

INTRODUCTION

On July 20, 2015, in the vicinity of XXXX S. Halsted Street, Chicago, Illinois, complainant, Subject 1 (“Subject 1”) was involved in a traffic accident and later received several citations from Officer A, Star XXXX while she was at XXXX Funeral Home. Subject 1 alleges that Officer A improperly arrested her, refused to let her get her asthma inhaler from her purse, and verbally abused her. She further alleges that an unknown sergeant verbally abused her and an unknown officer snatched keys from her cousin. The Civilian Office of Police Accountability¹ (“COPA”) examines these allegations.

ALLEGATIONS

It is alleged that on June 20, 2015, at the location of XXXX S. Halsted Street, at approximately 12:15 PM, **Officer A #XXXX:**

1. Handcuffed Subject 1 too tightly.
2. Made demeaning comments to Subject 1.
3. Used racial epithets while speaking to Subject 1.

It is alleged that on June 20, 2015, at the location of XXXX S. Halsted Street, at approximately 12:15 PM, **an unknown sergeant:**

1. Said to Subject 1, “be quiet or I will deal with you.”

It is alleged that on June 20, 2015, at the location of XXXX S. Halsted Street, at approximately 12:15 PM, **an unknown officer:**

1. Snatched car keys out of Subject 1’s cousin’s hand.

INVESTIGATION

COPA reviewed relevant documentary evidence and interviews associated with this incident. A summary of the evidence is as follows:

On July 22, 2015, at approximately 11:40 AM, investigators from the Independent Police Review Authority (“IPRA”) interviewed **Subject 1**. Subject 1 stated that on July 20, 2015 at approximately 12:15 PM, she was at XXXX’s Funeral Home². She stated that when she left the interior of the funeral home, she saw two uniformed white officers standing on the side of her vehicle in the parking lot. She stated that the officers confirmed her identity and said she was the

¹ On September 15, 2017, the Civilian Office of Police Accountability (COPA) replaced the Independent Police Review Authority (IPRA) as the civilian oversight agency of the Chicago Police Department. Thus, this investigation, which began under IPRA, was transferred to COPA on September 15, 2017, and the recommendation(s) set forth herein are the recommendation(s) of COPA.

² XXXX’s Funeral Home is located at XXXX S. Halsted Street, Chicago, Illinois.

subject in a hit-and-run traffic accident. She said at that time, an officer snatched car keys from her cousin's hand, jumped in her car and drove away. Subject 1 stated that the remaining officer, now known to be Officer A, handcuffed her and placed her inside his vehicle. Subject 1 stated that she denied to the officer that she was driving, and that she has a suspended license. She said that at around 10:45 AM her cousin was driving and "tapped" the bumper of a car. She said that after the accident there was a conversation with the other driver, after which she left because she was running late for a funeral.

Subject 1 stated that when referencing her purse, Officer A stated, "get your food stamp card out." She further stated that Officer A said the word nigger "multiple times in the conversation" they were having while she was transported to the police station. Subject 1 stated Officer A did not directly call her a "nigger" during the times that he used the word. Subject 1 stated that she was handcuffed and it caused injury to her wrist bone. She further stated that Officer A said that she "stunk up" his car during the transport. Once back at the district, Subject 1 stated that she was uncomfortably handcuffed to a bench, given tickets and then released after about 30 minutes. (Attachments 11, 13)

On April 7, 2016, at approximately 3:50 PM, **Officer A** provided a statement to IPRA. He stated that on July 20, 2015 he was on regular duty, working alone in uniform. Officer A stated that at around 12:30 PM, he was assigned a hit-and-run traffic crash involving Subject 2 ("Subject 2") and Subject 1 which occurred at approximately XXXX S. Halsted Street. Officer A described that he met Subject 2 at about XXXXth and Halsted Street (XXXX's Funeral Home) and spoke with him about the accident. Officer A stated that Subject 2 said that he could identify the driver of the vehicle that fled. Officer A stated they waited until the driver exited the funeral home (now known as Subject 1) and Subject 2 identified her as the driver that rear-ended him and left the scene of the accident.

Officer A stated that he talked to Subject 1 and that she initially denied being the driver, but eventually admitted to driving the vehicle that was involved in the accident. He stated that he discovered that Subject 1's license was suspended and that she would receive tickets. Officer A also stated that Subject 1 was angry at first but then calmed down. He stated that since Subject 1's license was suspended, she had to be taken to the police station to receive an I-Bond³. Officer A stated that he did not recall Subject 1 complaining of her cuffs being too tight and denied cuffing her too tightly. Officer A stated that he could not recall how Subject 1's vehicle was removed from the scene, but the vehicle was impounded. Officer A denied using the word "nigger" when speaking to Subject 1, and denied ever referencing a food stamp card. He stated that he had no recollection of Subject 1 ever requesting her asthma pump. (Attachments 18, 19)

IPRA made multiple attempts to contact witness, **Civilian 1**, to no avail. (Attachment 20)

³ Recognizance Bond

Subject 1 received five **traffic citations**. (Attachment 7)

ANALYSIS/CONCLUSION

COPA's burden is based on the preponderance of evidence standard. COPA recommends that Allegation #1 against Officer A, that he handcuffed Subject 1 too tightly, be **Not Sustained**. Despite Subject 1's claims of injury, she did not seek medical attention, nor did she provide any proof of injury. Additionally, Officer A could not recall whether Subject 1 ever complained of her handcuffs being too tight and denied cuffing her too tightly. As such, there is not enough evidence to prove or disprove this allegation.

COPA recommends that Allegation #2 against Officer A, that he made demeaning comments to Subject 1, be **Not Sustained** as there is no corroborating evidence to support Subject 1's allegation. Officer A denied this allegation, and Subject 1's alleged witness did not participate in COPA's investigation. Based on these factors, this allegation cannot be proved or disproved.

COPA recommends that Allegation #3 against Officer A, that he used racial epithets while speaking to Subject 1, be **Not Sustained**. Officer A denied using the language asserted by Subject 1, and there is no evidence to corroborate Subject 1's version of events.

COPA recommends that Allegation #1 against an unknown sergeant be **Unfounded**. Although Subject 1 initially made this claim, she never mentioned it in her statement, thus there is no evidence that this occurred.

COPA recommends that Allegation #1 against an unknown officer be **Unfounded**. There is no evidence to support the contention that any officer drove away with Subject 1's car, nor is there any corroborating evidence that an officer snatched keys from Subject 1's cousin.

Investigator

Supervising Investigator