

Slap at watchdog

Detectives union big rips CCRB, claims delays, bias

BY THOMAS TRACY
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The writing is on the wall for NYPD detectives the moment they walk into the Civilian Complaint Review Board's lower Manhattan office, a police union leader charged Wednesday.

Officers who show up to be interviewed on misconduct allegations sit in CCRB offices with articles about killer cops hanging on the walls — as they wait for video calls from investigators, said Detectives' Endowment Association President Paul DiGiacomo in a scathing letter to the police watchdog agency.

"They got a great gig over there," one union source told the Daily News. "We have to take time out of our day to go there and be interviewed and they're asking us questions from their home."

In his letter to CCRB Chairman Frederick Davie and Executive Director Jonathan Darche, DiGiacomo said his members often sit in the CCRB office for several hours as technical problems cause the Zoom interviews to get dropped and repeatedly delayed.

"These operational issues at your office cause DEA members to be taken away from their

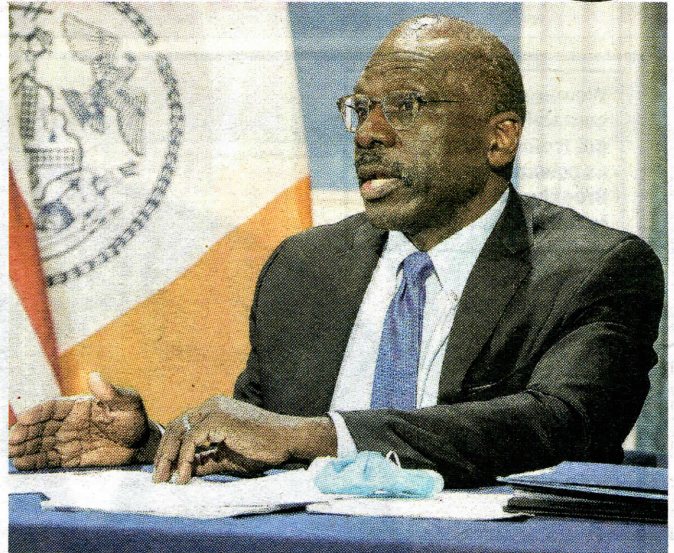
extremely important public-safety duties of investigating crimes and bringing criminals to justice," DiGiacomo wrote. "An hour wasted waiting for your office to fix a computer issue is an hour wasted of detective who would be solving crimes, helping the victims of crimes, and keeping the city safe."

While they wait, detectives face framed articles about cops being accused of excessive force, including former Police Officer Daniel Pantaleo, who was fired in 2019 for killing Eric Garner with a banned chokehold.

DiGiacomo said the clippings are used to "intimidate our members when providing statements."

"At a minimum, it is disrespectful to all members of the department," he wrote. "CCRB is statutorily charged with conducting unbiased investigations in a manner in which both the public and the police can have confidence. This makes a mockery of that mandate and furthers our members' belief that CCRB investigators are anything but fair and impartial."

The DEA president, who demanded that the CCRB conduct in-person interviews, also claimed the agency isn't concerned with wasting detectives' time and even



Frederick Davie, head of the Civilian Complaint Review Board.

calls in investigators to simply determine that they weren't on duty when a misconduct allegation was made — something that could easily be verified by calling the precinct.

The agency is also dragging its feet on their investigations, leaving the future of at least one detective dangling in the breeze for three years.

In a response letter mailed on Wednesday, Davie said the CCRB "returned to in-person work" last month although interviews have to still be done via Zoom to keep down the number of people in one room without masks, per city rules.

"At the moment, one of the most spacious room with adequate equipment is the press office which, as expected, has numerous relevant clippings round the room," Davie wrote. "We are looking for more spaces to host [officers] without compromising everyone's safety."

Problems with the NYPD's paperwork, not theirs, have caused issues where detectives not involved in a complaint has been brought before the agency, Davie said. "Despite these barriers, the CCRB's administrative prosecution unit" has closed 68 cases and held 26 trials since January 2020," the chairman wrote.