

Non-Emergency Crime Reporting Policy Proposal

The Citizen's Police Oversight Commission (CPOC) has submitted a policy proposal to the Philadelphia Police Department (PPD) that proposed the department create a non-emergency crime reporting unit to allow citizens to file police reports for low-level non-emergency crimes online and over the phone.

CURRENTLY, CITIZENS MAY ONLY REPORT THESE CRIMES BY CALLING 911 AND WAITING FOR AN OFFICER TO BE DISPATCHED AND TAKE THEIR REPORT IN PERSON.

Because these are low-priority, wait times are long and can be over an hour.

- **PPD is currently experiencing a staffing crisis**, which limits effects the amount of available patrol officers to respond to calls.
- Additionally, **PPD's 911 call center is understaffed** as well, effecting the amount of available operators to take calls for service.

These are crimes that include but are not limited to vandalism, car break-ins, or theft. These crimes are not in-progress and usually victims have no offender information that could lead to an arrest. Typically, victims are reporting the crime for the purposes of filing an insurance claim.

PPD used to have a unit that took police reports over the phone, but it was **disbanded in 2017**.

911 calls are ranked in priority as **1 (highest priority) through 6 (lowest priority)**.

Many police departments across the country allow low-level non-emergency crimes to be **reported online and over the phone**.

- These reporting methods allow 911 operators and police officers to answer and respond to emergency calls for service quicker.
- Additionally, removing non-emergency crimes from physical police response provides officers with more time during their shift to engage in community-oriented police work.

CPOC conducted research into PPD's current and past practices, along with best practices research, which included case studies into peer police departments to propose the following recommendations:

- **PPD should create a Non-Emergency Reporting Unit**, reinstating telephone crime reporting and adopting an online crime reporting system. To reduce the burden on sworn personnel, PPD should utilize civilian hires to receive telephone and online crime reports.
- **PPD should thoroughly review all priority 3, 4, and 6 calls** to identify all calls that do not require a physical police response.
- **If PPD accepts these recommendations**, CPOC will be available to assist the department in their efforts to establish a new unit and publish progress reports for the public.
- Should a Non-Emergency Reporting Unit be implemented, **CPOC will collect data and report on the unit's effectiveness**.

CPOC'S PROPOSAL CAN BE READ IN ITS ENTIRETY ON CPOC'S WEBSITE

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In 2022, PPD received 77,469 priority 6 calls for service.