



"A Message from the Inspector General: Review of the FBI's Adjudication Process for Misconduct Investigations," September 2021

Hello, I'm Michael Horowitz, Inspector General for the U.S. Department of Justice.

Today, my office released a report on how the FBI's Office of Professional Responsibility, or OPR, handles the adjudication process for misconduct investigations.

We found that when the subject of an investigation retires or resigns, the FBI OPR does not always fully document an adjudication decision in those cases. This practice fails to hold accountable former FBI employees who separate while under investigation, fails to clear former employees whose misconduct allegations were unsubstantiated, and wastes OIG and FBI investigative resources.

We also found that in cases where FBI OPR conducts an adjudication, it generally does so consistent with FBI policy. However, we determined that those policies aren't comprehensive regarding how and when certain disciplinary actions may be invoked. For example, the FBI uses summary dismissal to immediately remove from FBI employment employees who engage in serious misconduct, but FBI policy does not define when a summary dismissal is appropriate. We also found inconsistency in how the FBI determines the maximum length of a disciplinary suspension.

This lack of guidance and formal policy may result in unfair and inconsistent application of disciplinary actions.

Additionally, we found that FBI OPR has not fully transitioned from hard copy recordkeeping to electronic records, which is inefficient and presents challenges for other FBI offices.

Our report details several other areas of improvement and we made 8 recommendations to improve the transparency and effectiveness of the FBI's adjudication process.

To read our report, please visit our website at oig.justice.gov, or go to oversight.gov.

Thank you for joining me today.

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