

For Immediate Release:

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CPC Analyzes Agreements between City and Nine Other Police Departments related to the Consent Decree

Assessment finds spotty compliance with agreements and lack of city oversight

In 2018, City officials amended agreements called Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) with nine separate police agencies who have arrest power in Cleveland. The updated documents outlined changes the departments will make to ensure constitutional policing under the Consent Decree is more consistent in Cleveland.

The agreements are all up for renewal by City Council this year. Some of the departments, such as University Circle and Case Western Reserve University, have already requested Council grant them additional authority in the renewals. Today, the Community Police Commission (CPC) Outside Affiliates Work Group released its [review of the Memoranda of Understanding \(MOU\)](#) to give the public an understanding of how well these agencies honored their previous commitments.

As the CPC is concerned with issues relevant to the Consent Decree, this assessment focused on three main areas to determine MOU compliance: 1. use of force and vehicle pursuit policy, 2. training and 3. the establishment of a civilian administered complaint board. These were common elements in all nine agreements.

The result of this initial analysis suggests that most of the smaller police departments in Cleveland are in partial compliance with their obligations under their MOUs, with only one of the nine departments in full compliance. One area of significant concern is accountability and the process of receiving and investigating citizen complaints. Although agreed to in 2018, many of the civilian complaint boards were established only after the CPC began requesting MOU information and records in 2020.

"It was clear that CDP gave the nine private police departments authority to police substantial areas of the city, but then failed to check whether the nine police departments had met their responsibilities under the Consent Decree," says CPC Commissioner and work group chairperson Lewis Katz.

The smaller departments in Cleveland themselves are **not** directly under the Consent Decree or the new provisions of Charter Amendment 115 that Cleveland voters put into place in November 2021. These smaller police departments **are however subject to the authority** of the City of Cleveland when it comes to many of their policing powers, and City Council can hold them accountable to the goals and objectives outlined in the MOUs, which bring them in line with the spirit of the Consent Decree.

The City of Cleveland is the governing body in Cleveland, so it has authority to grant or remove policing powers to many smaller police departments operating in Cleveland within limitations of state law.

The CPC has made several recommendations in its assessment for both the City of Cleveland and the police agencies to consider to better ensure each department's policies and practices are consistent with their MOUs and city wide guidelines.

The CPC's full assessment and recommendations can be found on the CPC website at:
bit.ly/MOU-Report-2022

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