



FREDERICK COUNTY GOVERNMENT

Jessica Fitzwater
County Executive

POLICE ACCOUNTABILITY BOARD

Robert Effler, Chair
Sarah Ambrosio, Executive Administrator
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TO: Jessica Fitzwater, County Executive
Frederick County Council
Michael O'Connor, Mayor, City of Frederick
Nathan Brown, Mayor, Town of Brunswick
John Kinnaird, Mayor, Town of Thurmont

FROM: Frederick County Police Accountability Board

DATE: December 19, 2025

SUBJECT: 2025 Police Accountability Board Annual Report

Introduction

The Frederick County Police Accountability Board (*PAB*) submits their Annual Report (*Report*) pursuant to the Police Accountability Act of 2021, codified at Maryland Code Annotated, Public Safety Article, Title 3, Subtitle 1 (*Act*). The Act requires, among other things, that each Maryland county's PAB submit a report to the county's governing body that (1) identifies any trends in the disciplinary process of police officers in the county and (2) makes recommendations on changes to policy that would improve police accountability in the county.

2025 Meetings

The PAB held nine (9) meetings in 2025 as follows: four (4) required quarterly meetings with law enforcement agencies, two (2) administrative meetings to interview candidates for the Administrative Charging Committee (*ACC*) and the Trial Board (*TB*) rotation list, two (2) special meetings to discuss community outreach and appointments to the *ACC* and *TB* rotation list, and the last meeting of the year to finalize the Annual Report.

The County Executive appointed three (3) new members to the PAB in July and also appointed a new PAB Chair. The PAB appointed two (2) new members to the *ACC* and one (1) additional person to the *TB* rotation list. All members to their respective Boards and Committees have completed all mandated and necessary trainings.

2025 Activities

Members of the PAB and ACC attended several community events to advance outreach efforts and enhance public awareness and knowledge. PAB members set up tables with signage, informational materials, and outreach items at community events including Frederick Pride, In the Streets, National Night Out for the Frederick County Sheriff's Office and the Brunswick Police Department, and Brunswick Railroad Days. PAB and ACC members represented their respective groups at Frederick County Veterans Appreciation Day and Thurmont Police Department's National Night Out.

State Law Changes in 2025

The Maryland General Assembly passed Senate Bill 533 which was signed into law on May 13, 2025, with an effective date of October 1, 2025. This Bill revised the deadlines for filing administrative charges in police discipline cases as follows:

1. **Public Complaints:** When a member of the public files a complaint against a police officer, the entire process—from a law enforcement agency's completion of an investigation to the administrative charging committee's case review and rendering of a decision—must be completed within **395 days** of the complaint filing (was previously 1 year and 1 day after the complaint filing).
2. **Internal Complaints/Investigations:** For misconduct cases not requiring review by an administrative charging committee, the law enforcement agency must file charges within **one year and one day** from when the designated official (as defined by agency policy) became aware of the incident (not previously addressed in the law).
3. **Criminal Investigations:** If alleged police officer misconduct is also under criminal investigation, the one-year-and-one-day deadline in which to bring administrative charges begins after the date of one of the following:
 - The investigating agency determines the matter is not criminal; or
 - All criminal charges are resolved against the officer; or
 - The agency or committee receives notice that prosecutors declined to file charges.

County Code Changes in 2025

County Council Vice President Kavonté Duckett introduced Bill No. 25-08 to amend certain provisions of Frederick County Code, Chapter 1-2, Sections 802, 803, 804, and 806. Bill 25-08 was enacted on June 17, 2025, and became effective August 22, 2025. Highlights of the amendments included encouraging PAB members' participation in ride-alongs with law enforcement officers, authorization of the PAB's creation of

subcommittees, adjustment of the ACC's meeting schedule to once per month or as needed, and filling of ACC vacancies on the same basis as the original appointments for unexpired terms with members continuing in office until their successors are appointed and qualified to serve.

Administrative Charging Committee

As of July, the ACC became comprised of all new members. In addition to the newly appointed PAB Chair, the County Executive appointed two (2) new members and the PAB appointed two (2) members, all in accordance with applicable provisions of Frederick County Code, Article XVIII, Police Accountability Board and Administrative Charging Committee.

Trial Board Rotation List

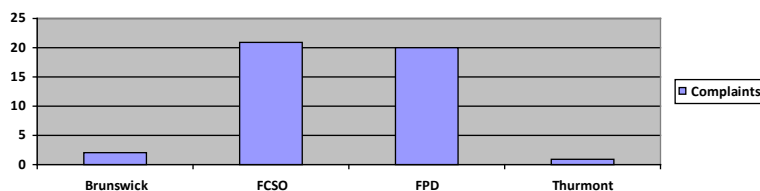
Currently, the County's Trial Board rotation list contains four (4) individuals who are trained and prepared to serve. To date, the County has 1 trial board.

2025 Complaint Data

To date in 2025, the PAB received 18 complaints directly. Of those 18 complaints, 12 were PAB-applicable. Overall, there have been 44 complaints of misconduct this year. As the numbers show, a majority of the complaints of police misconduct are still filed with the law enforcement agencies directly.

The ACC received 48 complaints for review and decision in 2025. In those 48 complaints, 97 alleged violations of police misconduct involving 90 officers were identified and investigated. The most common alleged violations were misconduct related to the law enforcement agencies' respective policies and standards. The ACC recommended administrative charges in 6 cases of police misconduct in 2025.

Number of Complaints per Agency



Compliance

- Quarterly Meetings were held.
- Members were appointed to the ACC and TB.
- All complaints received were forwarded to the correct LEA within 3 business days.
- Due to member transitions, only one (1) ACC quarterly update was provided to the PAB. That update occurred at the October meeting and information had been provided for the year to date.
- Annual Report completed by December 31, 2025.

Recommendations

- Looking into the maturation of the ACC process:
 - Frequency of updates
 - Identifying if more reporting metrics are needed (Complaint origination, geographic/demographic specifics, rate of unique complaints, whether remediation happens, etc.)
 - Clarifying records retention policies/standards for both the Co. & State
- Tracking community events and whether increased awareness increases reporting.
- Under the current law, if a police officer is charged, the ACC can recommend discipline in accordance with Disciplinary Matrix. The General Assembly should amend §3-104€(3) of the Public Safety Article, Annotated Code of Maryland to allow an ACC to recommend mandatory training of an officer even if the ACC ultimately decides not to administratively charge an officer.