



Internal Memo

January 23, 2024

TO: Anthony Chandler, City Administrator
 FROM: Marc VanderStelt, Chief of Police
 SUBJECT: 2023 Internal Affairs Analysis

The following is a summary of the Internal Affairs cases logged during the 2023 calendar year. This summary information is made available to the public through the city website.

During the calendar year 2023, twelve internal affairs incidents involving ten different employees were logged. Of the twelve cases, three were the result of a citizen complaint.

Internal Affairs Statistics – 2023

ALLEGATIONS	Substantiated	Exonerated	Unsubstantiated	Unfounded	TOTAL
External - Formal	1				1
External - Informal	1	1			2
External - Inquiry					0
Internal - Formal	3				3
Internal - Informal					0
Internal - Inquiry	5	1			6
TOTAL	10	2			12

Disciplinary Action	Number	Percentage
Termination	0	0.00%
Demotion	0	0.00%
Suspension	0	0.00%
Written Reprimand	4	40.00%
Counseling	3	30.00%
Resignation	3	30.00%

A total of ten allegations were ruled as substantiated, meaning that the employee involved was responsible for violating department or city directives. The employees involved in the substantiated complaints this year received appropriate disciplinary action. Three officers received verbal warnings



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with training connected to the disposition to correct the actions, and four received written reprimands. Three offices resigned from their position before a final disposition was determined.

It should be noted that the number of internal affairs complaints in 2023 met the average number of complaints from 2019 (13) and 2020 (13). In 2021, there was a drastic reduction to six total complaints (internal and external). In 2022, the department had a significant increase in internal inquiries (20) because of use of force situations and four officer-involved city crashes. In 2023, there were only two crash reports and zero investigations related to use-of-force incidents.

The Norton Shores Police Department expects and receives the highest degree of integrity from its members and that all employees' actions are performed in good faith. Employees were trained each of the last four years on enhancing de-escalation techniques and better communication skills. Several officers attended C.I.T. training and learned how to de-escalate encounters with a person in crisis.

The Norton Shores Police Department will continue challenging officers through internal and external training opportunities to enhance their communication and de-escalation skills. We have added by-monthly department training that is scenario/reality-based training that tests our officers on the preferred response to most police/citizen interactions. It is my hope that the continued training will assist in lowering the number of citizen complaints in 2024.

Policies related to Internal Affairs were reviewed, and the process is still valid with no suggestions for change.