



Log # 2019-2214

FINAL SUMMARY REPORT¹

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On June 17, 2019, the Civilian Office of Police Accountability (COPA) received a complaint from [REDACTED] reporting alleged misconduct by a member of the Chicago Police Department (CPD). [REDACTED] alleged that on September 14, 2015, and in the Spring of 2017, Police Officer Matthew Johnson pushed a dresser drawer into her stomach, grabbed her by the arms, and pushed her into a kitchen counter.² Following its investigation, COPA reached Not Sustained findings regarding the allegations made against Officer Matthew Johnson.

II. SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE³

Matthew and [REDACTED] on March 31, 2007. Three children were born during the course of [REDACTED]: [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED]. The Johnsons officially [REDACTED] on May 9, 2017. Officer Johnson packed up his belongings and moved out of their apartment. The minor children remained with [REDACTED] and they developed a parenting agreement as a part of [REDACTED]. Their [REDACTED] was finalized April 17, 2019.

COPA interviewed [REDACTED] in which she described three incidents that led to the allegations. [REDACTED] reported that most of their [REDACTED] problems started when she was pregnant with their third child, [REDACTED]. Officer Johnson became distant and began doing things that [REDACTED] was unaware of such as applying for law school, going out after class, and opening bank accounts.

On September 14, 2015, Officer Johnson and [REDACTED] were engaged in a verbal altercation when Officer Johnson began moving [REDACTED] belongings into the children's room without her permission. She was pregnant with [REDACTED] at this time. While moving one of her dresser drawers out of their bedroom into a narrow hallway, Officer Johnson walked into [REDACTED] without stopping.⁴ [REDACTED] attempted to talk to Officer Johnson, but he did not want to engage in conversation. [REDACTED] stated she stood in front of the Officer Johnson

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 One or more of these allegations fall within COPA's jurisdiction pursuant to Chicago Municipal Code § 2-78-120. Therefore, COPA determined it would be the primary investigative agency in this matter.

³ The following is a summary of what COPA finds most likely occurred during this incident. This summary utilized information from several different sources, including body worn camera (BWC) footage, case and arrest reports, and interviews.

⁴ Att.2 at 23:09 to 24:20.

assuming he would stop to communicate with her, but that did not happen. Officer Johnson continued to walk into [REDACTED] causing the dresser drawer to bump her stomach. [REDACTED] said Officer Johnson was not forcefully pushing the drawer into her.⁵

Around the same time, [REDACTED] stated she and Officer Johnson was involved in a verbal altercation when she tried to grabbed Officer Johnson to keep him in the bathroom with her.⁶ She said Officer Johnson grabbed her arms, but she did not remember what happened next. Officer Johnson left the bathroom and [REDACTED] began hitting herself on the floor because she was upset. Officer Johnson began recording [REDACTED] but [REDACTED] did not see the video, only the flash on the back of his phone. Officer Johnson called [REDACTED] parents to come to their home and check on her out of concern for her wellbeing.

[REDACTED] reported an incident around March or April 2017, in which she and Officer Johnson argued in the kitchen in front of [REDACTED]. During the argument, [REDACTED] noticed their dog had something in its mouth, so she tapped the dog on top of his head. After tapping the dog, Officer Johnson pushed her into the kitchen counter. She was able to catch herself and did not sustain any injuries.⁷ [REDACTED] said she did not want to report Officer Johnson because of concerns that it may jeopardize his employment with the Department.

In his own statement to COPA, Officer Johnson reported he did not recall any of these events due to the amount of time that had passed.⁸ Officer Johnson said he and [REDACTED] were still going to court for child support issues, but they do not communicate regularly. There is a parenting agreement in place for Officer Johnson to pick up his children. Officer Johnson said during the time he and [REDACTED] were involved they had disagreements, but it never once got physical.

III. ALLEGATIONS

Police Officer Matthew Johnson:

1. Pushed a dresser drawer into [REDACTED] stomach without justification.
 - Not Sustained
2. Grabbed [REDACTED] by the arms without justification.
 - Not Sustained
3. Pushed [REDACTED] into a kitchen counter without justification.
 - Not Sustained

IV. CREDIBILITY ASSESSMENT

⁵ Att. 2 at 24:53.

⁶ Att.2 at 29:02.

⁷ Att. 2 at 33:15.

⁸ Att. 1.

This investigation did not reveal any evidence that caused COPA to doubt the credibility of any individuals who provided statements. A significant amount of time passed between these alleged incidents and the start of this investigation. Officer Johnson related he did not recall any of these specific incidents, and COPA does not have any reason to doubt the veracity of that statement.

V. ANALYSIS⁹

COPA finds allegations # 1 -3 against Officer Matthew Johnson, in that he pushed a dresser drawer into [REDACTED] stomach, grabbed [REDACTED] by the arms, and pushed [REDACTED] into a kitchen counter, **not sustained**. In her statements to COPA, [REDACTED] described several incidents where arguments between her and Officer Johnson led to physical contact. She did not sustain any injuries during these incidents and did not tell anyone what happened until she filed this complaint. She was not able to fully describe each of the incidents and Officer Johnson was unable to recall anything specific. He acknowledged there were arguments during their relationship but said it never got physical. Even by [REDACTED] own description, it is not clear if Officer Johnson's actions were forceful/intentional. There is therefore insufficient evidence to prove or disprove the allegations against Officer Johnson.

Approved:



Shannon Hayes
Director of Investigations

July 3, 2024

Date

⁹ For a definition of COPA's findings and standards of proof, see Appendix B.

Appendix A**Case Details**

Date/Time/Location of Incident:	September 14, 2015/ [REDACTED], [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
Date/Time of COPA Notification:	July 17, 2019/ 07:21 pm
Involved Member #1:	Matthew Johnson, star # 14518, employee ID# [REDACTED], July 9, 2007, 020 District, Male, White
Involved Individual #1:	[REDACTED] Female, White

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

- *[Directive #]: [Directive Name] (effective [date] to [date (or present)])*

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.¹⁰ 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.”¹¹

¹⁰ 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).

¹¹ *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