

SUMMARY REPORT OF INVESTIGATION

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Date of Incident:	November 10, 2017
Time of Incident:	2:10 PM
Location of Incident:	7535 S. Ashland Avenue (Walmart)
Date of COPA Notification:	November 10, 2017
Time of COPA Notification:	5:40 PM

On November 10, 2017, [REDACTED] (“[REDACTED]” Walmart’s assistant store manager, encountered Chicago Police Department (“CPD”) Officer Vanessa Muhammad (“Officer Muhammad”) at the Walmart on 7535 S. Ashland Ave., Chicago, IL. [REDACTED] alleges Officer Muhammed assaulted and intimidated him during a confrontation about him mistreating her niece, [REDACTED] a Walmart sales associate. As a result, CPD was called and a case report was generated naming Officer Muhammad as the suspect for Simple Assault against [REDACTED]. Further investigation revealed Officer Muhammad was on-duty at the time and left her assigned beat without authorization and without notifying the Office of Emergency Management Communications (“OEMC”). It is also alleged that Officer Muhammad abused her authority and brought discredit upon the department. COPA investigated the matter and reached Sustained findings for each allegation.

II. INVOLVED PARTIES

Involved Officer:	Vanessa Muhammad, Star#12835, Employee [REDACTED], DOA: June 19, 1991, Police Officer, Unit of Assignment: 051 ¹ DOB: [REDACTED] 1960, Female, Black
Complainant:	[REDACTED] DOB: [REDACTED] 1984, Male, Black

III. ALLEGATIONS

Officer	Allegation	Finding
Officer Vanessa Muhammad	1. Verbally assaulted [REDACTED] in violation of Rules 2, 4, 8, and 9.	Sustained / 5 days
	2. Threatened and intimidated [REDACTED] in violation of Rules 2, 4, 8, and 9.	Sustained / 5 days

¹ On the date of the incident, Officer Muhammad was assigned to the 002nd District. She is currently assigned to Unit 051.

3. Left her beat of assignment without permission in violation of Rules 6 and 30.	Sustained / 30 days
4. Abused her authority in violation of Rules 2, 4, and 8.	Sustained / 10 days
5. Brought discredit upon the Department in violation of Rule 2.	Sustained / 30 days
6. Failed to report/notify OEMC of her change of availability and/or relocation in violation of Rules 6 and 30.	Sustained / 30 days

IV. APPLICABLE RULES AND LAWS

Rules and Regulations of the Chicago Police Department

Rule 2: Any action or conduct which impedes the Department’s efforts to achieve its policy and goals or brings discredit upon the department.

Rule 4: Any conduct or action taken to use the official position for personal gain or influence.

Rule 6: Disobedience of an order or directive, whether written or oral.

Rule 8: Disrespect to or maltreatment of any person, while on or off duty.

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

Rule 30: Leaving duty assignment without being properly relieved or without proper authorization.

General Orders

General Order 03-01-01 – Radio Communications

V. INVESTIGATION²

a. Interviews

On November 15, 2017, COPA interviewed ██████████ about his encounter with Officer Muhammad. He said that on November 10, 2017, he was a Walmart assistant store

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

manager. During his shift, the service desk alerted him to a customer request for a manager. At the service desk, he encountered Officer Muhammad. She wanted to speak with Walmart Store Manager [REDACTED] about her niece, a Walmart worker who was recently reprimanded by management. [REDACTED] was not present, so [REDACTED] offered to speak with Officer Muhammad. During the conversation, Officer Muhammad identified herself as a CPD officer. She wore blue pants, black boots, and a dark jacket. When [REDACTED] identified himself by name, Officer Muhammad accused him of harassing her niece. At that point, she appeared emotional and belligerent. Officer Muhammad stood face-to-face with [REDACTED] and issued several verbal threats while pointing her fingers towards his face. Specifically, Officer Muhammad stated, "I am a Chicago Police Officer and you don't know what I'm capable of doing to you"³ She further suggested she could "make him disappear" and told him that her sister was also a CPD member and that they both have a lot of power.

[REDACTED] asked Officer Muhammad to leave the store. She refused to leave, so Walmart security escorted her out. After Officer Muhammad left, fearing she would act upon her threats, [REDACTED] called 911 to request a sergeant. Sergeant Jeffrey Gougis ("Sgt. Gougis") responded and conducted a preliminary investigation, which included brief interviews with [REDACTED] and other Walmart employees, including Officer Muhammad's niece. His investigation concluded and a unit was dispatched to initiate **Original Case Incident Report RD JA506660** for Simple Assault.⁴

In a statement given to COPA on January 23, 2018, **accused Officer Muhammad** relayed that on November 10, 2017, at approximately 2:00 pm, after leaving her "tour of duty" in the 002nd District, she went to the Walmart at 7535 S. Ashland to address employment concerns regarding her niece, [REDACTED]. She stated that, prior to the visit, she had multiple conversations with [REDACTED] about issues of harassment and unfair treatment at the hands of [REDACTED]. Officer Muhammad admitted [REDACTED] did not ask her to get involved. Nevertheless, she decided to intervene because [REDACTED] had learning disabilities and similar experiences with prior employers. However, she did not elaborate on the nature of [REDACTED] condition. To the contrary, she described [REDACTED] as an independent, competent 27-year old who does not require day-to-day living assistance.

Officer Muhammad believed she built a rapport with [REDACTED] because she had spoken to him on previous occasions regarding her niece. Therefore, upon arrival, she asked to speak with him. Instead, [REDACTED] approached and identified himself as one of the managers and offered her assistance. Initially, both parties were calm but as she began to address [REDACTED] concerns, his demeanor changed. She relayed that [REDACTED] became defensive and began to raise his voice. Thus, her demeanor also changed as they exchanged words. During the conversation, she said, "We're going to file a formal complaint against whoever the person is harassing [Ms. [REDACTED]]"⁵ Officer Muhammad told COPA she did not learn [REDACTED] was [REDACTED] alleged bully until after the incident. She added, after the incident a formal complaint was made against [REDACTED] and he was disciplined by Walmart. However, she failed to provide any additional information and did not know Walmart's findings or what discipline was imposed.

³ See audio recorded statement of [REDACTED] (Att. 12) at 4:35

⁴ Attachment 12

⁵ See audio recorded statement of Officer Muhammad (Att. 40) at 13:30

Officer Muhammad denied directing any threats toward [REDACTED]. She also insisted she was not on-duty, did not represent or identify herself as a police officer, and was not working in the capacity of a police officer at that time. However, during her interview, she could neither recall the details of her tour of duty nor what time it began or ended. She admitted to wearing her police uniform covered with a coat but denied carrying her duty weapon. Officer Muhammad also admitted to standing in front of [REDACTED] and to possibly pointing toward his face during the confrontation, because she typically communicates with hand gestures. When asked if she had relatives employed with CPD, she identified her sister, **Sergeant Maudessie Jointer**, [REDACTED] mother. She did not, however, recall bringing her sister up during the encounter with [REDACTED].

After having words with [REDACTED] she was asked to leave the store. Officer Muhammad said it was possible she refused to leave because she felt that she was “*right in her position.*”⁶ Eventually she was escorted out by a female security officer whom she locked arms with (in a friendly manner) as they walked towards the exit. After leaving the store, she remembered [REDACTED] calling her to say she was being interviewed by CPD. At that time, Officer Muhammad spoke with Sgt. Gougis on [REDACTED] phone. He asked her to return to the store. When Officer Muhammad returned, she briefly spoke with Sgt. Gougis in the parking lot. There, she offered her version of what occurred. Sgt. Gougis told her [REDACTED] wanted her arrested and that he would be initiating a CR number against her regarding the incident. During her interview, she stated that she later learned through her niece that [REDACTED] had alleged that she displayed her weapon during the incident. However, she suggested that, after a review of store video surveillance, [REDACTED] changed his story.

Later that day, she contacted [REDACTED] to discuss her encounter with [REDACTED]. She said [REDACTED] was in disbelief about the allegations against her, because he felt it was out of her character. She also contacted Walmart’s corporate office to file a complaint regarding her experience with [REDACTED] and to share her concerns for her niece.⁷

In a statement given to COPA on January 10, 2018, **Sergeant Jeffrey Gougis** of the 006th District reported that on November 10, 2017, he responded to a request for a sergeant at Walmart. Upon arrival, he spoke with [REDACTED] who said he was threatened by a police officer. [REDACTED] explained the officer was an employee’s aunt who was upset about a reprimand her niece received for poor job performance. [REDACTED] stated that, during their encounter, Officer Muhammad conducted herself in a physically and verbally threatening manner. He reported that Officer Muhammad used the words, “I’m the police and you don’t know what I’m capable of doing,” while pointing her fingers toward his face. [REDACTED] also stated that the officer mentioned her sister was a CPD sergeant or lieutenant.

After speaking with [REDACTED] Sgt. Gougis met with [REDACTED] who was accompanied by a female Walmart manager. [REDACTED] identified Officer Muhammad as her aunt and as a CPD officer. Although she was aware Officer Muhammad was in the store, she denied having any knowledge of the incident and could not provide any details. During his interview with [REDACTED] Officer Muhammad called [REDACTED] cell phone and Sgt. Gougis spoke briefly with Officer Muhammad. During the conversation, Officer Muhammad identified herself by name and said she was an active

⁶ See audio recorded statement of Officer Muhammad (Att. 40) at 34:10

⁷ Attachment 40

CPD officer assigned to the 002nd District. She also stated she had just left the store and that whatever they claimed to have happened was false. Sgt. Gougis told Officer Muhammad he could not speak with her at that time.

After his preliminary investigation, Sgt. Gougis stated he “absolutely thought the incident required to be documented and found ██████████ to be credible.”⁸ As such, he returned to his police vehicle to request a unit to come out to prepare a case report. While at the vehicle, Officer Muhammad approached him in a civilian min-van in the Walmart parking lot. He remembered her wearing dark pants, boots, and a dark colored coat but had no visible CPD insignia. In the parking lot, she identified herself and stated, “Nothing happened, I didn’t do anything.”⁹ Once more she suggested that whatever claims were being alleged were false. Sgt. Gougis informed her that he would be initiating a report and returned to the store. In his interview, Sgt. Gougis stated he was under the impression that she was off-duty but he did not confirm this detail.¹⁰

In a statement given to COPA on November 21, 2017, ██████████ the Walmart manager, confirmed he was not present during the incident and that Officer Muhammad contacted him via telephone later that day. He believed she called to tell her side of the story. She told him that she came into the store to speak to him regarding her niece but was instead greeted by ██████████ She said that she wanted to discuss her concerns about ██████████ but ██████████ informed her that he would not discuss employee matters with her. ██████████ stated that he supported ██████████ and that they were not obligated to address employee concerns with her. He also told Officer Muhammad he did not appreciate her behavior in the store. During the conversation, she told him she was asked to leave the store and was consequently escorted out by security. However, she denied any wrongdoing.¹¹ ██████████ also noted that Walmart’s corporate office contacted him to inform him that Officer Muhammad contacted its office to report the incident.¹²

In a statement given to COPA on November 29, 2017, **witness** ██████████ ██████████ a Walmart employee, reported that on November 10, 2017, she observed Officer Muhammad speaking with ██████████ It was her understanding that the officer had come to address employment issues concerning ██████████ She recalled that, as she walked onto the salesfloor, she could hear the officer yelling. ██████████ relayed that Officer Muhammad was dressed in her police uniform: blue pants, blue sweater, and a jacket with visible CPD insignia. During the conversation, ██████████ heard the officer accuse Walmart of not protecting ██████████ and say that she was tired of people picking on her niece.

Once ██████████ introduced himself, Officer Muhammad replied, “Oh you’re ██████████ You’re the one she was telling me about.” ██████████ recalled Officer Muhammad stood close to ██████████ as she yelled and pointed her finger in his face. She also recalled Officer Muhammad saying, “You don’t know me, I’m a police officer. Me and my sister coming up here, we’re not

⁸ See Audio recorded statement of Sgt. Gougis (Att. 26) at 14:15

⁹ *Id.* at 10:20

¹⁰ *Id.* 26

¹¹ Attachment 19

¹² Attachment 35

done with you yet.”¹³ Eventually, a female security officer escorted Officer Muhammad out of the store who locked arms with her as they walked toward the exit.¹⁴

In a statement given to COPA on November 29, 2017, witness ██████████ a Walmart supervisor, reported that she observed the encounter between Officer Muhammad and ██████████. She recalled that the incident created a disturbance and disrupted normal activities. She said Officer Muhammad wore a blue sweater with CPD insignia, blue pants, and dark shoes. She also stated that Officer Muhammad was aggressive from the start. Upon ██████████ approach, she yelled that they were not going to mistreat her niece. Once he identified himself, Officer Muhammad said, “Oh, you’re ██████████”¹⁵ At that point ██████████ explained that Officer Muhammad became even more enraged, getting louder, pointing her fingers toward ██████████ face, and accusing him of harassing ██████████. She recalled the officer’s demeanor led her to believe the incident would escalate. ██████████ believed ██████████ calm demeanor agitated Officer Muhammad.

██████████ also recounted that Officer Muhammad identified herself and her sister as CPD officers. She also overheard the officer use words to the effect of “I’ll show you what I can do to you.”¹⁶ When ██████████ finally asked Officer Muhammad to leave the store, she initially refused. However, when security arrived she left without incident with a female security officer she locked arms with and walked toward the exit.

After the disturbance, ██████████ stated she spoke with ██████████ about her aunt’s behavior. During the conversation, ██████████ stated she did not overhear or observe the incident. However, she relayed Officer Muhammad told her that all she said was that she would drag her ██████████ out of Walmart before she let anyone continue to harass her. But ██████████ suggested to ██████████ that it was possible for Officer Muhammad to react in such a way because, “we about that life.”¹⁷ ██████████ interpreted that statement to mean they would hurt someone if they wanted to.¹⁸

b. Digital Evidence¹⁹

Body Worn Camera (BWC) videos retrieved from **Officer Cesar Cuevas #11002** depict footage relative to the investigation conducted by responding Officers Cuevas and his partner, Jacob German, # 15650 of the 006th District. Footage shows the officers’ visit to the Walmart on November 10, 2017.²⁰

BWC video (X81050996) assigned to Officer Cuevas depicts the officers’ interaction with ██████████ and other Walmart employees. The officers are seen collecting information from ██████████ to prepare a report of the incident. ██████████ reported that he felt threatened by Officer Muhammad and was concerned for his physical well-being based upon her behavior. In the video,

¹³ See Audio recorded statement of ██████████ (Att. 15) at 2:40

¹⁴ Attachment 15

¹⁵ See Audio recorded statement of ██████████ (Att. 22) at 4:28

¹⁶ *Id.* at 05:35.

¹⁷ See Audio recorded statement of ██████████ (Att. 22) at 23:00

¹⁸ Attachment 22

¹⁹ The Walmart’s surveillance cameras were positioned such that they did not capture the encounter between ██████████ and Officer Muhammad.

²⁰ Attachment 31

he relayed to the officers that she stood in front of him pointing her finger at his face and yelled that he did not know what she was capable of doing. He further stated that she told him that her sister was also a police officer and that “they do things.”²¹

Further investigation led to a brief interview with a female security officer who identified herself as an off-duty employee of the Cook County Sheriff’s Office.²² She informed the officers that she escorted Officer Muhammad out of the store but she did not witness the incident with [REDACTED]. She further stated that, once she approached Officer Muhammad, she left without incident. However, as they walked toward the exit, Officer Muhammad shared with her that [REDACTED] was being harassed and she served as [REDACTED] advocate because she could not speak for herself. Additionally, Officer Muhammad told her [REDACTED] mother worked at the police department as a sergeant or lieutenant.

BWC video (X81055002) assigned to **Sergeant Jeffrey Gougis #2232** was unrelated to the incident.

c. Documentary Evidence

The **Initiation Report** authored by Sgt. Gougis on November 10, 2017, documents that Officer Muhammad committed a verbal assault against [REDACTED] at the subject Walmart. The report documents [REDACTED] allegations that the officer pointed her finger in his face and stated, “I’m a police officer -- you don’t know what I’m capable of,” placing him in fear of receiving a battery and that he requested that she be escorted out of the store by security. In the report, Sgt. Gougis also notes that [REDACTED] identified Officer Muhammad as her aunt and as a CPD Officer. Although she knew that the officer had visited the store, she denied having any knowledge of the incident. Sgt. Gougis noted that, during his interview with [REDACTED] Officer Muhammad called her cell phone at which time he briefly spoke with her. During the call, Officer Muhammad denied any allegations made against her.²³

CPD Original Case Incident Report RD Number JA506660, prepared by Officer Cuevas, dated November 10, 2017, names Officer Muhammad as the suspect of IUCR 0560-Simple Assault against [REDACTED] at the subject Walmart at 2:10 pm. The narrative reads, “he [REDACTED] was verbally assaulted by Officer Muhammad who identified herself as a Chicago Police Officer.” It further details that Officer Muhammad was visibly upset about [REDACTED] receiving reprimands at work and pointed her finger at his face as she stated, “I’m a police officer, you don’t know what I’m capable of.”²⁴

Assignment and Attendance (A&A Sheets) records retrieved from the CLEAR data system document that on November 10, 2017, Officer Muhammad’s tour of duty was from **6:00**

²¹ COPA notes here that the information collected by Officer Cuevas during his interview with Mr. [REDACTED] mirrors Mr. [REDACTED] description of events that he provided to COPA.

²² The security officer’s name could not be gathered from the BWC. Further investigation identified her; however, during CPD’s investigation she did not wish to be identified on official reports.

²³ Attachment 2

²⁴ Attachment 5

am - 3:00 pm. She was assigned to car #7118, Beat 253 as a foot patrol officer. The record does not reflect that she had any adjustments to her schedule on the date of incident.²⁵

A records request from **OEMC** for Officer Muhammad's **Portable Data Terminal (PDT) messages** revealed that on November 10, 2017, she was assigned to Beat 253 and began her tour of duty at 6:00 am. She was detailed to CPD Headquarters at 3510 S. Michigan Ave. at 6:15am. Records reflect that Officer Muhammad signed out for lunch from 12:41pm-1:12pm. The record also documents that Officer Muhammad scheduled a log-off for her tour of duty at 1:40 pm. However, that request was not cleared until 2:23pm.²⁶

However, the **CPD Time and Attendance records** retrieved from the 002nd District timekeeper reflect that on November 10, 2017, Officer Muhammad worked her 9-hour regular tour of duty from 6:00am-3:00pm. These records contain no notation that Officer Muhammad had accounted for an early release. In a conversation with the COPA investigator, the timekeeper explained that the records in her possession did not reflect that Officer Muhammad used any accrued time, had an early dismissal, or any record of permission to leave before her 3:00pm end of tour. The timekeeper stated that any such usage of time or requests for the same would be notated on the time card and documented in the time and attendance records found in **CLEAR**.²⁷ COPA notes that this information is inconsistent with Officer Muhammad's action of logging off of her PDT at 1:40 pm.²⁸

d. Additional Evidence

A records request from **Walmart's corporate office** returned Witness Statements from five employees. Four of them actually observed the incident involving Muhammad and [REDACTED] and one was from the security guard asked to escort Muhammad from the store (who did not witness the incident).²⁹ Of the four eyewitnesses, COPA interviewed two of them and those interviews are summarized above ([REDACTED] and [REDACTED]). COPA was unable to interview the other two witnesses ([REDACTED] and [REDACTED]) despite the investigator's three visits to the Walmart.

Records retrieved from the **CLEAR Data Warehouse Personnel Check** system confirm the identity of Officer Muhammad's sister, CPD Sergeant Maudessie Jinter.³⁰

VI. ANALYSIS

COPA must prove allegations by a preponderance of the evidence. Here, the evidence supports **Sustained** findings for **Allegations 1 through 6** against Officer Muhammad. The evidence indicates, based upon her authoritative presence and aggressive behavior, it is more likely than not she abused her authority and assaulted [REDACTED]. It also suggests she left her beat of

²⁵ Attachment 27

²⁶ Attachment 29

²⁷ Attachment 32 (containing the Time and Attendance records and a memorandum memorializing the conversation with the timekeeper).

²⁸ See Attachment 29 at 5.

²⁹ Attachment 34

³⁰ Attachment 33

assignment without permission and failed to notify OEMC of her change of availability and relocation. Those actions independently and collectively amounted to Officer Muhammad bringing discredit upon the department.

During her interview with COPA, Officer Muhammad stated, at the time of the incident, she felt she was “right in her position.” Similarly, during her interview, she appeared to embrace the same sentiment. Officer Muhammad stated she went to the store to address her niece’s employment concerns. Her decision to get involved stemmed from conversations with Ms. [REDACTED] about what they perceived as [REDACTED] unwarranted behavior. At no point during her interview did she provide a justifiable reason for the manner in which she interacted with [REDACTED]. Instead, she excused her behavior as an attempt to protect her niece. However, she also confirmed that Ms. [REDACTED] is a competent adult who lives independently and who did not request her intervention.

Officer Muhammad’s own credibility came into question in her attempt to discredit [REDACTED]. Without knowing what was reported, she immediately told Sgt. Gougis “whatever they claimed to have happened at the store was false.” Officer Muhammad also challenged [REDACTED] credibility by accusing him of falsely reporting she “displayed a weapon” during their encounter. However, neither [REDACTED] nor any of the other parties interviewed by COPA alleged she had a weapon.³¹ Additionally, neither Sgt. Gougis nor Officer Cuevas mentioned or reported anyone alleging Officer Muhammad had a weapon.

The witnesses interviewed by COPA agreed that [REDACTED] introduced himself to Officer Muhammad. They further stated that she became more infuriated after his introduction. However, Officer Muhammad told COPA she did not learn of [REDACTED] identity until after the incident. In another attempt to discredit [REDACTED] Officer Muhammad stated [REDACTED] was ultimately investigated and disciplined by Walmart for issues related to Ms. [REDACTED]. However, when probed, she could not provide any facts or details about [REDACTED] alleged punishment. As previously stated, Sgt. Gougis found [REDACTED] to be credible, as documented in his case report. Similarly, COPA found his account credible and independently corroborated.

Officer Muhammad denied making verbal threats, but explained she typically uses hand gestures to communicate so it is possible she pointed at [REDACTED] during the confrontation. When asked if she told [REDACTED] she had a sister employed with CPD, she never definitively denied saying it. However, she confirmed having a sister who is also an officer. Further investigation identified her sister as CPD Sergeant Maudessie Jointer. This further supports the allegation Officer Muhammad abused her authority by using her and her sister’s position to intimidate [REDACTED].

Allegations 1 (Verbal Assault); 2 (Threats and Intimidation); and 4 (Abuse of Authority)

Here, multiple eyewitnesses confirmed Officer Muhammed stood in close proximity with [REDACTED] and pointed towards his face while threatening: “we are not done with you yet,” “you don’t know what I’m capable of,” and suggesting that she could make him disappear. Those witnesses also confirmed that it was clear from Officer Muhammad’s appearance and attire that

³¹ None of the five Witness Statements collected by Walmart mentioned Muhammad possessing a weapon during the incident. See Attachment 34.

she was a police officer. They also heard her announce that she and her sister were both police officers. Officer Muhammad was in uniform and her status as a police officer was obvious to all present. The encounter so troubled [REDACTED] that he had security escort Officer Muhammad from the store and then requested that CPD dispatch a sergeant to his location because he feared she would act on her threats. Overall, [REDACTED] knowledge of Officer Muhammad's authoritative position, her aggressive tone and behavior, and statements about her and her sister's status placed him in reasonable apprehension of receiving a battery. Thus, COPA recommends a Sustained finding for Allegations 1, 2, and 4.

Allegations 3 (Leaving Assignment without Permission); 5 (Bringing Discredit upon the Department); and 6 (Failing to notify OEMC of her Change of Availability)

CPD Rule 30 prohibits an officer from leaving her duty assignment without being properly relieved or authorized to do so. Here, COPA's recommendations for Allegations 3, 5, and 6 turn on CPD records. Those records confirm Officer Muhammad was on-duty during the incident, even though she was adamant in her interview that she was off-duty at the time. According to the General Case Incident report, the incident occurred at a Walmart in the 006th District at approximately 2:10 pm. Attendance records show that on November 10, 2017, Officer Muhammad's tour of duty began at 6:00 am and concluded at 3:00 pm. The same records do not indicate that Officer Muhammad took any deductions from her accrued time off, e.g. comp time, etc., or that she was given permission for an early departure. However, Officer Muhammad logged off of her PDT at 1:40 pm – clearly indicating that she was making herself unavailable for the rest of her tour. This supports the conclusion that Officer Muhammad was on-duty at the time of the incident. Specifically, it shows she left her beat of assignment in District 002 and/or CPD Headquarters where she was detailed and relocated to the 006th District where the Walmart is located. As such, COPA concludes Officer Muhammad violated General Order 03-01-01, thereby violating CPD Rule 6 (prohibiting disobedience of an order or directive). G03-01-01(II)(H) orders a member who requests a change in availability status for any reason not covered by an assignment to: (1) notify the dispatcher of a change in status via voice radio only; and (2) include the reason for (or nature of) the change and the member's specific street location. In this case, Officer Muhammad violated that order when she left her assigned district without proper notification or permission. Additionally, the findings that Officer Muhammad entered the Walmart to verbally assault and intimidate the manager, while she was in uniform, on-duty, and away from her assignment, collectively brought discredit upon the CPD.

The outcome of this investigation centered primarily upon witness statements. All witnesses, other than Officer Muhammad, gave statements consistent with [REDACTED] account. Although Officer Muhammad denied assaulting [REDACTED] multiple eyewitnesses indicate she did. During her interview with COPA and her encounter with Sgt. Gougis, she failed to be apologetic or credible and failed to accept any responsibility for her behavior. In this case, Officer Muhammad violated CPD Rules and ultimately conducted herself in a manner that brought discredit upon the department. For the above reasons, COPA recommends a finding of Sustained for all allegations against Officer Muhammad.

VII. RECOMMENDED DISCIPLINE FOR SUSTAINED ALLEGATIONS**a. Officer Vanessa Muhammad****i. Complimentary and Disciplinary History³²**

1. Officer Muhammad has numerous awards, which include the following: Democratic National Convention Award; Honorable Mentions (7); 2004 Crime Reduction Ribbon; Department Commendation; Complimentary Letters (4); NATO Summit Service Award; 2009 Crime Reduction Award.
2. CPD Records show no Complaint Register history for Officer Muhammad for the past five years. CPD records do, however, note five sustained findings in Officer Muhammad's SPAR History Report – all for incidents that occurred in 2017. These violations include: (1) Indebtedness to the City, May 24, 2017; (2) Medical Roll – Fail to Notify Supervisor, June 13, 2017; (3) Court Appearance Violation, September 14, 2017; (4) Radio Call Violation, October 3, 2017; and (5) Indebtedness to the City, September 13, 2017.

ii. Recommended Penalty, by Allegation

1. Verbal assault of ██████████ 5 days;
2. Threatened and intimidated ██████████ 5 days.
3. Left beat of assignment without permission: 30 days.
4. Abuse of Authority: 15 days.
5. Bringing discredit upon the department: 30 days.
6. Failed to report/notify OEMC of her change of availability and/or location: 30 days.

iii. Discussion

1. Aggravating factors COPA considered in making its recommendations are: (1) Officer Muhammad's twenty-six years of service as of the date of this incident; (2) that she was in uniform as she publicly engaged in intimidating and abusive behavior; (3) she was given the opportunity to acknowledge wrongdoing and accept responsibility, yet she refused to do so; and (4) Officer Muhammad's five sustained findings of SPAR violations in the same year as the subject incident. No mitigating factors were identified.
2. COPA recommends that the penalties for the six sustained findings run concurrently, for a 30-day suspension.

³² See Ex. A to this SRI.

VIII. CONCLUSION

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

Officer	Allegation	Finding
Officer Muhammad	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Verbally assaulted [REDACTED] in violation of Rules 2, 4, 8, and 9. 2. Threatened and intimidated [REDACTED] in violation of Rules 2, 4, 8, and 9. 3. Left her beat of assignment without permission in violation of Rules 6 and 30. 4. Abused her authority in violation of Rules 2, 4, and 8. 5. Brought discredit upon the Department in violation of Rule 2. 6. Failed to report/notify OEMC of her change of availability and/or relocation in violation of Rules 6 and 30. 	<p>Sustained / 5 days</p> <p>Sustained / 5 days</p> <p>Sustained / 30 days</p> <p>Sustained / 10 days</p> <p>Sustained / 30 days</p> <p>Sustained / 30 days</p>

Approved:

[REDACTED]

Angela Hearts-Glass
Deputy Chief Administrator

9-13-18
Date

[REDACTED]

Sydney Roberts
Chief Administrator

9/19/18
Date

Appendix A

Assigned Investigative Staff

Squad#:	11
Investigator:	Chantelle Hill
Supervising Investigator:	Brian Dollar
Acting Deputy Chief Administrator:	Shannon Hayes
Attorney	Gino Betts



Print Face Sheet Print Current Case Summary

< Return Investigation

Reporting Category

Category	Subcategory	Situation	Victim/Offender Armed?	Weapon Types	Weapon Other	Weapon Recovered?	Deceased?
19A COERCION - VIOLENCE -							

row(s) 1 - 1 of 1

Log No: 1087468 Type:CR

Accused Members

Review Name	Status	Accused Overall Finding	Recommended Penalty	No. of Days	Date/Time Served	Created Date	Complimentary History
MUHAMMAD, VANESSA -	SUSTAINED					10-NOV-2017	==>

row(s) 1 - 1 of 1

Complimentary History

Award Type	Count
DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL CONVENTION AWARD	1
HONORABLE MENTION	7
2004 CRIME REDUCTION RIBBON	1
DEPARTMENT COMMENDATION	1
COMPLIMENTARY LETTER	4
NATO SUMMIT SERVICE AWARD	1
2009 CRIME REDUCTION AWARD	1

row(s) 1 - 7 of 7

Attachments

No.	Type	Related Person	No. of Pages	Narrative	Original in File	Entered By	Entered Date/Time	Status	Approve Content?	Approve Inclusion?
View 1	FACE SHEET	N/A	-	-	-	LOPEZ, ROBERTO	NOV-10-2017 17:40	-	-	-
View 2	INITIATION REPORT	N/A	2	Sgt. Jeffrey Gougis #2232.	NO	SOTO, ROBERTO	NOV-13-2017 09:53	APPROVED	-	YES
View 3	CONFLICT CERTIFICATION	N/A	-	-	-	DOLLAR, BRIAN	NOV-17-2017 09:28	-	-	-
View 4	CONFLICT CERTIFICATION	N/A	-	-	-	HILL, CHANTELLE	NOV-20-2017 10:54	-	-	-
View 5	GENERAL OFFENSE CASE REPORT	N/A	2	RD#JA506660-Officer Muhammad	NO	SOTO, ROBERTO	NOV-13-2017 09:59	APPROVED	-	YES
View 6	DETECTIVE SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT	N/A	2	RD#506660	YES	HILL, CHANTELLE	MAR-29-2018 09:40	APPROVED	-	YES
View 7	SWORN AFFIDAVIT FROM COMPLAINANT	N/A	1	[REDACTED]	YES	HILL, CHANTELLE	MAR-29-2018 09:42	APPROVED	-	YES
View 8	PHOTO IDENTIFICATION	N/A	1	[REDACTED]	YES	HILL, CHANTELLE	MAR-29-2018 09:43	APPROVED	-	YES
View 9	CONSENT FOR AUDIO RECORDED INTERVIEW	N/A	1	-	YES	HILL, CHANTELLE	MAR-29-2018 09:44	APPROVED	-	YES
View 10	REPORT (OTHER)	N/A	4	Victim Info Notice/Letter Summons & Warrant Dept.(Submitted by [REDACTED])	YES	HILL, CHANTELLE	MAR-29-2018 09:47	APPROVED	-	YES
View 11	TO/FROM REPORT	N/A	1	Re: Possible retrievable evidence (Inv. Sheets)	YES	HILL, CHANTELLE	MAR-29-2018 09:51	APPROVED	-	YES
View 12	AUDIO INTERVIEW	N/A	1	Complainant Statement-[REDACTED]	YES	HILL, CHANTELLE	JAN-22-2018 14:06	APPROVED	-	YES
View 13	REPORT (OTHER)	N/A	1	Sworn Affidavit (Witness), Brittenae Williams	YES	HILL, CHANTELLE	MAR-29-2018 09:54	APPROVED	-	YES
View 14	CONSENT FOR AUDIO	N/A	1	Brittenae Williams	YES	HILL,	MAR-29-	APPROVED	-	YES

BUREAU OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS
RECORDS SECTION

18 APRIL 2018

TO: COMMANDING OFFICER OF UNIT 113
FROM: RECORDS SECTION
BUREAU OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS
SUBJECT: PREVIOUS DISCIPLINARY RECORD OF:

MUHAMMAD	VANESSA	12835	051
NAME	(LAST, FIRST)	STAR	UNIT
FEMALE		BLACK	56707
SEX		RACE	EMPLOYEE#

REFERENCE: COMPLAINT REGISTER / LOG NUMBER 1087468
THE PREVIOUS SUSTAINED DISCIPLINARY HISTORY OF THE SUBJECT ACCUSED HAS
BEEN REQUESTED IN YOUR NAME BY:

ING.	HILL, C	66	113976	113
RANK	NAME	STAR	EMPLOYEE#	UNIT

RELATIVE TO A SUSTAINED FINDING IN THE INVESTIGATION OF THE ABOVE
REFERENCE COMPLAINT LOG NUMBER.

THE RECORDS SECTION, BUREAU OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS, DISCLOSED THE FOLLOWING
DISCIPLINARY ACTION ADMINISTERED TO THE SUBJECT ACCUSED FOR THE PAST FIVE
(5) YEARS.

VERIFIED / PREPARED BY:

NIYA SCOTT

FOR: COMMANDING OFFICER
RECORDS SECTION
BUREAU OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS

CR – NONE
SPAR – SEE ATTACHED



Chicago Police Department

Internal Affairs Division

SPAR HISTORY REPORT (Sustained Findings)



Employee#	Name	Star#	Unit	Position	Sex	Race	Birth Date	Date of Appointment
56707	MUHAMMAD, VANESSA L	12835	051/-	POLICE OFFICER	F	BLACK	09-DEC-1960	19-JUN-1991

History : Total No. SPAR's: 5

Log #	Incident Date	Completed Date	Disciplinary Action	Transgression Type	Suspension Dates
551047	13-SEP-2017	27-NOV-2017	1 DAY OFF	022B - INDEBTEDNESS TO THE CITY	13-NOV-2017 to 13-NOV-2017
550636	03-OCT-2017	10-OCT-2017	REPRIMAND	021 - RADIO CALL VIOLATION	
550609	14-SEP-2017	24-OCT-2017	1 DAY OFF	005 - COURT APPEARANCE VIOLATION	20-OCT-2017 to 20-OCT-2017
549694	13-JUN-2017	18-JUL-2017	3 DAYS OFF	003A - MEDICAL ROLL - FAIL TO NOTIFY SPVSR	
549309	24-MAY-2017	31-JUL-2017	NO DISCIPLINARY ACTION	022B - INDEBTEDNESS TO THE CITY	

For Official Police Purposes Only! This information is confidential and should not be disseminated for reasons other than its intended purpose.
CLEAR, Personnel Suite: Automated SPAR Application Print Date and Time: 18-APR-2018 13:19:24 Printed By : PC0S988

ISSUED FOR CR# 1087468 ONLY