



# Internal Memo

January 27, 2026

TO: Anthony Chandler, City Administrator  
 FROM: Marc VanderStelt, Chief of Police  
 SUBJECT: 2025 Internal Affairs Analysis

The following is a summary of the Internal Affairs cases logged during the 2025 calendar year, including departmental actions taken and outcomes. This summary information is made available to the public through the city website.

Thirteen internal affairs incidents involving 11 employees were logged in 2026. Five investigations were the result of a citizen complaint.

## Internal Affairs Statistics – 2025

ALLEGATIONS	Substantiated	Exonerated	Unsubstantiated	Unfounded	TOTAL
External - Formal	1				1
External - Informal	1			3	4
External - Inquiry					0
Internal - Formal					0
Internal - Informal	6			2	8
Internal - Inquiry					0
TOTAL	8			5	13

Disciplinary Action	Number	Percentage
Termination	0	0.00%
Demotion	0	0.00%
Suspension	0	16.67%
Written Reprimand	2	16.67%
Counseling	7	66.67%
Resignation	0	0.00%

Eight allegations were ruled substantiated, indicating clear violations of department or city directives. The involved employees received appropriate disciplinary actions, including verbal warnings with



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training for seven officers and two officers receiving written reprimands, demonstrating our commitment to accountability.

It should be noted that the number of internal affairs complaints in 2025 more than doubled from 2024 (6); however, it matched 2023 levels and is roughly the average number of complaints over the past several years. A somewhat concerning statistical increase is the number of external allegations. In 2025, we had five complaints, and in most years, we average three or fewer. It's important to note that only two of the five complaints were substantiated, and the other three were unfounded. An additional contributing factor in this year's data is that we had two allegations on non-sworn personnel, which is not a common theme for the department.

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 have been trained each of the last five years on enhancing de-escalation techniques and better communication skills, reflecting our ongoing commitment to improvement.

A goal for 2025 was to reduce the number of citizen complaints by continuing to provide training in de-escalation and behavioral health. The Norton Shores Police Department had five citizen complaints in 2025, but only two were substantiated. The two substantiated incidents led to additional training and counseling for the officers involved. The Norton Shores Police Department will continue to challenge officers through internal and external training opportunities to enhance their communication and de-escalation skills.

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