

*Patrolmen's
Benevolent
Association*

Of The City Of New York, Incorporated



OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

April 11, 2018

VIA HAND

Commissioner James P. O'Neill
New York City Police Department
One Police Plaza
New York, NY 10038

Re: BuzzFeed News Disclosure of Stolen Police Personnel Records

Dear Commissioner O'Neill:

As you know, we understand BuzzFeed News is in possession of confidential disciplinary files relating to hundreds of New York City police officers (the "Confidential Files") that likely have been stolen or misappropriated from the NYPD. These files—which were disclosed to BuzzFeed News in clear violation of both Civil Rights Law § 50-a and City Charter § 2604(b)(4)—provided the basis for the March 5, 2018 article entitled "Busted: The NYPD's Secret Files." In my letter of March 22, 2018, I asked you to provide the status of the Department's investigation into this leak, but have received no response.

We now understand that BuzzFeed News intends to publish the entirety of the Confidential Files on the internet *as early as today*. Specifically, BuzzFeed News will publish a searchable database of NYPD disciplinary records, which will contain personnel orders relating to approximately 1,800 NYPD employees. The database will include the police officer's (a) name; (b) tax ID number; (c) case number; (d) charges and specifications; (e) penalty; and (f) command.

In addition to the searchable database, BuzzFeed News intends to publish an accompanying story with its analysis of the Confidential Files. We understand that BuzzFeed News further intends to highlight the disciplinary cases of at least two New York City police officers that it will specifically identify.

There is no dispute that the leak of these Confidential Files maintained by the Department violates both State law (Civil Rights Law § 50-a) and City law (City Charter § 2604(b)(4), which precludes the public disclosure of "confidential information"). And as you know, publishing

these illegally-obtained documents will undoubtedly put New York City police officers in grave danger.

In the interest of ensuring our members' safety, a goal which we assume the Department shares, we demand that the Department and City immediately take all possible steps to prevent BuzzFeed's disclosure of the stolen Confidential Files including, but not limited to, seeking an injunction in court.

As the Confidential Files at issue could be published as early as today, please let us know by **close-of-business** what actions will be taken to prevent this unprecedented violation of the rights of New York City police officers. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "P. Lynch", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Patrick J. Lynch

cc:

Lawrence Byrne, Deputy Commissioner for Legal Matters (*by email and hand*)
John Beirne, Deputy Commissioner for Labor Relations (*by email and hand*)