



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 14, 2023

CIVILIAN OFFICE OF POLICE ACCOUNTABILITY (COPA) ANNOUNCES LAUNCH OF PEOPLE'S ACADEMY

Today, the Civilian Office of Police Accountability (COPA) announced the launch of the COPA People's Academy, a six-week condensed version of COPA's Training Academy for the public (civilian or sworn) and organizations around the country.

COPA People's Academy is designed to educate citizens on COPA's processes including (but not limited to):

- History of Civilian Oversight of Policing
- Introduction to Officer-Involved Shooting/Death Investigations
- Witness Reliability-Legal Concepts Overview-Standards of Proof
- Analyzing Video—Use of Force Investigative Tools
- Policy Research & Analyses Division (PRAD)

Courses will be taught by COPA subject matter experts, including the Chief Administrator, First Deputy Chief Administrator, Deputy Chief of Investigations, and directors.

Throughout the last year, COPA has worked on the development of its People's Academy, where interested community members, as well as national police oversight agencies can attend an abridged version of COPA's formal training academy.

"Transparency is one of the core values of the agency and through this new training opportunity, the goal is to better inform the public of not just who we are, but intentionally share in great detail how we do our work and reach conclusions to a local and national audience," said COPA Chief Administrator Andrea Kersten. "The more transparent we are, the more we believe we build trust with residents, civilian and sworn, and continue to serve as a leader in civilian oversight of policing."

In 2016, Chicago's City Council passed an ordinance to establish COPA as the civilian oversight agency of the Chicago Police Department. Under the direction of Chief Administrator Andrea Kersten, COPA has the power and authority to conduct investigations into allegations of police misconduct within its jurisdiction and has strived to become a leader in police accountability and a model nationally for other oversight agencies.

COPA investigates complaints against CPD members alleging domestic violence, improper search, or seizure (4th Amendment violations), excessive force, coercion, unlawful denial of access to counsel, sexual misconduct, or verbal abuse; firearm discharges (officer-involved shootings) and other incidents that result in death or serious bodily injury.

COPA People's Academy will begin on March 21, 2023, and will be held every Tuesday from 6pm-8pm through April 25, 2023. It will take place at the Bauer Plummer Joint Public Safety Training Campus.

To enroll in COPA People's Academy, please visit: <https://www.chicagocopa.org/community-outreach/copa-peoples-academy/>

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