



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**COPA CONCLUDES FATAL OFFICER INVOLVED SHOOTING  
INVESTIGATION OF MR. HARITH AUGUSTUS**

The Civilian Office of Police Accountability (COPA) has concluded its investigation into the July 14, 2018 fatal officer-involved shooting of Harith Augustus in Chicago's South Shore neighborhood. Pursuant to Ordinance (<http://www.chicagocopa.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/COPA-Ordinance.pdf>) our findings and recommendations have been delivered to the Superintendent of the Chicago Police Department and are currently under review.

This tragic incident began as several Police Officers, probationary and veteran, were on foot-patrol near 71st and Chappel Avenue in the South Shore neighborhood. Officers observed Mr. Augustus walking with the outline of a handgun visible under his shirt. The officers stopped and detained Mr. Augustus to inquire about the firearm. As Mr. Augustus searched through his wallet, officers attempted to gain physical control him. Mr. Augustus then pulled away from the officers and moved into the street. As he did so, Mr. Augustus appeared to grip the handle of the firearm. In response to the motion, an officer discharged his weapon five times, fatally striking Mr. Augustus.

COPA responded to the shooting scene and immediately began investigating the actions of all involved officers leading up to and including the shooting. The death of Mr. Augustus, who was a well-regarded local business owner, led to significant unrest, both immediately and throughout the summer of 2018.

"Of importance in COPA's investigation and its findings is the complex and nuanced interplay between the Fourth Amendment and the Illinois Firearm Concealed Carry Act," said COPA Chief Administrator Sydney Roberts. "Police officers frequently confront such ambiguous circumstances and their decisions as well as actions are viewed in the context of disparate policing practices, experiences, and outcomes in communities of color. It is therefore

imperative that the Department devote considerable thought and care to creating and implementing appropriate policies and training.”

Since the incident, COPA participated in many community meetings in an ongoing effort to provide transparency into its investigative process and answered questions without compromising the integrity of its investigation. COPA released more than twenty relevant video, audio, and written Department records within 32 days of the incident. In September 2019, COPA investigators located two additional video files capturing part of the incident, provided a supplemental notice and posted the material to its transparency portal shortly thereafter.

COPA’s findings and recommendations are set forth in its Summary Report of Investigation (SRI). COPA will post the SRI to its website for public examination after the Department concludes its review and officers are served with any resulting charges. We appreciate the public’s continued patience with and understanding of the administrative disciplinary process as we conclude this important investigation.

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