

SUMMARY REPORT OF INVESTIGATION

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Date of Incident:	November 16, 2017
Time of Incident:	6:00 pm
Location of Incident:	██████████ Chicago IL 60655
Date of COPA Notification:	November 16, 2017
Time of COPA Notification:	7:58 pm

On the date and time above, the Chicago Police Department received a 911¹ called from the Reporting Party Victim, ██████████, who stated that ██████████, Chicago Police Officer Vincent Barner, had pushed her ██████████ after they had engaged in a verbal altercation regarding some paperwork. ██████████, were present at the time and witnessed this altercation. Officer ██████████ had begun ██████████ at the time of the incident but still ██████████. When officers responded to the scene, the parties had separated willingly. Officer Barner reported to work later that evening for his scheduled shift, and no arrests were made. COPA was notified later that evening by the responding Sergeant on the scene, Sergeant Blum. The interaction between the responding officers and the Barner was recorded by the officers' Body Worn Cameras, including a brief interview of Vincent Barner by Sergeant Blum inside ██████████.

II. INVOLVED PARTIES

Involved Officer #1 (<i>Accused</i>):	Vincent Barner , Star #19562, Employee # ██████████ Appointed December 4, 1995; Police Officer, Unit 022, DOB ██████████, 1967; Black Male
Involved Individual #1: (<i>Reporting Party Victim</i>)	██████████, DOB ██████████, 1977; Black Female
Involved Individual #1: (<i>Witness After the Fact</i>)	██████████, Mother of ██████████, DOB ██████████ ██████████, 1963; Black Female
Involved Individual #2: (<i>Juvenile Witness</i>)	██████████, Son of ██████████ ██████████, DOB ██████████, 2005; Black Male
Involved Individual #3: (<i>Juvenile Witness</i>)	██████████, Daughter of ██████████ DOB ██████████, 2006; Black Female

¹ The audio tape of this 911 call was requested by COPA but has not been received at the time this report was submitted.

III. ALLEGATIONS²

Officer	Allegation	Finding
Officer Vincent Barner #19562	1. It was alleged that on November 16, 2017, while off duty, Officer Barner pushed ██████, in violation of Rule 9.	Not Sustained
	2. It was alleged that on November 16, 2017, while off duty, Officer Barner verbally degraded ██████ and called her names, including a "crazy bitch" and a "ghetto bitch," in violation of Rule 9.	Not Sustained
	3. It was alleged that on June 11, 2017, Officer Barner grabbed ██████ arm, in violation of Rule 9.	Not Sustained
	4. It was alleged that Officer Barner verbally abused and directed profanity at ██████, saying "Shut the fuck up" and "Get the fuck out" in front of their juvenile children, in violation of Rule 9.	Not Sustained

IV. APPLICABLE RULES AND LAWS

Rules

1. Rule 9 -Engaging in any unjustified verbal or physical altercation with any person, while on or off duty.

V. INVESTIGATION

a. Interviews

Reporting Party Victim ██████-

In her interview with COPA on November 27, 2017, Mrs. ██████ stated that she was at home sitting at the dinner table reviewing mortgage paperwork when ██████ Officer

² COPA conducted a thorough and complete investigation. The following is a summary of the material evidence gathered and relied upon in our analysis.

Vincent Barner snatched the documents from her hand and knocked them to the floor. As she tried to retrieve them, Officer Barner pushed and shoved her, saying, "Give me the fucking papers."³ The couple's son, [REDACTED], was present at the time and witnessed this interaction.

[REDACTED] called 911 at this time, and Officer Barner then began behaving erratically, telling her to "hang up the fucking phone."⁴ At one point, he also called [REDACTED] a "crazy bitch"⁵ and a "ghetto bitch."⁶ [REDACTED] witnessed this according to [REDACTED], and they spoke to the responding officers when they arrived, telling them that [REDACTED] had shoved [REDACTED], although she did not fall to the ground.

While awaiting the responding officers, [REDACTED] both arrived. The responding officers questioned the involved parties and [REDACTED], and there was no further altercation. Officer Barner left for work about an hour later while the responding officers were still on scene; they ordered an Evidence Technician to the scene to take photographs of [REDACTED], but she declined when the ET arrived. [REDACTED] was also asked if she wished to file a restraining order, and she declined.

The next day, [REDACTED] went to CPD Headquarters at 35th Street and Michigan Avenue to report the incident and obtain the Incident Report. Sergeant Blum also initiated a log number with COPA per department protocol.

[REDACTED] noted that Officer Barner had returned to the home the morning after the incident. She mentioned that both of them still [REDACTED] they were living in separate [REDACTED] and their communication was limited to text. She noted that she sustained verbal abuse on various occasions over the course of their relationship, including an incident on June 11, 2017 in which he grabbed her arm.⁷ [REDACTED] also stated that Officer Barner threatened her in the past, and he had some "mental issues" and gambling problems. Finally, [REDACTED] claimed that Officer Barner did not securely lock up his firearm; instead, he only placed it in a sock drawer in the bedroom.

Witness [REDACTED]

In her interview with COPA on November 27, 2017, [REDACTED], stated she had been called by [REDACTED] to come over because [REDACTED] "did not want [REDACTED] to hurt [REDACTED]." When [REDACTED] arrived at the home, four or five police cars were there. [REDACTED] stated to the police that she wanted to file a complaint against [REDACTED] because his verbal and physical abuse had been getting worse, beginning as

³ Att 17, 05:35. [REDACTED] stated that Officer Barner and her were standing side by side. Officer Barner shoved her from her left side; she stumbled, and he pushed her again on the same side.

⁴ Att 16, 04:23.

⁵ Att 16, 04:23.

⁶ Att 17, 02:16.

⁷ Att 16, 16:23.

verbal abuse and then becoming physical⁸. The responding officers spoke to [REDACTED] and Officer Barner was ultimately allowed to retrieve his uniform from the bedroom and go to work.

Accused Officer Vincent Barner

In his interview with COPA on September 7, 2018, Officer Barner confirmed that he was currently still undergoing [REDACTED] and that they [REDACTED] [REDACTED]⁹. This was also the case at the time of the incident in November 2017. The mortgage was currently in Officer Barner's name, but his plan was to [REDACTED].

Officer Barner stated that on the night of the incident, he had placed some bills and paperwork on a dresser in the [REDACTED] bedroom and then took a shower. [REDACTED] was asking him questions about the paperwork while he was in the shower. When he exited the bathroom, she was sorting through his mail on the kitchen table. When he approached her and took some of the mail, she swatted the papers out of his hands, and they fell to the floor. As Officer Barner reached down to pick the papers up, [REDACTED] kicked them around the floor to keep them away from him. Officer Barner used his right arm to block her kicks, which he admitted were not aimed directly at him. A few seconds later, [REDACTED] stated she was going to call 911. Alarmed at this, Officer Barner then called [REDACTED] to come to the house. When the responding officers arrived, Officer Barner and [REDACTED] did not exchange further communication. Officer Barner eventually left for work, and no one was arrested.

Officer Barner confirmed that the [REDACTED] were present in the home at the time of the incident. His [REDACTED] witnessed the altercation between him and [REDACTED] but denied seeing him strike [REDACTED].

Officer Barner denied directing profanity toward [REDACTED], including calling her names, but he admitted that it was possible he may have used profanity at some point in a generalized way. He denied striking, pushing or shoving [REDACTED] at any time. The only physical contact made was a result of both parties tussling to retrieve the papers on the floor. No injuries were reported.

Officer Barner denied suffering from any mental health issues or suicidal ideations in the past. He was aware of the EAP, as he and [REDACTED] sought EAP assistance after [REDACTED] and Officer Barner acknowledged seeing a counselor in 2000 after the death of his partner. He stated the [REDACTED] were normal problems and there was no prior verbal or physical abuse.

b. Digital Evidence

⁸ When asked further about whether the children knew about the abuse, [REDACTED] stated that the children were "used to" the verbal abuse toward [REDACTED] by Officer Barner.

⁹ Officer Barner mentioned that [REDACTED] but that their communication was limited to texts only about [REDACTED].

The **Body Worn Camera Footage**¹⁰ from the responding officers began by showing the responding officers approaching the front of Officer and ██████████ from the street. Officer Barner came out the front door, immediately asked for a Sergeant, and said that he “knew she was gonna pull this shit.”¹¹ He was visibly and admittedly upset and invited the officers in to show them the paperwork that he ██████████ were arguing over. He explained to them that he tried to grab his paperwork out of ██████████ hands, and it fell to the floor. When he attempted to pick it up off the floor, ██████████ began to kick the papers around, then called 911 claiming that Officer Barner hit her. ██████████ was also seen peeking out of the front door while the officers were speaking outside, and she said to Officer Barner, ██████████ say you push me and shove me several times.”¹²

The responding officers entered the home after speaking with Officer Barner outside for a few minutes and questioned all parties present. ██████████ was questioned about what he saw. In summary, ██████████, “He didn’t hit her. I mean, he didn’t hurt her. He was just trying to pick it up. He grabbed her this way to keep her from picking it up. He was trying to get his papers back and touching the papers, and they were both dropping papers all around. He was trying to pick up his papers, as he picked them up, he was trying to hold her this way so he could pick them up. He was trying to pick up his papers he gave a little shove not trying to push her to the ground, just so he could get to the papers. I didn’t see any abuse.”¹³

██████████ was recorded on the Body Worn Camera footage being asked by the officers if she had any injuries. She responded that she did not and would not be needing an ambulance.¹⁴ ██████████ also mentioned that Mr. Barner had pushed her before, but this is the first time she had the abuse documented. The responding officers did not ultimately make any arrests, which they attributed on tape to “cross-complaints” by the involved parties.¹⁵

c. Documentary Evidence

The **Initiation Report** made by Sgt. Blum on November 16, 2017, listed Officer Barner as the Accused and ██████████ as the Victim/Complainant. The report stated that Officer Barner pushed ██████████ but that no injuries were sustained. It also documented that Officer Barner had previously notified his Lieutenant, Lieutenant Reynolds, that ██████████ had threatened to “put a case on him” due to their pending ██████████.

The **Office of Emergency Management and Communication (OEMC) Event Queries**¹⁶ documented the call for service at 6:20 pm to ██████████ because of a domestic dispute in which a male pushed a female. The male was heard speaking in the background and denied touching her. No intoxication was indicated per the reports. The reports also confirmed that an Evidence Technician was dispatched to the scene. No arrests were made.

¹⁰ Att 21.

¹¹ Att 21 (Murdoch), 00:30.

¹² Att 21 (Murdoch), 06:45.

¹³ Att 21 (Murdoch), 15:39.

¹⁴ Att 17, 31:15.

¹⁵ Att 21, 36:40.

¹⁶ Atts 7-10.

The **Crime Scene Processing Report**¹⁷ documented that an Evidence Technician was called to the scene per department protocol and arrived at the home at 11:47 pm. [REDACTED] informed the Evidence Technician that the injuries to her arm and shoulder were not visible, and that she did not wish to be photographed.

The **Case Reports**¹⁸ documented the arrival of responding officers on November 16, 2017, at approximately 6:25 pm to resolve a domestic dispute in which both [REDACTED] and Vincent Barner were listed as Victims. No weapons or intoxication were indicated in the reports. The narrative documented that during a verbal altercation over some paperwork, Officer Barner was bumped into by [REDACTED], and [REDACTED] had been pushed and blocked by Officer Barner. The report also documented the conversation with [REDACTED] who told police that [REDACTED] were bumping into each other attempting to pick up the papers. Neither party sought an arrest against the other, and no injuries were reported.

VI. ANALYSIS

Allegation #1

COPA finds the allegation that Officer Barner pushed [REDACTED], without justification, is **NOT SUSTAINED**. Officer Barner is alleged to have pushed [REDACTED] without justification. Rule 8 establishes that Department members may not engage in disrespect to or maltreatment of any person, while on or off duty. Testimony given by [REDACTED] Officer and [REDACTED], indicates that Officer Barner was attempting to hold [REDACTED] off, as he retrieved papers that had fallen to the floor. However, while providing his version of events, [REDACTED] is seen on the responding sergeant's body-worn camera coaching Vijay Barner, insisting that he say Officer Barner shoved her. Prior to being coached by [REDACTED] statement corroborated with the statement Officer Barner provided to COPA, in which Officer Barner explained that he put his arm up as he attempted to defend himself against [REDACTED] kicking at him as they fought over documents that had fallen to the floor. Although there is no dispute that an altercation occurred that involved at least incidental contact, the parties' differ in their descriptions of both the nature of the contact and the details of the incident. Both parties allege that the other was the aggressor in the incident. Even with the narrative provided by [REDACTED] on BWC, the evidence is not strong enough to either prove or disprove the allegation.

Allegation #2

In regard to the allegation that on November 16, 2017, while off duty, Officer Barner verbally degraded [REDACTED] and called her names, including a "crazy bitch" and a "ghetto bitch," in violation of Rule 9, COPA recommends a finding of **NOT SUSTAINED**. [REDACTED] alleged that Officer Barner verbally abused her by calling her various derogatory names. However, Officer [REDACTED] was present during the alleged incident and he did not report hearing Officer Barner direct such statements at [REDACTED]. Further, Officer Barner does not deny using profanity during the contentious argument with [REDACTED], however, he denied directing the alleged verbal abuse towards her.

¹⁷ Att 11.

¹⁸ Atts 4-5, 27.

Allegation #3

In regard to the allegation that on June 11, 2017, Officer Barner grabbed ██████ arm, in violation of Rule 9, COPA recommends a finding of **NOT SUSTAINED**. ██████ testified to COPA that she has sustained physical and verbal abuse by Officer Barner in the past, even though she did not report the incident to authorities. This investigation revealed insufficient evidence to prove or disprove the allegation that Officer Barner grabbed ██████ arm. There are no independent witnesses to the alleged physical and verbal abuse who can prove or disprove the allegations.

Allegation #4

In regards to the allegation that Officer Barner verbally abused and directed profanity at ██████ saying "Shut the fuck up" and "Get the fuck out" in front of their juvenile children, in violation of Rule 9, COPA recommends a finding of **NOT SUSTAINED**. During his statement, ██████ did not indicate whether Officer Barner used or directed profanity at ██████ during this incident. Officer Barner did not deny using profanity, however, he denied using and directing profanity at ██████ in the presence of ██████

d. CONCLUSION

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

Officer	Allegation	Finding
Officer Vincent Barner #19562	1. It was alleged that on November 16, 2017, while off duty, Officer Barner pushed ██████, in violation of Rule 9.	Not Sustained
	2. It was alleged that on November 16, 2017, while off duty, Officer Barner verbally degraded ██████ and called her names, including a "crazy bitch" and a "ghetto bitch," in violation of Rule 9.	Not Sustained
	3. It was alleged that on June 11, 2017, Officer Barner grabbed ██████ arm, in violation of Rule 9.	Not Sustained
	4. It was alleged that Officer Barner verbally abused and directed profanity at ██████, saying "Shut the fuck up" and "Get the fuck out" in front of their juvenile children, in violation of Rule 9.	Not Sustained

Approved:



Director of Investigations

August 31, 2021

Date

Appendix A

Assigned Investigative Staff

Squad#:	8
Investigator:	Marquita Pittman
Deputy Chief Administrator:	DIO Sherry Daun