

SUMMARY REPORT OF INVESTIGATION

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Date of Incident:	March 8, 2019
Time of Incident:	12:00 pm
Location of Incident:	87█ S. Michigan Avenue
Date of COPA Notification:	March 13, 2019
Time of COPA Notification:	9:17 am

Complainant █ (█) and Officer Garrick Jeffries (Officer Jeffries) are next-door neighbors on the 8700 block of S. Michigan Avenue. On March 8, 2019, Officer Jeffries' wife was carrying their newborn son to the garage when █ dog ran up to the shared fence and started barking and lunging at Officer Jeffries' wife. Officer Jeffries exited his home with his firearm in hand and pointed the weapon directly at the dog. █ entered her backyard and attempted to pull her dog away from the fence. As soon as █ entered the yard, Officer Jeffries lowered his weapon.

II. INVOLVED PARTIES

Involved Officer #1:	Garrick Jeffries, star# 16407, emp.# █, DOA: August 25, 2014, Officer, Unit 005, DOB: █ 1977, Male, Black
Involved Individual #1:	█ DOB: █, 1966, Female, Black

III. ALLEGATIONS

Officer	Allegation	Finding
Officer Garrick Jeffries	1. It is alleged by █ that on or about March 8, 2019, at approximately 12:00 p.m., at or near 87█ S. Michigan Ave, Officer Garrick Jeffries, star 16407, committed misconduct through the following act or omission, by pointing his firearm at or in the direction of █ and/or her dog, without justification.	Exonerated
	2. It is alleged by █ that approximately four months prior to March 8, 2019, at or near 87█ S. Michigan Ave, Officer Garrick Jeffries, star 16407, committed misconduct through the following act or omission, by pointing his firearm at or in the direction of █ and/or her dog, without justification.	Exonerated

IV. APPLICABLE RULES AND LAWS

Rules

1. Rule 38- Prohibits the unlawful or unnecessary use or display of a weapon.
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Municipal Code of the City of Chicago

1. MCC §7-12-050(c), Dangerous animals – Investigation, determination, and requirements.

V. INVESTIGATION¹

a. Interviews

██████████ provided a statement to COPA on March 11, 2019.² On the date of the incident, ██████████ stated she exited her home through the side door with her dog, a 10-year-old pit bull. ██████████ let the dog outside, and as she turned to close the door, Officer Jeffries yelled at her to get the dog, which was at the fence barking at Officer Jeffries and his family.³ Officer Jeffries shouted he had to protect his wife and baby, and he threatened to call Animal Care and Control. As ██████████ rushed to get her dog, she observed Officer Jeffries with his gun pointed at the dog. ██████████ grabbed the dog's collar and pulled him back towards her house. Officer Jeffries continued to point his firearm at both ██████████ and her dog until she was able to secure the dog.⁴

According to ██████████ she has lived at 87███ S. Michigan Avenue off and on throughout her life, and she moved back into the home permanently in 2004. Officer Jeffries purchased the home next door to ██████████ in 2007 or 2008. ██████████ stated she and Officer Jeffries were great neighbors in the beginning but that changed in April or May of 2011, when ██████████ dog bit Officer Jeffries. The incident occurred when ██████████ was arriving home with her dog and Officer Jeffries was exiting the front door of his home. ██████████ dog broke away from her, ran onto Officer Jeffries' porch, and bit the officer several times on both his legs. ██████████ relationship with Officer Jeffries deteriorated after that. Officer Jeffries sued ██████████ and she stated he constantly called Animal Care and Control on her dog.

According to ██████████ approximately four months prior to the March 8, 2019 incident, she let her dog outside in her backyard, and the dog started barking when Officer Jeffries' girlfriend (now his wife) left his home. Officer Jeffries came outside, yelled at ██████████ and pointed his gun at ██████████ and her dog until she took the dog inside. When ██████████ came back outside,

¹ COPA conducted a thorough and complete investigation. The following is a summary of the material evidence gathered and relied upon in our analysis.

² Atts. 2 & 3.

³ ██████████ stated there is a five-foot chain-link fence between the two properties and her dog cannot jump over the fence.

⁴ According to ██████████ Officer Jeffries had the gun pointed at her for a few seconds, and the entire incident lasted approximately 30 to 40 seconds. ██████████ estimated Officer Jeffries was about 10 to 12 feet from her when he pointed the gun in the direction of her and her dog.

Officer Jeffries told her she was going to have to do something about the dog because his girlfriend was pregnant.

Officer Garrick Jeffries provided a statement to COPA on April 21, 2021.⁵ According to Officer Jeffries, he and ██████████ have been neighbors since 2009, and they have a good relationship. On the date of the incident, Officer Jeffries' wife was carrying their newborn son to the garage when ██████████ dog ran outside and lunged towards the fence that separates the two properties. Officer Jeffries ran outside with his firearm and pointed his weapon at ██████████ dog. He then moved his wife and newborn son out of the way so the dog could not attack them. According to Officer Jeffries, ██████████ dog was declared dangerous by Animal Care and Control after an August 27, 2011 incident in which the dog ran onto Officer Jeffries' property and bit him in both legs.

Officer Jeffries described ██████████ dog as a large rust-brown pit bull. The fence that separates their back yards is a four-foot tall, weak metal fence. According to Officer Jeffries, ██████████ dog has jumped the fence and come onto his property numerous times in the past, but he did not report those incidents. Officer Jeffries acknowledged he pointed his weapon at ██████████ dog once or twice before the March 8, 2019 incident, but he denied ever pointing a weapon at ██████████ Officer Jeffries stated ██████████ has not followed the Chicago Municipal Code provisions applicable to owners of dangerous dogs, including the requirements that she build a locked outdoor enclosure for the dog, and keep the animal leashed and muzzled anytime it is not on her property.

b. Digital Evidence

Officer Jeffries captured the March 8, 2019 incident on his **home security camera** system, and he submitted a copy of the video to COPA.⁶ The video captures Officer Jeffries' wife walking from her back door towards the garage, holding her newborn baby in a baby carrier. ██████████ dog then comes into frame and runs toward the chain-link fence that separates the two properties. The dog appears to be barking as it repeatedly lunges at and jumps on the fence. Officer Jeffries exits his home with his firearm in hand and points the weapon at the dog. He keeps the weapon pointed at the dog for approximately eight seconds, until ██████████ walks into her back yard to get the dog. At that point, Officer Jeffries immediately lowers his weapon so it is pointed at the ground. ██████████ takes hold of her dog and drags it towards her house as Officer Jeffries returns to his home and his wife continues to the garage.

c. Documentary Evidence

COPA obtained and reviewed **Animal Care and Control's investigative file** regarding the August 27, 2011 dog bite of Officer Jeffries.⁷ On October 27, 2011, the agency sent ██████████ a letter declaring her dog a "dangerous animal" and a public nuisance. As part of the determination, ██████████ agreed to comply with Chicago Municipal Code §7-12-050(c).

⁵ Atts. 10 & 13.

⁶ Att. 11.

⁷ Att. 14.

VI. LEGAL STANDARD

For each Allegation COPA must make one of the following findings:

1. Sustained - where it is determined the allegation is supported by a preponderance of the evidence;
2. Not Sustained - where it is determined there is insufficient evidence to prove the allegations by a preponderance of the evidence;
3. Unfounded - where it is determined by clear and convincing evidence that an allegation is false or not factual; or
4. Exonerated - where it is determined by clear and convincing evidence that the conduct described in the allegation occurred, but it is lawful and proper.

A **preponderance of evidence** can be described as evidence indicating that it is **more likely than not** that the conduct reviewed complied with Department policy.⁸ If the evidence gathered in an investigation establishes that it is more likely that the conduct complied with Department policy than that it did not, even if by a narrow margin, then the preponderance of the evidence standard is met.

Clear and convincing evidence is a higher standard than a preponderance of the evidence but lower than the “beyond-a-reasonable doubt” standard required to convict a person of a criminal offense. Clear and convincing can be defined as a “degree of proof, which, considering all the evidence in the case, produces the firm and abiding belief that it is highly probable that the proposition . . . is true.”⁹

VII. ANALYSIS

COPA finds both allegations against Officer Jeffries are **exonerated**. Rule 38 prohibits officers from unlawfully or unnecessarily using or displaying their weapons; however, COPA finds Officer Jeffries did not violate this rule. It is undisputed that ██████ dog bit Officer Jeffries in 2011, and that following the incident Animal Care and Control determined the dog was a “dangerous animal” under Chicago Municipal Code §7-12-020. ██████ alleged that on at least two occasions—March 8, 2019 and an unknown date approximately four months prior—Officer Jeffries pointed his firearm at both ██████ and her dog. Officer Jeffries denied he ever pointed his firearm at ██████ but he admitted to pointing it at the dog on several occasions, including during the March 8th incident. On that date, Officers Jeffries stated his wife was walking to the garage with their newborn son when ██████ dog ran to the fence and starting barking and lunging at them. Officer Jeffries pointed his firearm at the dog to protect his family and immediately lowered it when ██████ came outside to get her dog. COPA finds Officer Jeffries’ account of events credible, as his statement is corroborated by the video he recorded on his home security system. That footage shows Officer Jeffries did not point his firearm at ██████ during the March 8, 2019 incident.

⁸ See *Avery v. State Farm Mutual Automobile Insurance Co.*, 216 Ill. 2d 100, 191 (2005) (a proposition is proved by a preponderance of the evidence when it has found to be more probably true than not).

⁹ *People v. Coan*, 2016 IL App (2d) 151036, ¶ 28 (2016).

██████████ also alleged that Officer Jeffries pointed his weapon at her and her dog approximately four months prior to March 8, 2019. Officer Jeffries admitted he pointed his firearm at the dog on prior occasions, but he explained the dog was dangerous and had repeatedly jumped the fence between the two properties. The paperwork from Animal Care and Control confirms that ██████████ agreed to comply with Chicago Municipal Code §7-12-050(c) in order to keep her dog after it was declared a “dangerous animal.” One of these provisions required ██████████ to either confine the dog indoors or secure it inside a locked outdoor enclosure suitable to prevent the entry of young children and designed to prevent the dog from escaping.¹⁰ On the date of the incident, ██████████ dog was not secured in such an outdoor enclosure. Given the fact that the dog had previously bit Officer Jeffries, had a history of escaping ██████████ yard, and had been declared dangerous by Animal Care and Control, COPA finds Officer Jeffries’ actions to protect his family did not violate Rule 38. Therefore, Allegations 1 & 2 against Officer Jeffries are **exonerated**.

VIII. CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis set forth above, COPA makes the following findings:

Officer	Allegation	Finding
Officer Garrick Jeffries	1. It is alleged by ██████████ that on or about March 8, 2019, at approximately 12:00 p.m., at or near 87██ S. Michigan Ave, Officer Garrick Jeffries, star 16407, committed misconduct through the following act or omission, by pointing his firearm at or in the direction of ██████████ and/or her dog, without justification.	Exonerated
	2. It is alleged by ██████████ that approximately four months prior to March 8, 2019, at or near 87██ S. Michigan Ave, Officer Garrick Jeffries, star 16407, committed misconduct through the following act or omission, by pointing his firearm at or in the direction of ██████████ and/or her dog, without justification.	Exonerated

Approved:

██████████

6/30/2021

Matthew Haynam
Deputy Chief Administrator – Chief Investigator

Date

¹⁰ See Chicago Municipal Code §7-12-050(c)(1).

Appendix A

Assigned Investigative Staff

Squad#:	6
Investigator:	Chenese Brown
Supervising Investigator:	Steffany Hreno
Deputy Chief Administrator:	Matthew Haynam