



CITY OF DETROIT
BOARD OF POLICE COMMISSIONERS
Rev. Jerome L. Warfield, Sr.
Chief Investigator

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Detroit Board of Police Commissioners

FROM: Chief Investigator Jerome L. Warfield, Sr.

DATE: June 11, 2026

SUBJECT: DRAFT PUBLIC STATEMENT - FBI's Removal of CJIS Access from the Office of the Chief Investigator

I. Executive Summary

On May 15, 2026, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), in coordination with the Michigan Commission on Law Enforcement Standards (MCOLES), formally removed direct Criminal Justice Information Services (CJIS) access from the Detroit Board of Police Commissioners' Office of the Chief Investigator (OCI). This action ends a 52-year operational practice through which OCI investigators have independently accessed Detroit Police Department (DPD) records, body-worn camera (BWC) footage, Incident/Investigation Report, Computer Aided Dispatch reports (CAD), daily activity logs, impound records, and personnel files to conduct timely, thorough, and impartial investigations of alleged non-criminal misconduct by DPD personnel.

The Board of Police Commissioners (BOPC) expresses deep concern that this decision, though framed as a compliance matter, directly impacts the Board's ability to fulfill its Charter-mandated civilian oversight responsibilities. OCI investigators are fingerprinted, undergo extensive criminal background investigations, and are CJIS-certified through the FBI, identical to the vetting required of DPD civilian investigators and crime technicians.

The Board is committed to working with the FBI, MCOLES, the Michigan State Police, the City of Detroit Corporation Counsel, and the Detroit Police Department to restore appropriate, lawful access, through a Management Control Agreement, Memorandum of Understanding, or such other mechanism as federal regulators may require, so that independent civilian oversight of the DPD is preserved as mandated by the people of Detroit through the 2012 Detroit City Charter.

II. Historical Context: The Detroit Board of Police Commissioners

Civilian oversight of policing in Detroit traces its origins to 1865, when a state legislative act established the Detroit Police Department and provided for a four-member commission appointed by the Governor to eight-year terms. That four-member structure remained in place until May 4, 1901, when a single-commissioner model replaced it. The single-commissioner form of administrative authority continued until the adoption of the Detroit City Charter.



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In 1974, following a charter change championed by former Mayor Coleman A. Young and ratified by a vote of the people of Detroit, the modern Board of Police Commissioners (BOPC) was created. The Charter vested broad supervisory authority over the Detroit Police Department in an eleven-member civilian board.

At the time of its founding, the Detroit BOPC was the first fully independent civilian police oversight body in the United States, operating without command-level interference from, or administration by, sworn members of the police department it oversees. Comparable bodies in cities such as New York, Philadelphia, and St. Louis remained, at that time, embedded within or administered by their respective police agencies. The Detroit BOPC was uniquely empowered to:

- Hire its own Board Secretary, Chief Investigator, legal counsel, and additional staff;
- Exercise subpoena power;
- Hire the Personnel Director for the Detroit Police Department, ensuring the Department reflects the values and culture of the community it serves.

III. Charter Authority of the Board of Police Commissioners

For more than fifty-two (52) years, the Board has executed the following Charter-mandated responsibilities:

Supervisory control and oversight of the Police Department;

Establishing policies, rules, and regulations in consultation with the Chief of Police and with the approval of the Mayor;

Receiving and resolving any complaint concerning the operation of the Police Department, and forwarding all allegations of criminality to the appropriate law enforcement agency;

Acting as final authority in imposing or reviewing discipline of departmental employees;

Subpoenaing witnesses, administering oaths, taking testimony, and requiring the production of evidence;

Appointing the Chief Investigator and additional investigative staff as needed;

Ensuring that the Chief Investigator immediately investigates any complaint.

Relevant Provisions of the 2012 Detroit City Charter

Sec. 7-801. Police Department. The Police Department shall preserve the public peace, prevent crime, arrest offenders, protect the rights of persons and property, guard the public health, preserve order, and enforce the laws of the State of Michigan and the United States and the ordinances of the City of Detroit.

Sec. 7-802. Board of Police Commissioners. The Board of Police Commissioners has supervisory control and oversight of the Police Department as set forth in this Chapter.



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Sec. 7-803. Duties of the Board. The Board shall establish policy; review and approve the departmental budget; receive and resolve complaints; act as final authority in discipline; report annually to the Mayor, City Council, and the public; and may subpoena witnesses, administer oaths, take testimony, and require the production of evidence.

Sec. 7-804. Staff. The Board shall appoint a Board Secretary and a Chief Investigator, together with such additional investigative staff as it deems necessary.

Sec. 7-808. Complaints. All complaints concerning the Police Department, filed anywhere within the Department, shall be forwarded immediately to the Board Secretary. The Chief Investigator shall investigate each complaint immediately and file a report of findings with the Board within sixty (60) days.

IV. The Office of the Chief Investigator (OCI)

The Office of the Chief Investigator is the investigative arm of the Detroit Board of Police Commissioners. Its purpose is to conduct independent, thorough, timely, and impartial investigations into all allegations of non-criminal misconduct by members of the Detroit Police Department. Allegations of criminal conduct are referred to the appropriate internal or external law enforcement agency.

The OCI is currently comprised of:

Investigators	24
Supervisors	3
Chief Investigator	1
Administrative Staff	4

All OCI personnel are fingerprinted, undergo extensive criminal background investigations, and are CJIS-certified by the FBI, the same standard applied to civilian investigators and crime technicians within the Detroit Police Department. All OCI investigators operate under the supervisory control and oversight of the Board of Police Commissioners. There has never been a sanction or allegation against the OCI in its fifty-two-year history for violating rules, procedures, or regulations concerning CJIS.

Evidence Sources Historically Accessed by OCI

To carry out its Charter-mandated duties, OCI investigators have routinely and lawfully accessed:

- Body-Worn Camera (BWC) footage;
- Officer Daily Activity Logs;
- Computer Aided Dispatch;
- GovTow access;



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- UD10 Accident Reports;
- Completed Use of Force Reports and Supervisor Investigation Report (SIR);
- Completed Allegation of Force Reports;
- Incident/Investigation Report;
- Warrant Packages;
- Front-desk supervisor interactions with citizens filing reports;
- DPD personnel records and files;
- Other Detroit Police Department records relevant to a misconduct allegation.

This direct access was expressly preserved under the Federal Consent Decree entered against the City of Detroit and the Detroit Police Department, which maintained OCI's direct access to DPD evidence as a safeguard of independent civilian oversight.

V. What Is CJIS?

The Criminal Justice Information Services (CJIS) Division of the Federal Bureau of Investigation is the central repository for criminal justice information shared with federal, state, local, and tribal law enforcement agencies. CJIS systems include the National Crime Information Center (NCIC), the Interstate Identification Index (III), Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR), and fingerprint identification databases, among others.

Access to CJIS data is governed by the FBI CJIS Security Policy, which establishes minimum standards for personnel screening, training, certification, physical security, technical safeguards, and audit accountability.

Every three (3) years, the FBI and MCOLES conduct a joint compliance audit of every agency with CJIS access in Michigan to verify adherence to the CJIS Security Policy. Failure to comply may result in restriction, suspension, or termination of CJIS access.

VI. Timeline of Events

2017–2019 - The Board of Police Commissioners' administrative reporting structure was transitioned from the Detroit Police Department's Personnel Bureau to the City of Detroit Human Resources Department. It is believed this structural change was not formally communicated to the State of Michigan or MCOLES, which may have contributed to the eventual CJIS access determination.



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2022 - A determination was reportedly made internally that the Office of the Chief Investigator should no longer have CJIS access. This determination was not acted upon at the time.

Mid-2025 - The Chief Investigator was informed by the Public Safety IT Director of the 2022 determination and the intent to act upon it.

Week of August 25, 2025 - Internal meeting held with the Chief of Police and members of his executive team, Corporation Counsel, Chairwoman Dewaelsche, Vice-Chair Woods, the Chief Investigator, and the Public Safety IT Director to identify potential solutions.

September 10, 2025 - The Chief Investigator emailed the Chairperson Dewaelsche, Vice Chairperson Woods, and Secretary of the Board, as well as Corporation Counsel Conrad Mallett, to provide context ahead of the September 11 CJIS meeting.

September 11, 2025 - Multi-agency meeting convened with the Michigan State Police, MCOLES, the Chief of Police and his executive team, Selectmembers of the Board, Corporation Counsel, the Chief Investigator, and the Public Safety IT Director.

September 11, 2025 - The Chief Investigator emailed Corporation Counsel regarding CJIS certifications for the entire OCI investigative staff.

November 17, 2025 - Corporation Counsel circulated a draft Management Control Agreement as a proposed compliance pathway. The State of Michigan and MCOLES did not respond.

January 22, 2026 – During the BOPC meeting, formal request from Commissioner Camille for a public presentation from DPD on CJIS.

February 5, 2026 - Email from Corporation Counsel to Deputy Chief Parrish, 2nd Deputy Chief Ha, and the Chief Investigator regarding the status of CJIS access.

February 7, 2026 - Email from Commissioner Camille requesting Corporation Counsel fully brief all Commissioners on concerns around access to CJIS.

March 17, 2026 - Follow-up correspondence between the Chief Investigator and Commissioner Camille regarding CJIS.



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April 14, 2026 - The Chief Investigator emailed a draft Resolution and draft Memorandum of Understanding to the Chairperson Dewaelsche, Vice Chairperson Woods, Corporation Counsel, and Board Secretary. Two meetings were held that same day with the Chief of Police, executive team, Public Safety IT leadership, select members of the Board, Board Secretary, Chief Investigator, and Corporation Counsel.

May 4, 2026 - A multi-agency Teams meeting was held including representatives from the FBI, MCOLES, Michigan State Police, Detroit Police Department, Corporation Counsel, Board of Police Commissioners staff and select Commissioners, and City of Detroit IT. The Chief of Police and Corporation Counsel presented several proposed frameworks to preserve OCI's direct access to CJIS-related information for investigative purposes. Each proposed accommodation was denied by the FBI, and subsequently by the State of Michigan.

May 15, 2026 - Direct access to evidence and CJIS information was formally removed from the Office of the Chief Investigator.

Following the removal, the Chief of Police has pledged the full cooperation of his command and staff to provide indirect access while maintaining LEIN confidentiality to evidence so that OCI investigators may continue to fulfill the oversight responsibilities mandated by the Detroit City Charter.

VII. The Board's Position

The Detroit Board of Police Commissioners affirms the following:

OCI investigators are properly vetted. Every OCI investigator is fingerprinted, criminal-background investigated, and CJIS-certified by the FBI to the same standard required of DPD civilian investigators, and crime analysts.

OCI's authority is rooted in the will of the people. The Board's investigative powers derive directly from the 2012 Detroit City Charter, ratified by Detroit voters, and from the Federal Consent Decree, which expressly preserved OCI's direct access to DPD evidence.

Independent civilian oversight requires independent access. Indirect access, while a workable interim measure, and one for which we are grateful to the Chief of Police, cannot, over the long term, substitute for the direct, unfiltered access required to conduct truly impartial investigations of the agency under review.

The Board remains committed to full federal and state compliance. The Board has, and will continue to, pursue every lawful pathway, including a Management Control Agreement, Memorandum of Understanding, or other accommodation, to restore direct access in a manner fully consistent with the FBI CJIS Security Policy and MCOLES standards.



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Public trust is non-negotiable. For 52 years, the citizens of Detroit have relied upon the Board and the Office of the Chief Investigator to provide an independent check on the conduct of their police department. That trust is the foundation upon which lawful, effective policing in Detroit rests, and the Board will not allow it to be diminished.

VIII. Path Forward

The Board of Police Commissioners calls upon the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Michigan Commission on Law Enforcement Standards, the Michigan State Police, the City of Detroit, and the Detroit Police Department to engage in good-faith negotiation toward a binding Management Control Agreement or comparable instrument that:

- Recognizes the OCI as a properly vetted, CJIS-certified investigative body;
- Restores direct access to the evidentiary sources necessary for independent oversight;
- Ensures full ongoing compliance with the FBI CJIS Security Policy and the triennial FBI/MCOLES audit; and
- Honors the Detroit City Charter and the Federal Consent Decree.

The Board thanks the Chief of Police, his executive team, Corporation Counsel, and the Public Safety IT Division for their continued partnership during this transition, and pledges to keep the residents of Detroit fully informed as this matter progresses.

Issued by the Detroit Board of Police Commissioners

Sincerely,

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