSU) for review. The PSU will review the circumstances surrounding the complaint and investigate each incident determining the facts related to the allegation using reports, body camera, squad car camera, or any other applicable video footage, as well as interviews with any relevant witnesses. At the conclusion of this process, the assigned investigator will make a preliminary determination on the complaint. The possible dispositions for any complaint are as follows:

**Exonerated:** The allegation is true but was consistent with Duluth Police Department policy

**Unfounded:** The allegation is false or not factual

**Not Sustained:** There is insufficient evidence to prove or disprove the allegation

**Sustained:** The allegation is supported by sufficient evidence

**Policy Failure:** The action is not a violation of policy, but the policy is not adequate

The PSU investigators preliminary determination will be reviewed by the Lieutenant of that Unit. If formal discipline is a consideration, the consideration of discipline will be reviewed by the employee's Lieutenant, Deputy Chief, and ultimately the Chief. A final discipline determination is made by the Chief or their designee. Discipline is designed to be progressive and corrective in nature, and may be accompanied with a training component. The following is a list of corrective actions and disciplines that can be given following a complaint investigation.

**Advising:** Unit leaders have the responsibility and/or authority to immediately correct improper behavior by verbally informing the employee and explaining expectations.

**Coaching/Counseling:** Unit leaders have the responsibility and/or authority to counsel an employee when a more serious or ongoing performance problem is encountered.

**Training:** Unit leaders have the responsibility and/or authority to recommend and arrange training through the PSU to correct more serious or ongoing employee performance problems.

**Written Reprimand:** Lieutenants have the responsibility and/or authority to recommend a written reprimand for a serious breach of conduct after counseling, training, or verbal reprimand have failed to correct performance or behavioral problems.

**Suspensions\*:** Lieutenants and above have the right to suspend employees for up to 240 working hours (aggregated during one calendar year, Police Contract Section 34.2) for serious breaches or when other actions have failed.

**Demotions\*:** The Deputy Chiefs and Chief have the ability to demote employees if warranted.

**Terminations\*:** The Chief or the appointing authority has the ability to terminate employees if warranted.

**Citizen Review Board:** Report to the Board the findings and disposition. Discussion about policy, training, and expectations.

At the conclusion of an external-generated complaint investigation, the Duluth Police Department will reach out to the complainant who brought the complaint forward to advise them of the disposition. This investigative process is governed by DPD's Internal Investigations Policy.

\*In accordance with Civil Service Rules, labor contracts, Veteran's Preference Act, and current case law.

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