



FINAL SUMMARY REPORT¹

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On July 17, 2020, the Civilian Office of Police Accountability (COPA) received an initiation report from Sgt. James Grissett Jr., reporting alleged misconduct by two members of the Chicago Police Department (CPD). In the report, ██████████ Complainant, alleged that on July 16, 2020, two police officers used excessive force when handcuffing him, wrongfully arrested him, and conducted themselves unprofessionally. Upon review of the evidence, COPA served Detention Aide (DA) George Raehl allegations that he forcefully pulled ██████████ shirt without justification, failed to notify the District Station Supervisor (DSS) in violation of S06-01-02 III.B, and failed to complete required Department reports regarding the incident. Following its investigation, COPA reached sustained findings regarding the allegations of forcefully pulling ██████████ shirt without justification and failure to complete required Department reports regarding the incident. COPA also reached not sustained findings regarding the allegation of failure to notify the District Station Supervisor (DSS) in violation of S06-01-02 III.B.

II. SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE²

On July 16, 2020, at approximately 6:25 pm ██████████ was arrested for battery and criminal damage to property.³ ██████████ was arrested and processed in the 004th district.⁴ Once ██████████ was bonded and released from custody, he informed Sgt. James Grissett that an unknown uniformed officer injured his wrist and hand during the arrest process while being handcuffed.⁵ ██████████ was unable to identify the officer by name or star.⁶ ██████████ was then transported to his residence by 004 district patrol unit.⁷ On July 22, 2020, ██████████ was interviewed by investigators at COPA.⁸ During this interview, he reported that he attempted to hang himself while in custody

¹ Appendix A includes case identifiers such as the date, time, and location of the incident, the involved parties and their demographics, and the applicable rules and policies.

² The following is a summary of what COPA finds most likely occurred during this incident. This summary utilized information from several different sources, including, but not limited to, District cell block footage, Department reports, Detention Aide interview, and Complainant interview.

³ Att. #1 Initiation Report Sgt. Grissett #1072

⁴ Att. #1 2

⁵ Att. #1

⁶ Att. #1

⁷ Att. #1

⁸ Att. #9 (██████████ pt.1 statement 22JUL20) & #10 (██████████ pt.2 statement 22JUL20)

using his t-shirt.⁹ He further stated that one of the workers in lockup “banged his head,” and another officer made inappropriate remarks.¹⁰

COPA identified the unknown officers as Detention Aides Dennis J Graham (who retired in 2022 and is no longer with the department) and George Raehl.¹¹¹² COPA received and reviewed a copy of the Daily Prisoner Log Record on January 4, 2023.¹³ COPA also obtained video from the lock-up area in the 004 District.¹⁴ At approximately 9:48:23 [REDACTED] attempted to knot his shirt to the cell bars and place it around his neck.¹⁵ This action drew the attention of the detention aides and a few seconds later both DA George Raehl and DA Dennis Graham walked into the lock up area.¹⁶ DA attempted to grab the shirt the complainant is using to hang himself but [REDACTED] backed away from the bars creating distance.¹⁷ [REDACTED] then attempted to put the shirt back on the bars and DA Raehl pulled the shirt in his direction causing [REDACTED] head to strike the bars.¹⁸

III. ALLEGATIONS

Detention Aide George Raehl:

1. Forcefully pulling [REDACTED] shirt without justification.
Sustained, Violation of Rules 2, 5, 6, 8, 9, and 10.

2. Failing to notify District Station Supervisor (DSS) in violation of S06-01-02 III.B.
Not sustained.

3. Failing to complete required Department reports regarding the incident.
Sustained, Violation of Rules 2, 5, 6, and 10.

I. CREDIBILITY ASSESSMENT

COPA interviewed Detention Aide George Raehl in December 2023. This investigation did not reveal any evidence that caused COPA to doubt the credibility of the individual (sworn or unsworn) who provided a statement.

⁹ Att. #10 ([REDACTED] pt.2 statement 22JUL20) Minute 06:40 from beginning

¹⁰ Att. #10 ([REDACTED] pt.2 statement 22JUL20) Minute 07:27 from beginning

¹¹ Att. 16 DA Dennis J Graham CMS Report_Retired2022; Att. 4 Arrest report & Attachment #11 A_A sheet

¹³ Att. 25 Daily Prisoner Log Record

¹⁴ Att. 13 District 04 Cam05 Cell Block C Cells C3-2 and C3-3

¹⁵ Att. 13

¹⁶ Att. 13

¹⁷ Att. 13

¹⁸ Att. 13

II. ANALYSIS¹⁹

A. Forcefully pulling ██████ shirt without justification.

COPA finds Allegation 1 against DA Raehl **Sustained**. Department members may only use force that is objectively reasonable, necessary, and proportional under the totality of the circumstances, in order to... control a subject.²⁰ Members will use de-escalation techniques to prevent or reduce the need for force based on the totality of the circumstances.²¹ In this case, DA Raehl had options available to him that did not include the use of force in the location and manner he chose to gain compliance. Instead of electing one of those less forceful options, DA Raehl escalated the situation by yanking ██████ shirt causing his head to hit the cell bars.

█████ was not an imminent threat to the Department members' lives, and while he was acting erratically, ██████ was surrounded by two Department members, inside a lockup facility, at the time of the incident. Simply put, there were many other options available to gain compliance. DA Raehl chose none of those options and used force without justification instead. Therefore, COPA finds that Allegation 1 is **Sustained**.

B. Failing to notify District Station Supervisor (DSS) in violation of S06-01-02 III.B.

COPA finds Allegation 2 against DA Raehl is **Not Sustained**. Per CPD policy "in those instances in which the arrestee has been identified as a present or prior danger to themselves (i.e., attempt suicide, caused harm to self, despondent), place the subject in a cell closest to lockup personnel, place another arrestee in the cell with the subject arrestee, and notify the DSS."²² DA Raehl stated during his COPA statement that he in fact notified the supervisor on shift but could not recall the DSS's name as it was the next watch and not his immediate supervisor.²³ COPA attempted to independently verify this evidence, but was unable to confirm or deny the DA's claim. Therefore, Allegation 2 is **Not Sustained**.

C. Failing to complete required Department reports regarding the incident.

COPA finds Allegation 3 against DA Raehl **Sustained**. Detention facilities general procedures and responsibilities states Detention Aides are required to conduct a visual check of each arrestee every 15 minutes, record the time of each inspection, a concise statement of conditions found, notable occurrences, actions taken, if any, and record the initials and employee identification number on the Daily Prisoner Log record.²⁴ COPA requested a copy of DA Raehl's Daily Prisoner Log Record. The copy retrieved for July 16, 2020, 3rd watch has "Normal" under

¹⁹ For a definition of COPA's findings and standards of proof, see Appendix B.

²⁰ Att. 27 G03-02 Use of force (III.B.)

²¹ Att. 27 G03-02 Use of force (III.B.4.)

²² Att. 26 S06-01-02 (III.B.27.) Detention Facilities General Procedures and Responsibilities

²³ Att. 21 DA Raehl COPA statement_12.6.23 (Pg.14, LN. 14-22)

²⁴ Att. 26 S06-01-02 (III. B. 32) Detention Facilities General Procedures and Responsibilities

observations, and was initialed by DA Raehl, Employee# [REDACTED]. No comment about the incident involving [REDACTED] was reported on the Log which is in violation of Special Order 06-01-02 (III. B. 32) detention facilities general procedures and responsibilities. Therefore, COPA finds Allegation 3 is **Sustained**.

III. DISCIPLINARY RECOMMENDATION

a. Detention Aide George Raehl

i. Complimentary and Disciplinary History²⁵

Detention Aide George Raehl has received five total complimentary awards, including two complimentary letters and one honorable mention. DA Raehl does not have a record of disciplinary or sustained cases.

ii. Recommended Discipline

COPA has considered DA Raehl's complimentary and disciplinary as well as the totality of the circumstances in this case. COPA recommends a suspension of up to 30 days.

Approved:

[REDACTED]

Sharday Jackson
Deputy Chief Administrator – Chief Investigator

January 23, 2024

Date

²⁵ Att. 24

Appendix ACase Details

Date/Time/Location of Incident:	July 16, 2020 /9:48 pm / 2255 E 103rd St, (004th District Station)
Date/Time of COPA Notification:	July 16, 2020 / 10:43 p.m.
Involved Member #1:	Detention Aide George Raehl, Employee ID# [REDACTED], Unit: 004, Gender: Male, Race: White.
Involved Individual #1:	[REDACTED] Male, Black.

Applicable Rules

- 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 3:** Any failure to promote the Department's efforts to implement its policy or accomplish its goals.
- Rule 5:** Failure to perform any duty.
- 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 10:** Inattention to duty.
- Rule 14:** Making a false report, written or oral.
- Rule 38:** Unlawful or unnecessary use or display of a weapon.
- Rule __:** *[Insert text of any additional rule(s) violated]*

Applicable Policies and Laws

- General Order G03-02, Use of Force (effective February 29, 2020 to April 1, 2021).
- Special Order S06-01-02, Detention Facilities General Procedures and Responsibilities (effective September 9, 2019 to August 17, 2020.)

Appendix B

Definition of COPA’s Findings and Standards of Proof

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 a proposition is proved.²⁶ For example, if the evidence gathered in an investigation establishes that it is more likely that the conduct complied with CPD 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.”²⁷

²⁶ 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 is found to be more probably true than not).

²⁷ *People v. Coan*, 2016 IL App (2d) 151036, ¶ 28 (quoting Illinois Pattern Jury Instructions, Criminal, No. 4.19 (4th ed. 2000)).

Appendix C

Transparency and Publication Categories

Check all that apply:

- Abuse of Authority
- Body Worn Camera Violation
- Coercion
- Death or Serious Bodily Injury in Custody
- Domestic Violence
- Excessive Force
- Failure to Report Misconduct
- False Statement
- Firearm Discharge
- Firearm Discharge – Animal
- Firearm Discharge – Suicide
- Firearm Discharge – Unintentional
- First Amendment
- Improper Search and Seizure – Fourth Amendment Violation
- Incidents in Lockup
- Motor Vehicle Incidents
- OC Spray Discharge
- Search Warrants
- Sexual Misconduct
- Taser Discharge
- Unlawful Denial of Access to Counsel
- Unnecessary Display of a Weapon
- Use of Deadly Force – other
- Verbal Abuse
- Other Investigation