State of New York
Offices of the Inspector General

Review of The City University of New York's Firearms Policies and Procedures

November 2025

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This report references incidents of domestic violence and gun violence. If you or someone you know is a victim of domestic violence and wants help, emergency shelter, information, or support, contact the New York State Domestic and Sexual Violence Hotline: Call 1-800-942-6906 or Text 844-997-2121. If you have questions relating to Gun Safety in New York, you can visit gunsafety.ny.gov or speak with the New York State Police during normal business hours by dialing: 1-855-LAW-GUNS. As always, if you are in immediate danger, please dial 911. If you or someone you know is concerned about being a victim of gun violence, visit gunsafety.ny.gov/anti-gun-violence-initiatives to learn about anti-gun violence initiatives and resources.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Depending on the circumstances, firearms can play an integral part in ensuring public safety or be among the greatest threats to it. Over 10,000 New York State employees, across more than 75 State entities, bear the responsibility of carrying a firearm in the performance of their official duties. Consequently, those entities take on the equally grave responsibility of promulgating and implementing comprehensive firearms policies to ensure proper practices and accountability by those individuals.

The City University of New York (CUNY), a single university comprised of 26 colleges across New York City's five boroughs, is one such state entity that employs public safety personnel authorized to carry licensed firearms. Since 2020, three troubling incidents have occurred on CUNY campuses involving public safety staff, prompting the Inspector General to undertake a review of CUNY's firearms policies, with a particular focus on those relating to domestic violence and mental health.

More specifically, in November 2020, a CUNY peace officer employed at City College of New York (CCNY) opened fire on two New York City Police Department (NYPD) officers[1], seriously injuring both before being fatally shot. At the time of the incident, the NYPD officers had escorted the public safety officer's wife to their shared home in Queens, when the public safety officer suddenly and unexpectedly arrived home. Subsequent investigation revealed that the public safety officer had a documented history of domestic violence, had previously brought his CUNY-issued firearm home in violation of CUNY policy, and had undergone psychological examinations after threatening self-harm following a prior police intervention. Despite these red flags, CUNY allowed him to return to duty and regain access to his CUNY firearm without conducting an internal investigation or following established protocols for restoration of firearm privileges.

In a second incident, which occurred in October 2022, a CUNY public safety sergeant drove to work at CUNY's Queensborough Community College campus nearly three hours late, appearing to be under the influence of alcohol, and carrying a loaded personal firearm. Before the sergeant started his tour, the director of public safety told him that he was unfit for duty and would be driven home. The director also requested that the sergeant secure his personal firearm in his campus gun locker. Although the director observed the sergeant place his personal firearm in his gun locker, unbeknownst to the director, the sergeant then doubled back to the gun locker and removed his firearm before being driven home. Upon his return to the campus shortly thereafter, the director

[1] The weapon used by the public safety officer was personally purchased/owned, not his CUNY-issued duty firearm.

discovered that the firearm was missing. The sergeant, who admitted to taking the firearm, was placed on leave and his peace officer status suspended before he ultimately resigned.

The third incident occurred in October 2024, when a CUNY lieutenant assigned to CUNY's New York City College of Technology (City Tech) drove his car onto the campus of CUNY's College of Staten Island (CSI) for a personal matter. While there, a public safety sergeant encountered the lieutenant, who he observed had a campus security shield and what appeared to be a firearm on his waistband and whose breath smelled of what the sergeant believed was an alcoholic beverage. The lieutenant, at the sergeant's urging, agreed to leave campus, but in the process was observed by two campus security assistants (CSAs) carrying his firearm. No reports of this incident were filed on the date it occurred. Upon subsequent investigation by CUNY, it was determined that the lieutenant had never been issued a CUNY firearm, does not have a Carry Guard License, and does not possess a personal gun license in New York State. In January 2025, the lieutenant resigned from CUNY.

The Inspector General's review included both an evaluation of CUNY's handling of these three incidents as well as the sufficiency of CUNY's firearms policies as a whole and the training provided to staff on their contents. In doing so, the Inspector General identified not only significant deficiencies in CUNY's firearms policies, but also numerous material deviations by CUNY staff in implementing the policies as written.

More particularly, the Inspector General's investigation revealed that CUNY's Operations Guide—the governing policy manual for its Department of Public Safety—is outdated, inconsistent, and in places contradictory. Critical policies regarding the suspension, revocation, and restoration of firearm privileges are scattered across multiple conflicting sections. Moreover, CUNY lacks a centralized system for firearm tracking and oversight. Practices such as firearm sign-in/out logs and locker inspections are inconsistently applied, and the university has no clear procedures for handling observations of unauthorized weapons on campus.

Equally concerning is the university's failure to initiate internal reviews in response to mental health concerns or domestic violence allegations involving its officers, especially in non-arrest situations. In the most serious case, CUNY relied solely on the NYPD's license restoration to return a firearm to the officer involved in the 2020 shooting. At no point did the university assess whether he remained fit for duty. And despite the fact that the firearms involved in the above-described incidents were not CUNY-owned or CUNY-issued, it is still imperative that CUNY ensure that staff to whom the university provides firearms, those who are enforcing the rules regarding firearms on

its campuses, and those who observe firearms on campus in situations that may be suspicious, are both fit to do so and fully versed in the firearms policies in place.

To that end, the Inspector General concludes that CUNY must modernize and enforce its firearms policies, including by:

- **Implementing University-wide Firearm Controls**, including logbooks, daily gun locker and/or logbook checks, and strict off-campus firearms transport policies.
- **Overhauling and Updating the Operations Guide** for clarity, legal accuracy, and consistency.
- **Mandating Training** for all public safety personnel on firearms policies including the procedures when firearms are encountered on campus under circumstances giving rise to concern.
- **Establishing Mandatory Reviews** after domestic violence or mental health incidents, regardless of arrest status.
- **Requiring Rigorous Independent Internal Reviews** when firearm licenses are suspended or when officers return from suspension, including full documentation of findings.
- **Enforcing Disciplinary Actions Promptly** for unauthorized firearm removal and other firearms policy violations.

BACKGROUND

THE CUNY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY AND THE PROCESS FOR CUNY PEACE OFFICERS TO CARRY FIREARMS

CUNY has 26 campuses, each with a Department of Public Safety that is overseen by CUNY's central Department of Public Safety. CUNY's Departments of Public Safety currently employ approximately 1,063 public safety officers, which includes 428 peace officers.[2]

There is a multi-step procedure to become an armed public safety officer at CUNY. New York Criminal Procedure Law requires that public safety officers authorized to carry firearms must first be appointed as peace officers.[3] At CUNY, all peace officers are appointed by the CUNY Board of Trustees through their designee, the CUNY chancellor, and are required by New York Education Law to have satisfactorily completed law enforcement training or do so within one year of their appointment.[4]

The CUNY Department of Public Safety Operations Guide (Operations Guide), a multi-part

[2] *See* New York State Criminal Procedure Law § 2.10(79). Peace officers are appointed by CUNY pursuant to New York State Education Law § 6206(16) and have powers set forth in Criminal Procedure Law § 2.20.
[3] New York Criminal Procedure Law § 2.10(79).
[4] New York Education Law § 6206(16); CUNY Operations Guide, Instruction No. 30.0, CUNY Peace Officer Designation Procedure § I.

handbook, is a consolidation of instructions for public safety staff on all campuses. Included in the Operations Guide are the specific procedures for appointment as a peace officer.[5] In short, candidates must first apply to the university director of public safety. Accepted applicants must pass a background investigation and complete a four-month basic training course given by CUNY's Public Safety Training Academy, the curriculum of which is certified by the New York State Municipal Police Training Council and the Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS).[6] Applicants who successfully pass these prerequisites are then recommended by the university director of public safety to be appointed as peace officers. This recommendation is ultimately approved by the chancellor (or designee), who administers the peace officer designation.[7]

Once appointed, a CUNY peace officer may apply to be recommended by an individual college president to carry firearms on that college's campus.[8] In practice, a college's Department of Public Safety makes such a request to that college's president. The college president then makes a request to CUNY Central Administration that the public safety officer receive firearms training and that a determination be made of the appropriate type of firearm to be issued.[9]

After completing firearm training, CUNY peace officers must obtain a Carry Guard License from the NYPD License Division in keeping with provisions of New York Penal Law and Criminal Procedure Law.[10] A Carry Guard License restricts a peace officer to carrying their firearm only while actually engaged in work or traveling to and from work and their residence.[11] CUNY's rules pertaining to firearms, which are found in its Operations Guide, are even more restrictive, prohibiting officers from carrying their CUNY firearms while off-duty and requiring approval from the college or university public safety director to take their CUNY firearm off-campus at any time.[12] Further, the Operations Guide requires that firearms not carried on one's body must be "properly secured" and may be stored in a "locker provided for that purpose in a secured department facility."[13]

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[5] CUNY Department of Public Safety Operations Guide, p. 17.
[6] *See* New York Criminal Procedure Law § 2.30(1); Operations Guide, Instruction No. 30.0 § I(E)(a). *See generally Police Safety Training Academy,* City Univ. of New York, https://www.cuny.edu/about/administration/offices/publicsafety/training-academy/ (last visited July 2, 2025).
[7] *See* Operations Guide, Instruction No. 30.0 § I-II. CUNY's Operations Guide notes that the Board of Trustees has authorized the chancellor to administer the peace officer designation.
[8] *See* Operations Guide, Instruction No. 19.0 § II.
[9] *See* Operations Guide, Instruction No. 19.0 § III.
[10] *See* New York Criminal Procedure Law § 2.10(79) and New York Penal Law § 400(6) ("A license to carry or possess a pistol or revolver . . . shall be effective throughout the state, except that the same shall not be valid within the city of New York unless a special permit granting validity is issued by the police commissioner of that city."); *see also* Operations Guide, Instruction No. 3.0 § IX(C), and Instruction No. 19.0 § XVIII(C).
[11] Rules of the City of New York, Title 38, § 5-24(b).
[12] Operations Guide, Instruction No. 3.0 § IV; and Operations Guide, Instruction No. 19.0 § VII and IX.
[13] Operations Guide, Instruction No. 3.0 § VI(C); and Operations Guide, Instruction No. 19.0 § VIII(C).

Although the NYPD issues Carry Guard Licenses to CUNY peace officers, it is CUNY that owns, issues, and maintains the firearms carried by armed CUNY peace officers. An NYPD-designated "gun custodian" at CUNY Central Administration is responsible for acting as a liaison with the NYPD for the issuance and monitoring of Carry Guard Licenses, purchasing of firearms, and assignment of the firearms to CUNY peace officers.[14] The receipt of an assigned firearm by an officer is recorded in a log.

Per a former CUNY gun custodian, once public safety officers are issued a firearm, they are required to sign it in and out of campus "gun rooms" before and after each shift using a log maintained at each college. This practice, however, is not memorialized in the Operations Guide. Moreover, the Inspector General's investigation found that this practice is not followed by all CUNY campuses. For example, CUNY's Queensborough Community College does not maintain such a gun log.

Finally, CUNY public safety officers who carry a firearm must pass a firearm qualification course annually for every firearm they are authorized to use in the course of their employment. Should they fail to qualify, their firearms must remain with the gun custodian until they undergo additional training and are able to qualify.[15]

THE FIREARM POLICIES IN PLACE AT THE TIME OF THE INCIDENTS

CUNY's Manual of General Policy is a consolidation of all policies that govern the university. The Manual includes a policy entitled "Domestic Violence and the Workplace," which addresses both those who are victims of domestic violence and also accountability for employees who are offenders. [16] A section in the policy entitled "Firearms" directly addresses employees who are authorized to carry a firearm as part of their job responsibilities.[17]

In addition to CUNY's Manual of General Policy, the Operations Guide serves as the primary repository of policies governing the Department of Public Safety and is described by CUNY as an "essential resource" to guide all members of the service, "[a]lthough much autonomy is given to the College Public Safety Directors in their ability to manage the safety and security of the individual colleges."[18] The Operations Guide is broken up into 44 sections or "Instructions" and governs topics

[14] *See,* Operations Guide, Instruction No. 19.0 § IV and XVIII.
[15] Operations Guide, Instruction No. 3.0 § VIII(E); and Operations Guide, Instruction No. 19.0 § XV.
[16] CUNY Manual of General Policy; Article V Faculty, Staff and Administration; Policy 5.061, Domestic Violence and the Workplace; IV Accountability for Employees Who Are Offenders.
[17] CUNY Manual of General Policy; Article V Faculty, Staff and Administration; Policy 5.061, Domestic Violence and the Workplace, V Firearms.
[18] Operations Guide, Introduction.

ranging from the "Use of Code Signals" to the "Magnetometer [Metal Detector] Policy." Each Instruction is clearly marked by the year that Instruction became effective and the date that that Instruction was last revised. The latest revision to any Instruction is listed as September 2020, while other instructions contain no indication that they have ever been revised since 1992.[19]

The two sections of the Operations Guide most relevant to the Inspector General's investigation are Instruction No. 3.0, "Use of Firearms and Deadly Physical Force," and Instruction No. 19.0, "Rules and Regulations Reguarding [sic] Firearms on Campus." Instruction No. 3.0, which became effective in 1992, was last revised in 2016. Instruction No. 19.0 became effective in 1995 and was last revised in 2009. The Inspector General's investigation found that these two firearms policies are at times conflicting.

Per these policies, firearms privileges must be revoked when a public safety officer is found to be unfit for duty due to intoxication.[20] The Operations Guide requires that officers who believe another officer is unfit for duty due to intoxicants record their observations in writing and immediately inform a supervisor. The supervisor must then immediately conduct an investigation and notify the NYPD License Division of the allegation. If a determination is made that the employee is unfit for duty, the officer's firearm privileges "shall be suspended and firearm and ammunition seized by the department Gun Custodian."[21]

Unfortunately, what is required to happen next depends on which Instruction of the Operations Guide is followed. Under Instruction No. 3.0, the officer "*shall* be referred to agency counseling services or to other health care providers."[22] (Emphasis added.) In contrast, Instruction No. 19.0 states that such officers "*may* be subject to disciplinary action . . . and/or referral to counseling services or to other health care providers."[23] (Emphasis added.)

One subsection of Instruction No. 3.0 also mandates that an officer *must* surrender their firearm when he or she receives "psychiatric treatment or treatment for alcoholism or Drug abuse."[24] However, the parallel subsection in Instruction No. 19.0 makes the surrendering of a firearm a discretionary matter under the same set of circumstances.[25]

Moreover, other subsections found in both Instructions state that the receipt of psychiatric

[19] Operations Guide, Instruction No. 2.0, Use of Code Signals – Public Address Systems.
[20] *See* Operations Guide, Instruction No. 3.0 § VI(B)(1); and Operations Guide, Instruction No. 19.0 § VIII(B)(1).
[21] Operations Guide, Instruction No. 3.0 is quoted. Operations Guide Instruction No. 19.0 is substantially the same.
[22] Operations Guide, Instruction No. 3.0 § VI(B)(e).
[23] Operations Guide, Instruction No. 19.0 § VIII(B)(6).
[24] Operations Guide, Instruction No. 3.0 § VI(B)(2).
[25] Operations Guide, Instruction No. 19.0 § VIII(B)(7).

treatment or treatment for alcoholism or drug abuse "may" result in the suspension and/revocation of firearm privileges."[26] Both Instructions 3.0 and 19.0 provides ten circumstances in which an officer's firearm privileges *may* be suspended or revoked. The three circumstances most relevant to this investigation are: (1) violation of firearms guidelines, (2) acts of domestic violence,[27] and (3) receipt of psychiatric treatment or treatment for alcoholism or drug abuse or the presence of any disability, or other condition which may affect the ability to possess or use a firearm. These terms are undefined. Apart from the list of offenses which may result in the revocation of firearm privileges, the two policies outline additional requirements. The language is again inconsistent between Instructions No. 3.0 and 19.0.

Lastly, both Instruction No. 3.0 and Instruction No. 19.0 address the restoration of revoked firearm privileges.[28] The two Instructions require that all charges against the officer be adjudicated and that the officer not be on probation before becoming eligible for restoration of firearm privileges. Both Instructions also include a specific process for campus Departments of Public Safety to follow upon receiving a request to restore firearm privileges.[29] The process includes a requirement that the officer's supervisor investigate the request and make a written recommendation as to whether the request should be granted or denied. The university director of public safety must review this recommendation and determine whether the firearm privilege should be restored. In doing so, an officer may be ordered to undergo an independent medical and/or psychological examination.

FINDINGS OF FACT

CCNY PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICER INVOLVED IN NOVEMBER 2020 SHOOTING

A public safety officer, first hired by CUNY in 2011 as an unarmed peace officer at another campus, transferred to CCNY in 2013. In 2015, he was issued a Carry Guard License after completing a seven-day NYPD firearms training course and passing an NYPD background check. According to the CCNY assistant director of public safety, he informed the public safety officer upon his receipt of a CUNY firearm that the weapon must be placed in a designated lock box on the campus at the end of every shift worked.

On July 16, 2020, NYPD officers responded to a 911 call from the public safety officer's wife following a domestic incident. When police arrived, the public safety officer's wife stated that

[26] Operations Guide, Instruction No. 3.0 § VIII(A)(4); Operations Guide, Instruction No. 19.0 § VIII(B)(6).
[27] Operations Guide Instruction No. 19.0 § XII(B)(7) (requiring that they be "[a]cts of domestic violence resulting in a conviction or plea of guilty or nolo contendere") whereas Operations Guide, Instruction No. 3.0 § VIII(A)(7) requires only "Acts of domestic violence."
[28] *See* Operations Guide, Instruction No. 3.0 § VII(D); and Operations Guide, Instruction No. 19.0 § XIV.
[29] *See* Operations Guide, Instruction No. 3.0 § VII(D)(1)(c); and Operations Guide, Instruction No. 19.0 § XIV(B).

a heated verbal dispute had occurred, that she feared for her safety, and that her husband was armed, had threatened self-harm, and had written a suicide note. Although the public safety officer was not arrested, the NYPD officers did confiscate both of his personal weapons and his CUNY firearm, which he had at his home in violation of CUNY policy, and had him removed by emergency medical technicians to a hospital for a psychological examination.[30] The NYPD License Division also temporarily suspended the public safety officer's Carry Guard License and Premises License. An After Visit Summary resulting from the public safety officer's psychological examination provided "Instructions" that the public safety officer was "psychiatrically cleared at this time and he can return to work."[31]

On July 17, 2020, the public safety officer advised his supervisor, a lieutenant and the CCNY assistant director of public safety, as to his version of what had transpired, including the circumstances which led to the NYPD's seizure of both his personal and work firearms. In that telephone call, the public safety officer claimed that he had been in possession of his CUNY firearm by mistake and that he only realized this while driving home from work the previous day.[32] The CCNY assistant director of public safety testified to the Inspector General that he advised the public safety officer that he lacked permission to have his CUNY firearm at home and he should memorialize his statement about the incident in an email. The public safety officer's email to the CCNY assistant director of public safety read:

> Good afternoon Lt.
>
> Last night my wife and I got into a very heated verbal dispute. There were no physical contact at all. NYPD was called and due to the things said to each other they thought it was in the best interest to remove all my firearms which included my service weapon from my home and voucher it at the 105 pct for safekeeping. They also requested that requested that I go to the hospital to get medically cleared which I guess is now their protocol. I was cleared and I have to go to 1pp to take my medical clearance form in order to get my firearms released. They also have my Peace Officer ID. I complied and followed all the instructions the officers asked of me.

[30] The public safety officer's peace office identification card was also seized.
[31] Jamaica Hospital, Outpatient Mental Health Clinic, After Visit Summary (July 17, 2020).
[32] A firearm log was not maintained by CCNY at this time. Subsequent to the incident at issue, CCNY implemented such a log and requires public safety officers to complete it at the start and end of each shift worked.

Although he acknowledged his awareness that he should not have had his CUNY firearm at home, he appeared to minimize the circumstances surrounding the incident including describing his psychological examination as "medical clearance" and neglecting to include his claim that he mistakenly brought his CUNY firearm home or any reference to his suicide note.[33] Other critical information is also absent from the public safety officer's statement including Instead, the only reference to any mental health concern was in the email chain, which occurred in the forwarding of the public safety officer's email from his direct supervisor, the CCNY executive director of public safety and security, to the then acting executive director of CUNY's Department of Public Safety and the CUNY assistant director of public safety/gun custodian. It read in pertinent part:

> As a preliminary in this investigation, [the public safety officer] was not authorized to take his weapon home. The 105 Precinct responded to a 911 call by his wife regarding a domestic dispute and confiscated his work and personal weapon at his residence, as well as his Peace Officer ID. The incident did not escalate into an arrest situation, however the responding Officers did require [the public safety officer] to undergo a psychological eval, which he complied with and was cleared (awaiting documentation).
>
> As part of this process, the NYPD License Division will be notified and the appropriate triage will take place. In the meantime, [the public safety officer's] armed status has been temporarily revoked pending a determination by the NYPD License Division.

While this email specifically touched upon several circumstances which could have resulted in the suspension/revocation of firearm privileges—a violation of firearms guidelines, an act of reported domestic violence, the receipt of "psychiatric treatment," and the presence of any "disability, or condition that may affect the ability to possess or use a firearm"—it did not prompt CUNY to commence an investigation.[34] Instead, without any further investigation of the matter, CUNY then permitted the public safety officer to return to work and resume patrol, albeit unarmed, the following week.

The CCNY executive director of public safety testified to the Inspector General that CUNY did not take any action because the public safety officer had not been arrested. According to the CCNY executive director of public safety, had the public safety officer been arrested, his peace officer status would have been suspended, and he would have been unable to perform his CCNY duties.

Following the July 16, 2020, incident, the NYPD License Division commenced an

[33] July 17, 2020, email from the public safety officer to the CCNY assistant director of public safety.
[34] *See* Operations Guide, Instruction No. 3.0 § VIII(A); and Operations Guide, Instruction No. 19.0 § XII(B).

investigation into the domestic violence incident and the public safety officer's mental health.[35] On August 14, 2020, the public safety officer underwent a second psychological examination in order to recover his weapons from the NYPD. According to the NYPD report, the doctor who conducted the evaluation determined the public safety officer to be "cleared to possess a firearm." On September 14, 2020, the NYPD License Division lifted the suspensions on the public safety officer's Carry Guard and Premises Licenses. Two days later, the NYPD notified the CUNY gun custodian by email that the suspensions of the public safety officer's firearm licenses had been lifted—without any further explanation. Within the hour, the CUNY gun custodian replied to the License Division that she would schedule the public safety officer's retrieval of his CUNY firearm. The public safety officer retrieved his CUNY firearm on September 22, 2020.[36]

In mid-October 2020, almost a month after the public safety officer's CUNY firearm was returned to him and roughly three months after the domestic violence incident at issue, the CCNY assistant director of public safety advised the CCNY executive director of public safety that he was uncomfortable with the decision to return the public safety officer's CUNY firearm and planned to investigate the matter to determine why the public safety officer had taken his CUNY firearm home. He also advised the public safety officer that he would secure the public safety officer's firearm while he conducted his investigation.

In furtherance of this, the CCNY assistant director of public safety ordered the public safety officer to surrender his CUNY firearm on October 21, 2020. The CCNY assistant director of public safety mistakenly believed at this time that the public safety officer had been in possession of his CUNY firearm "for about a week or so" when, in fact, the firearm had been in his possession for almost one month. After retrieving the firearm, the CCNY assistant director of public safety secured it in a lockbox on the campus, resetting the lock's combination so that the public safety officer could not access it.[37] Despite the public safety officer's firearm being taken, no investigation was commenced.

The CCNY assistant director of public safety testified that the lock box containing the public

[35] The NYPD License Division issues Premises Licenses to individuals for their residence or business. It authorizes the licensee to possess a handgun only on the premises listed on the license and to transport the handgun and ammunition directly to and from authorized ranges (or hunting locations with separate NYPD License Division endorsement and a New York State hunting license).

[36] The CUNY gun custodian testified to the Inspector General that due to paperwork issues, she was unable to retrieve the public safety officer's CUNY issued firearm from the NYPD until August 6, 2020, which she then secured in a safe at CUNY Central Administration while awaiting the NYPD's investigative determination. She further testified that CUNY does not track other licensed firearms owned by its officers.

[37] The CCNY assistant director of public safety maintains a key for all lock boxes where CCNY officers are required to secure their firearms at the end of their tours.

safety officer's firearm remained locked until after the public safety officer was killed in the firefight with NYPD officers on November 24, 2020. Following that incident, the CUNY gun custodian and the CCNY assistant director of public safety met at CCNY to confirm that the public safety officer's firearm was still in the lockbox and had not been used in his altercation with the NYPD.

QUEENSBOROUGH COMMUNITY COLLEGE SERGEANT INTOXICATED ON CAMPUS

In an unrelated incident, on October 12, 2022, a public safety sergeant reported to work at CUNY's Queensborough Community College (QCC) campus nearly three hours late. Campus surveillance video revealed that the public safety officer drove to work in a personal vehicle on this date. Due to this unscheduled lateness, the director of QCC Department of Public Safety instructed the sergeant to see him upon the sergeant's arrival at the campus, at which time the director observed that the sergeant appeared to be under the influence of alcohol—he smelled of an alcoholic beverage, was slurring his words, and walked with an unsteady gait. Although the sergeant repeatedly denied that he had been drinking, the director informed him that based on his observations, the sergeant was under the influence of alcohol, unfit for duty, and therefore could not work or drive himself home in his personal vehicle.

While preparing to drive the sergeant home, the director observed that the sergeant had a loaded firearm in his holster. Knowing that the sergeant had not yet removed his CUNY firearm from the locked gun locker located in the director's office, the director inquired of the sergeant if the firearm was his personal weapon. The sergeant confirmed this, claiming that he had taken his personal firearm to a firing range earlier in the day and had intended to secure it in the QCC gun locker while on shift and return home with it after his shift.

Given the sergeant's appearance of intoxication, the director requested that the sergeant place his personal firearm and magazine in the gun locker for the night. The sergeant agreed to this, placed his firearm and magazine in the gun locker while being observed by the director, and then went to different building to remove his uniform and change back into his street clothes. Approximately ten minutes later, when the sergeant did not return from changing his clothes, the director searched for him, finding him a few minutes later in a parking area. The director and a public safety lieutenant then drove the sergeant home.

Upon the director's return to the QCC campus, he contacted the director of the CUNY Department of Public Safety, who instructed him to secure the sergeant's CUNY firearm, which would be retrieved by the CUNY gun custodian the next day. When the director opened the sergeant's gun locker, he discovered that the sergeant's personal firearm and magazine were no longer there,

but the CUNY firearm remained. Surveillance footage revealed that while the director had been searching for him, the sergeant had doubled back to the director's office and gun locker after changing his clothes.

At the request of the director and the director of the CUNY Department of Public Safety, the NYPD conducted a wellness check on the sergeant. During the wellness check, the sergeant called the director, admitting that he had removed his personal weapon from the gun locker. That same evening, the sergeant's CUNY firearm was secured from the gun locker, and the sergeant was suspended from duty pending investigation. On October 15, 2022, the sergeant's Carry Guard License and Premise License were suspended by the NYPD pending investigation. In September 2024, the sergeant resigned from CUNY. The NYPD cancelled the sergeant's Carry Guard License; his Premises License remains active.

COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY LIEUTENANT INTOXICATED ON COLLEGE OF STATEN ISLAND CAMPUS WHILE CARRYING PERSONAL FIREARM

In yet a third unrelated incident, on a Friday night in October 2024, an off-duty public safety lieutenant assigned to CUNY's City Tech drove a car onto the CUNY CSI campus to attend to a personal matter.[38] While he was on campus for at least one hour that night, the lieutenant interacted with three campus security staff and two students. During this period, the lieutenant was carrying, and occasionally displaying, what appeared to be a firearm as well as his campus security shield. Also, according to the public safety officers who interacted with him, the lieutenant appeared to be in an intoxicated state.

While on campus, the lieutenant first encountered a sergeant when he entered the campus Public Safety Building. The sergeant could "visually see [the lieutenant] had a shield and firearm in his waistband" and "was able to smell what appeared to be [an] alcoholic beverage on his breath."[39] The sergeant reported that he advised the lieutenant to leave the campus.

More than 25 minutes later, security footage shows that the lieutenant approached the main gate security booth driving a car. The CSA on duty reported that the lieutenant pulled on the handle of the door to the booth and then displayed what appeared to be a firearm in his waistband. When the CSA let the lieutenant enter the booth to use the restroom, the CSA smelled either alcohol or

[38] The lieutenant, who had previously been a sergeant at the College of Staten Island, had been promoted and reassigned City Tech. According to the lieutenant, he was on campus to bring food to a relative who worked there.
[39] The sergeant's observations were memorialized in a written statement signed under penalty of perjury three days after the incident. He declined a request by the Inspector General to be interviewed.

cologne or both emanating from the lieutenant."[40]

The lieutenant then approached two cars near the security gate. The occupants of the first car were students. A second CSA, who was reporting for work, was in the second vehicle. This second CSA stated that the lieutenant displayed to him his campus security shield and what he assumed was the lieutenant's service pistol, and the lieutenant smelled of either alcohol or cologne or both.[41] The first CSA observed from the security booth that the lieutenant had also spoken with the two students and displayed his campus security shield to them.

Neither the sergeant nor either of the CSAs immediately notified their respective supervisors about this incident, but rather waited until Monday and Tuesday, respectively, to file reports. Upon further investigation, it was determined that the lieutenant did not have a firearm license, has never been issued a Carry Guard License, had never been assigned a CUNY firearm, and was not authorized to carry in the line of duty. In January 2025, the lieutenant retired from CUNY.

SITE VISITS

The Operations Guide regulates the use and storage of firearms by public safety officers, among other public safety operations. For instance, the Operations Guide prohibits officers from carrying their CUNY firearm while off-duty and requires approval from the college or university public safety director to take a CUNY firearm off-campus to their residence while traveling to and from work.[42] Additionally, the Operations Guide requires that firearms not carried on one's body must be "properly secured" and may be stored in a "locker provided for that purpose in a secured department facility."[43] There is no written policy regarding the use of logbooks to record the removal and return of CUNY firearms during work shifts despite their usage in some form on some campuses.

In fall 2024, the Inspector General visited seven CUNY campuses to observe current firearm safety practices at each campus. The campuses included Bronx Community College (BCC),

[40] The CSA's first report of what he observed is memorialized in a written statement signed under penalty of perjury three days after the incident. There he wrote, in pertinent part, "[the lieutenant] pulled up his shirt exposing his firearm" and "It is my belief that he had alcohol on his breath." Approximately four months later, the CSA was interviewed by the Inspector General in the presence of his union representative. In that interview, the CSA stated in sum and substance that the lieutenant exposed what appeared to be a firearm/weapon, and that the lieutenant smelled of either alcohol or cologne or both.

[41] The second CSA's initial report of what he observed is memorialized in an email sent four days after the incident. There he wrote, in pertinent part, "[the lieutenant] display[ed] . . . his service pistol" and the lieutenant's behavior "gave [the second CSA] the feeling that [the lieutenant] must have been inebriated." Approximately four months later, the second CSA was interviewed by the Inspector General in the presence of his union representative. In that interview, the second CSA stated in sum and substance that the lieutenant exposed what appeared to be a weapon/pistol, and that the lieutenant smelled of either alcohol or cologne or both.

[42] Operations Guide, Instruction No. 3.0 § IV; and Operations Guide, Instruction No. 19.0 § VII and IX.

[43] Operations Guide, Instruction No. 3.0 § VI(C); and Operations Guide, Instruction No. 19.0 § VIII(C).

CCNY,[44] CSI, Kingsborough Community College (KCC), City Tech, QCC, and the CUNY Central Office. The practices across these campuses were highly inconsistent.

In addition to learning about general security measures on these campuses, the site visits sought to determine: (1) whether routine checks are conducted to ensure that CUNY firearms are properly secured after each shift, (2) whether a logbook or other record is maintained reflecting firearm removal and return during each work shift, and (3) whether officers are permitted to remove their CUNY firearms from campus, and if so, what safety measures exist. This inquiry revealed that each campus has promulgated different policies and procedures and follows different practices.

For example, after the 2020 incident, the CCNY assistant director of public safety advised the Inspector General that upon his assignment to CCNY in 2012, in the absence of a CUNY-wide policy requiring firearm logbooks, he created his own logbook and required that CCNY uniformed public safety officers sign their CUNY firearms out of and into the gun room during each work shift. After the 2020 incident, the CCNY assistant director of public safety began requiring campus investigators to sign their firearms in and out of the gun room as well. While the CCNY site visit confirmed that a firearm logbook is still being maintained, the site visit found that the CCNY assistant director of public safety does not routinely verify whether firearms are actually secured after work shifts and he reviews the logbook infrequently. In contrast, at BCC, while no logbook is maintained, the acting director of public safety or another lieutenant checks the gun lockers after each shift to ensure that firearms are properly secured.

A summary of the findings of the campus site visits is as follows:

College	Routine Check to Ensure Firearms are Secured?	Firearm Logbook Maintained?	Allowed to Remove Firearms from Campus?
CCNY	No	No	Approval Required
BCC	Yes	No	Approval Required
City Tech	Yes	Yes	Yes
KCC	Yes	Yes	No
CSI	No	No	No
QCC	Yes	No	No
Central Office	No	Yes	Yes

[44] CCNY's practices had been first reviewed in 2020 following the 2020 incidents.

THE INSPECTOR GENERAL'S DETERMINATIONS

The Operations Guide is Outdated, Inconsistent, and Provides Insufficient Guidance

The Inspector General's review of the Operations Guide revealed that it is outdated and inconsistent. While first instituted in 1992, many of the Instructions have not been updated since the 1990s. For instance, both Instruction No. 22.0, "Bomb Threat Response Procedure," and Instruction No. 25.0, "Guidelines for Responding to Demonstrations," were last updated in 1997. And while Instruction No. 31.0, "Active Shooter Incident Response Protocol" was updated in 2015, in light of contemporary events, the Inspector General recommends that CUNY scrutinize these Instructions, as well as the other Instructions found in the Operations Guide, to ensure that they are consistent with best practices.

Additionally, the Operations Guide must be updated to account for changes in law. For example, Instruction No. 28.0, "Arrest – General," last updated in 2015, outlines the procedures for the processing of an arrested person. Section A, "Suspect Taken into Custody," addresses providing Miranda rights and questioning of an arrested person including in situations where the arrested person is a juvenile, which is described in the Instruction as a person "less than 16 years of age." However, in 2018, New York State raised the age of criminal responsibility to 17, and in 2019, the age was raised to 18, extending the protections each time and rendering this Instruction incorrect and outdated. This is just one example of an Instruction that must be reviewed for legal currentness.

In addition, the review found that the Operations Guide contradicts itself. As discussed earlier in this report, Instruction No. 3.0, "Use of Firearms and Deadly Physical Force," and Instruction No. 19.0, "Rules and Regulations Reguarding [sic] Firearms on Campus," are inconsistent and yield contradictory results. Moreover, absent from these Instructions are policies regarding the use of logbooks to record the transfer of firearms at the start and end of work shifts, despite their use on some CUNY campuses, or requirements that supervisors check to ensure that firearms are properly secured at the end of every shift. The need for such uniform policies for all campuses is evident from the findings of the Inspector General's site visits, which revealed that policies requiring firearm logbooks and routine firearm checks had been promulgated and implemented only at some campuses.

Finally, the Inspector General's review found that the Operations Guide provides insufficient guidance on the procedures to be followed if an unauthorized firearm is observed on campus.[45]

[45] Although CUNY's Operations Guide provides guidance on responding to weapons discovered via a magnetometer scan and firearms used by an "Active Shooter," no Instruction speaks to the steps to be taken if a weapon is observed on campus in situations like the aforementioned 2024 incident. Of note, the magnetometer policy states, "[I]ndividuals found to be in possession of illegal firearms without appropriate authority or license, will be arrested." *See* Operations Guide, Instruction No. 20.0, "Magnetometer [Metal Detector] Policy."

Although laws have relaxed in recent years regarding firearm permitting, licensing, and carrying in New York City, firearms are still prohibited on CUNY's campuses but for those carried by armed campus peace officers working in furtherance of their authorized duties.[46] Additionally, there exists a lack of guidance as to how public safety officers must handle situations where a person authorized (or believed to be authorized) to carry a firearm, such as the Queensborough Community College sergeant or City Tech lieutenant, is observed doing so on campus in an unfit state.

Indeed, when the City Tech lieutenant drove onto the College of Staten Island campus in October 2024 possibly intoxicated and carrying what appeared to be a firearm, public safety officers there took no immediate steps to address the matter. Their observations were not immediately reported to supervisors, an immediate review was not conducted, the allegation was not reported to the NYPD Licensing Division, the lieutenant's firearm was not secured, no determination was made if the officer was authorized to carry a firearm, and if not, no attempt was made to arrest the lieutenant. Instead, they waited several days to formally report the matter to their supervisors.

And although, even despite the sometimes-contradictory direction provided by the Operations Guide, the 2022 matter was handled more appropriately, the Queensborough Community College director of public safety was forced to rely on his own judgment on how to handle the situation as opposed to having unambiguous and consistent policies to follow.

<u>CUNY'S Handling of the 2020 Incident Was Improper</u>

CUNY Lacks Uniform System-wide Policies and Procedures to Adequately Monitor CUNY Firearms on Campus

On July 17, 2020, the day after the seizure of the public safety officer's firearms by the NYPD, the public safety officer claimed to the CCNY assistant director of public safety that he had been in possession of his CUNY firearm by mistake, having discovered that he still had the firearm while driving home from work the previous day, July 16, 2020. CUNY would not have been aware of this violation but for the public safety officer's own self-reporting, which only occurred after his weapons were seized by the NYPD. The fact that CCNY was unaware that one of its firearms was missing points to a failure in its firearm controls. Such weak controls do not allow for the detection and prevention of noncompliance or wrongdoing.

Since the incident in question, some campuses have instituted individual policies to try to address the monitoring of CUNY firearms. However, CUNY lacks a clear, comprehensive, and system-wide policy addressing firearm controls. Further, what sections of the policy are followed are

[46] *See* New York Penal Law § 265.01-a.

different on each campus reviewed. No policy is in place requiring its armed peace officers to use logbooks to sign firearms in and out of campus gun rooms at the start and end of shifts—although this is a practice at some campuses. Additionally, no policy requires campus supervisors to regularly conduct compliance reviews of such firearm logbooks. Further, the Operations Guide merely states that if a firearm is not being carried, it must be "properly secured," and it may be stored in a "locker" provided by the university for that purpose. The guide also does not address how firearms and ammunition should be stored, as in, for example, whether the magazine cartridge should be removed.

CUNY Failed to Conduct an Internal Review of the NYPD's Confiscation of the Public Safety Officer's Firearms and the Suspension of his Firearm Licenses Following the Domestic Dispute to Determine Whether He Was Fit for Duty

The Inspector General's investigation found that in practice, CUNY does not conduct an internal review to determine whether a public safety officer is fit for duty after that officer has had his or her firearm confiscated by law enforcement in a non-arrest situation. The CCNY executive director of public safety testified that the public safety officer had been permitted to return to work after the July 16, 2020, incident without any internal review simply because he had not been arrested.

The Operations Guide explicitly denotes that many of the public safety officer's infractions—his violations of the firearms guidelines, improper handling of his CUNY firearm, involvement in a prior domestic violence dispute,[47] suspension of his firearm license by law enforcement, or even perhaps his having a "condition that may affect his ability to possess a firearm"— *could* have served as the basis to commence such an investigation for unfitness for duty.

Further, the Operations Guide provides that peace officer status *may* be suspended or revoked if an officer is no longer performing their duties; unable to perform their duties due to various acts of wrongdoing, such as arrest or suspension/termination from employment; or if they are unable to perform their duties due to "a medical condition or for some other reason." Upon learning of such information, a college's director of public safety must issue an initial investigation report, which serves to notify CUNY Central Administration and the peace officer that their peace officer status is under review, suspended, or revoked.[48] Here, no internal investigation ensued. In neglecting to

[47] Notably, Instruction No. 3.0 § VIII(A)(7) reads, "Acts of domestic violence," while Instruction No. 19.0 § XII(B)(7) reads, "Acts of domestic violence resulting in a conviction or plea of guilty or nolo contendre," as grounds for potential suspension or revocation of firearm privileges. Instruction No. 3.0 was revised more recently, in September 2016, and contains more broadly "acts of domestic violence" rather than a conviction. The CUNY Public Safety Department should review these Instructions and revise as appropriate.

[48] Operations Guide, Instruction No. 30.0, CUNY Peace Officer Designation Procedure, § II(C). According to this Instruction, the cancellation, suspension, or revocation of peace officer status occurs "in addition to (not in lieu of) disciplinary action in accordance with established University policy." However, the guide does not provide instruction

investigate, CUNY signaled its only concern was whether the public safety officer *could* resume carrying a firearm on campus, but entirely neglected the question as to whether he *should* be permitted to do so. No effort was made by CUNY at this time to further review the matter or discipline the public safety officer even though the NYPD's investigation and findings did not consider the public safety officer's violation of CUNY policy.

It was not until almost a month after the public safety officer's CUNY firearm had been returned to him that the CCNY assistant director of public safety—spurred by his uneasiness with the return of the firearm—decided to investigate the matter further and confiscated the weapon. According to the CCNY assistant director of public safety, he did not immediately commence an investigation after the incident because the NYPD License Division's internal review was then ongoing. When that review concluded, the CCNY assistant director of public safety, who is also a firearms instructor, was then busy at the range in the firearm requalification of carrying public safety officers. Additionally, the CCNY assistant director of public safety noted that per union and college rules, any such investigation could be conducted within 18 months of the wrongdoing. Thus, he did not have an opportunity to "write up" the public safety officer for his policy violation before the public safety officer's death. Such an investigation could have led to the continuation of the suspension of the public safety officer's firearm privileges, additional psychological examinations or mental health treatment, and/or domestic violence awareness counseling or training. An investigation could also have found that the public safety officer's peace officer status should be suspended or revoked.

Although CUNY has a Robust Policy and Procedure for the Restoration of Revoked and Suspended Firearm Privileges, it Was Not Followed.

Pursuant to the Operations Guide, an officer's firearm privileges may not be restored unless:

> All charges against the officer that were related to the revocation of the privileges have been adjudicated and the officer is not on probation for an offense/incident which led to the revocation of the privilege or subject to any of the conditions or circumstances listed in Section VIII.A [i.e., the bases for finding an officer unfit for duty].[49]

The Operations Guide lays out a process to accomplish this. It requires an officer to request that his or her privileges be restored and submit documentation pertaining to their complaint, arrest,

on how to assess a public safety officer for cancellation, suspension, or revocation of their peace officer status or how to undertake related disciplinary action. Further, there is no mention of how to restore a peace officer's status once suspended, revoked, or cancelled.

[49] Operations Guide, Instruction No. 3.0 § VIII(D).

summons, or order of protection. The request is then investigated by the officer's supervisor, who makes a written recommendation to approve or deny to the university director of public safety. The university director of public safety must then make a final determination and may order an employee to undergo an independent medical and/or psychological examination. The CUNY Department of Public Safety must then check with the NYPD License Division and determine whether the officer is under investigation or has had his or her license suspended or revoked. Only after all steps have been completed, may an officer's firearm and ammunition be returned.

This protocol is both transparent and streamlined and affords those officers who have had their CUNY firearm confiscated—like the public safety officer in the instant case—with due process to ascertain whether they should be permitted to reclaim their firearm. Further, the provision that suggests that an employee may be subject to an *independent* psychological examination offers an added layer of protection for the CUNY Department of Public Safety, since an employee who is suffering from mental illness could be identified and assisted with appropriate resources.

Here, although NYPD officers confiscated the public safety officer's CUNY firearm and temporarily suspended his firearm licenses during the July 2020 incident with his wife, CUNY permitted the public safety officer to merely retrieve his firearm from the CUNY gun custodian when the NYPD lifted the public safety officer's license suspension. In doing so, CUNY bypassed the aforementioned protocols for restoration of firearms privileges and did not determine if the public safety officer was fit for duty and should be permitted to carry a firearm on campus or whether he should undergo further psychological examination.

Deficiencies in Policies During and After the 2022 and 2024 Incidents

In both the 2022 and 2024 incidents investigated by the Inspector General, intoxicated public safety officers brought what appeared to be firearms onto campus.

In the 2022 incident, the public safety officer drove to work in what appeared to be an intoxicated state carrying his personal loaded firearm onto a campus. Although supervisors took quick and decisive steps to mitigate the safety concerns, the lack of fixed stringent controls, including close monitoring of the public safety officer while on campus, contributed to the negative outcome.

In the 2024 incident, an off-duty public safety officer who appeared to be in an intoxicated state, drove onto campus carrying what appeared to be a firearm. Although it was suggested that he leave campus, his movements were again not monitored, and his firearm was never confiscated.

The improvised responses by CUNY in each of these instances may be in part due to the void of information covering these situations in the Operations Guide.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Given the findings of this investigation, the Inspector General recommends that CUNY undertake a review of its Operations Guide, clarify current policy and promulgate new policy as described below, and train staff on the same. Specifically, the Inspector General recommends that CUNY:

1. Review all policies for currentness and consistency to ensure they are current practices, consistent across instructions, and consistently implemented across campuses. Campus-specific practices not formalized as policy in the Operations Guide should be reviewed and considered for inclusion in the Guide where appropriate.

   CUNY's Operations Guide's Instructions must be reviewed and updated. Many Instructions contradict one another. Others contain outdated policies and procedures. Some are legally incorrect.

2. Promulgate policy and mandate training for all public safety officers about what to do if they see what appears to be a firearm on campus—including circumstances where the purported firearm is being carried by a co-worker who is not authorized to carry. Although a subsection of CUNY's Magnetometer policy addresses the discovery of an unauthorized weapon at the magnetometer, this is insufficient to address all circumstances—such as those found in the aforementioned 2022 and 2024 incidents.

   New training should accompany the new procedures to better prepare security officers for the risks they may encounter on the job.

3. Establish procedures for a mandatory review following any incident involving allegations of domestic violence or a mental health crisis to determine if an employee of the Department of Public Safety is fit to engage in their responsibilities, including patrol, even when unarmed.

   CUNY does not require an independent investigation when a public safety officer has been involved in a domestic violence incident or a mental health crisis. Due to their unique roles on school campuses, officers should be evaluated before being cleared to return to work.

   Moreover, CUNY should evaluate what is to be required of an employee when reporting their involvement in a domestic violence incident or mental health matter. Here, the public safety officer's own characterization was misleading. The onus should be on CUNY to explore the circumstances surrounding the incident.

4. Conduct an internal review when a public safety officer's firearm license is suspended by the NYPD in order to determine if that officer is fit for duty. This review should take place in *both* arrest and non-arrest scenarios and should be independent of any NYPD investigations.

CUNY, which does not conduct such a review when an officer has not been arrested, failed to determine if the officer in the 2020 incident, who was not arrested, was fit for duty before returning him to campus patrol. Had a review occurred, additional measures, including psychological examinations, mental health treatment, and domestic violence awareness counseling or trainings, could have been considered.

5. Conduct a review following an officer's suspension from duty or when their firearm license has been suspended before returning that officer's CUNY firearm or permitting them to resume patrol, as is already mandated by CUNY policy.

   In direct contravention to the Operations Guide, CUNY restored the public safety officer's firearm privileges in the 2020 incident without investigating the matter and issuing a final determination, instead relying solely on the NYPD's investigation and continuation of the public safety officer's firearm licenses to restore his firearm privileges.

6. Document a public safety officer's unauthorized removal of a firearm from campus immediately upon discovery and commence disciplinary actions in a timely fashion.

   In the 2020 incident, this did not occur, and the public safety officer's violation went unaddressed. Three months after the violation, the CCNY assistant director of public safety secured the public safety officer's firearm and contemplated commencing an investigation into the violation. No decisive action was taken before the public safety officer was killed in the firefight with NYPD officers one month later. Although CUNY noted that collective bargaining agreements may provide long periods in which to commence discipline, the circumstances of the instant case and the escalation of the public safety officer's violence show the need for early intervention.

7. Promulgate and implement system-wide policies for the oversight and tracking of CUNY firearms including policies requiring campus public safety departments to monitor firearm lock boxes and conduct daily reviews of firearm logbook entries reflecting the retrieval and return of firearms during work shifts.

   CUNY's controls for ensuring that its firearms are accounted for at all times are weak and do not allow for the detection and prevention of noncompliance or wrongdoing.

8. Periodically obtain written acknowledgements from officers that they have read, understand, and agree to comply with CUNY's Firearms Policy, including its prohibition on the removal of CUNY firearms from campuses without having first obtained written authorization from the college public safety director or the university director of public safety.

   In doing so, CUNY public safety employees will be reminded of their obligations, as well as the importance CUNY places on compliance with the Firearms Policy.

THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

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November 11, 2025

Lucy Lang
Inspector General
Office of the New York Inspector General
61 Broadway
New York, New York 1006-2701

Re: Review of The City University of New York's
Firearms Policies and Procedures – November 2025

Dear Inspector General Lang:

The City University of New York (the "University" or "CUNY") thanks you and your team for the comprehensive review and report of the University's Firearms Policies and Procedures (the "November 2025 Report" or the "Report"). The University takes these matters very seriously. The health, safety, and general welfare of our faculty, staff, and students is our foremost responsibility and integral to our mission.

The University has taken steps – and will continue to take steps - to address new policies, procedures, and personnel that is responsive to the recommendations contained in the Report. Additionally, the University is committed to allocating resources to both personnel and equipment to support the mission of the CUNY Department of Public Safety and support its personnel in carrying out its duties.

To address a rapidly changing landscape in higher education on our campuses, in 2020 the University developed a Public Safety Strategic Plan (the "Plan"). Objectives of the Plan center on reimagining the Public Safety Department at CUNY. More specifically, we are undergoing a comprehensive review of our public safety policies to strengthen relations between public safety officers and the CUNY community. Given the findings of your Report, the Plan will move to prioritize policies and procedures regulating the use and equipping of firearms.

I would also like to take this opportunity to share with you some of the initiatives and steps the University has already taken under this Plan that ensure the University is better meeting the demands of maintaining public safety at all our 26 campuses:

Expansion of the Public Safety Training Academy. The University has made efforts to enhance the training, educational programs, and access to informational resources available to University Public Safety personnel. The University acquired ACADIS Vector Solutions software, which, among other things, will aid in the recruitment, hiring, training and certification, and streamlining of training operations. With this new technology, the University is better positioned to deliver training and maintain compliance. Additionally, the University is moving its training location from its current space of 15,000 square feet of space at Gert Plaza in Jamaica, Queens, to 25,000 square feet of space at The Factory in Long Island City. This move would put the University Public Safety training academy in a larger and more professional educational environment that provides a real-world field training environment for its trainees.

Partnered with the International Association for Campus Law Enforcement Administrators ("IACLEA"). The University's Public Safety Department is seeking accreditation of its training academy. IACLEA accreditation is a program designed for campus public safety agencies at colleges and universities, aimed at enhancing law enforcement and security practices. The work began in 2022, and we are taking the steps to become accredited by 2027. The accreditation process includes an in-depth review of policies, procedures, protocols, training, and compliance with the IACLEA's standards.

Joint After Action Review. In 2024, CUNY revised its Emergency Operations Plan to include the implementation of a Joint After Action Review protocol to share lessons learned and develop and implement improvement plans as warranted. The review highlights lessons-learned and focuses on opportunities to improve future emergency response efforts, mitigate related risks, and strengthen communications and interactions between the campus(es) and the University.

Recruitment of Qualified Personnel. Since 2020, the University has aggressively attempted to recruit qualified public safety officers to secure and protect our 26 campuses. The University has increased its candidate pool in efforts to enlarge the class size of candidates eligible to enroll in the CUNY Public Safety Academy. We have also recently completed a key hire for a University Deputy Director of Public Safety, naming an individual with over 30 years of distinguished service in law enforcement, including key leadership roles within the New York City Police Department. Additionally, in light of the challenges in security personnel to fill these roles, the University has invested significant resources across multiple campuses to hire unarmed security personnel to protect our community and keep it safe.

There is no doubt that more work needs to be done, particularly in the areas of firearms policies and procedures. To that end, the University will retain thought leaders, experts and leading consultants in this field to advise the University on how it can further improve upon firearms controls, training, and accountability.

Thank you again for the opportunity to respond to the November 2025 Report, and the University looks forward to sharing with you in the near future how it has built upon the recommendations contained in the Report.

Respectfully,

Félix V. Matos Rodríguez, Ph.D.
Chancellor

Cc: Hector Batista, Executive Vice Chancellor and Chief Operations Officer
Derek Davis, Senior Vice Chancellor for Legal Affairs and General Counsel
Andre Brown, Executive Director, CUNY Department of Public Safety