



# Police detectives union rips CCRB bid for informant info

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NYPD detectives fear the city's police watchdog agency is trying to take the "confidential" out of the term "confidential informant."

A move by the Civilian Complaint Review Board to require information about confidential informants' involvement in or knowledge of police misconduct is dangerous, police union officials told the Daily News.

Under a new CCRB policy, its investigators handling misconduct cases in which a confidential informant played a role "should attempt to obtain paperwork referencing the involvement" of those informants, according to a memo shared with The News.

NYPD detectives who rely on confidential informants balk at the idea of giving up information about their sources.

"This CCRB policy — which shows complete ignorance of undercover police work — will endanger detectives, informants, and anyone else involved in such operations," said Paul DiGiacomo, president of the Detectives Endowment Association, which represents NYPD detectives.

The NYPD also had "significant concerns over protecting the identity of confidential informants," an NYPD spokesman said.

"These concerns were directly raised to CCRB leadership who has agreed to make necessary revisions and clarifications to the memo in order to ensure the protection of our confidential informants," the spokesman said.

Misconduct cases involving confidential informants are extremely rare.

The CCRB didn't have a policy on confidential informants until late last year, when the agency was faced with an investigation involving a questionable car stop undertaken on the basis of information from a tipster, a source with knowledge of the new rules said.

In prior cases, if a confidential informant was at an incident where misconduct was alleged, CCRB investigators didn't know it and treated them like witnesses if they were present when the incident occurred, the source said.

The new policy says that when CCRB investigators work cases involving a confidential informant, they should get all the paperwork possible on the cop's interaction with the informant, including copies of memo books, detective files and arrest reports, before they interview the officer accused of misconduct.

"If [the officer] refuses to answer questions that may implicate a CI's [confidential informant's] safety, the investigator should pause the record [and] notify their deputy chief of investigations who will determine the merits of the claim off the record with the officer's representative and [the officer]," the memo notes.

Cops, in order to protect their informant, may feel that they have to lie about what happened when being questioned by investigators, said CCRB Executive Director Jonathan Darche.

"A key purpose of the policy is to prevent officers from giving untruthful statements to protect their confidential informants," Darche said.

"The last thing anyone wants is for an officer to come down and give untrue testimony," he said. "Even if it is the officer's desire to protect the confidential informant, it is still the kind of thing that can get you fired from the Police Department."

A CCRB spokeswoman said that the agency will do everything possible to protect informants' identities, and described the policy as a work in progress.

"A recent investigation alerted the CCRB to the need of a policy on how to handle cases involving confidential informants, specifically on how to protect both their identity and their role in a case," spokeswoman Clio Calvo-Platero explained.

"The CCRB wants to create a policy that allows officers to accurately detail an incident without the fear of exposing an informant."

The CCRB may tweak the policy after receiving feedback from the NYPD and the city's police unions, she said.

"We are working with them to ensure the policy protects the anonymity and safety of confidential informants," she said.