

# Skelly Hearing Process Improvements

Informational Report to Oakland City Council

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Internal Affairs Bureau • February 24, 2026 Public Safety Committee

# Overview

- 1. What is a Skelly Hearing?**
- 2. The Backlog Challenge**
- 3. Progress to Date**
- 4. Process Improvements**
- 5. Path Forward**

# What is a Skelly Hearing?

A pre-disciplinary due process hearing required under California law for public employees facing suspension, demotion, or termination.

## **Notice**

Written notice of proposed action and reasons

## **Materials**

Copy of charges and supporting materials

## **Response**

Opportunity to respond before an impartial reviewer

# The Backlog Challenge

## Key Issues Driving the Backlog

### **Structural Capacity Constraints**

18 trained Skelly Hearing Officers; recusal requirements further reduce availability per case

### **Administrative Workload**

Preparation of investigative reports, body-worn camera footage, personnel records, and redactions is labor-intensive

### **Competing Operational Demands**

SHOs have primary operational responsibilities that limit hearing availability

# Progress to Date

~~169~~

46

Pending Skelly Cases

73%

Reduction in Backlog

18

Trained Hearing Officers

*October 2024 → January 2026*

# Process Improvements

## **Expanded SHO Training Pipeline**

All trained Commanders and Managers now eligible

## **City Executive Cross-Training**

Employee Relations identified city executives to conduct hearings

## **Digital Format Transition**

Digital Skelly materials reduce preparation time and speed distribution

## **Officer Waiver Option**

Formalized waiver for officers who do not contest proposed discipline

## **VISION Integration**

Automated reminders, deadline tracking, and email notifications

# Strategies Under Review

- Batch scheduling for related cases
- Tiered hearing assignment by discipline severity
- Dedicated SHO assignment for backlog clearance
- Coordinating timelines with CPRA
- Automated redaction software
- Pre-hearing settlement conferences

# Citywide Priorities Alignment

## **Holistic Community Safety**

Timely resolution of misconduct allegations maintains public trust and ensures accountability. Prompt resolution builds community confidence.

## **Responsive, Trustworthy Government**

Eliminating the backlog demonstrates Oakland takes accountability seriously. Honors obligations to the public and rights of the workforce.

# Recommendation

Staff recommends continued implementation of the multi-faceted approach to eliminate the Skelly hearing backlog and establish sustainable processes for timely due process hearings.

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