



CIVILIAN OFFICE OF POLICE ACCOUNTABILITY

INTEGRITY • TRANSPARENCY • INDEPENDENCE • TIMELINESS

Log # 2025-0000698

FINAL SUMMARY REPORT¹

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On February 11, 2025, the Civilian Office of Police Accountability (COPA) received an Initiation Report from Lieutenant Dean Claeson reporting alleged misconduct by a member of the Chicago Police Department (CPD).² Lt. Claeson alleged that on February 11, 2025, during the course of [REDACTED] arrest, Officer Leticia Ceron grabbed and pulled [REDACTED] braids while escorting him out of a residence.³ Upon review of the evidence, COPA served an additional allegation that Sergeant (Sgt.) Nicholas Rumsa failed to intervene and/or report the misconduct.

Following its investigation, COPA reached a sustained finding regarding the allegation against Officer Ceron, and a not sustained finding regarding the allegation against Sgt. Rumsa.

II. SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE⁴

On the evening of February 11, 2025, [REDACTED] called 911 to request assistance in serving her ex-partner, [REDACTED] with an emergency order of protection.⁵ Officers Ryan Harrison and Leticia Ceron were dispatched to [REDACTED], where they met with [REDACTED] and her son outside the apartment complex. Sgt. Rumsa also arrived on scene at the same time, as he had heard the radio transmissions and knew a supervisor would be needed to serve [REDACTED].⁶ [REDACTED] explained to the officers that she obtained an order of protection earlier that day, and she wanted [REDACTED] to be served with the order and to leave her home.⁷ Sgt. Rumsa left the scene shortly after arriving to make his way back to the station and obtain the forms needed to properly serve [REDACTED]. Officers Harrison and Ceron waited downstairs with [REDACTED] until Sgt. Rumsa arrived back on scene, at which point they proceeded up the stairs to the second-floor apartment.⁸ [REDACTED] unlocked the apartment door and stated that [REDACTED] was in their son's room, which was past the kitchen.

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 Att. 1.

³ 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.

⁴ The following is a summary of what COPA finds most likely occurred during this incident. This summary utilized information from several different sources, including BWC footage, police reports, civilian interviews, and officer interviews.

⁵ Att. 7.

⁶ Att. 41, pg. 6, lns. 11 to 23.

⁷ Att. 11 at 2:12 to 17:40; Att. 9 at 2:10 to 17:30; Att. 23 at 2:12 to 3:08.

⁸ Att. 9 at 17:00 to 18:21.

Officers Harrison and Ceron entered the son's bedroom, where [REDACTED] was located on a chair on the far-right side of the room.⁹ Once Officers Harrison and Ceron were in the bedroom, they began to explain to [REDACTED] why they were there and that he needed to leave the apartment.¹⁰ [REDACTED] refused to let the officers explain what was going on and he refused to exit the apartment. Officers Michael Montoya, Jesus Aguilera, Hector DeLeon, and several other officers made their way into the bedroom to assist. Sgt. Rumsa attempted to speak with [REDACTED] in the bedroom, but [REDACTED] was uncooperative.¹¹ [REDACTED] continued to state many times that he was not leaving the apartment, and the officers could not force him to do so. Officer Ceron later told COPA that she hoped the presence of the other officers and a sergeant would persuade [REDACTED] to leave the apartment without incident.¹²

After numerous attempts to get [REDACTED] to leave the apartment, Officers Harrison, Ceron, Montoya, Aguilera, and DeLeon decided to place [REDACTED] under arrest.¹³ When the officers attempted to take [REDACTED] into custody, he resisted by pulling away and stiffening his body, making it difficult for the officers to handcuff him.¹⁴ Officer Ceron was able to get one handcuff on [REDACTED] before she handed her handcuffs to another officer.¹⁵ Officer Ceron then grabbed [REDACTED] by the hair, bending him forward, hoping to gain more control so the officers could complete the handcuffing.¹⁶ While Officer Ceron maintained a hold on [REDACTED] hair, officers were able to place him in handcuffs.

After [REDACTED] was handcuffed, the other officers let Officer Ceron know that the handcuffs were on, but Officer Ceron continued to hold onto [REDACTED] hair as they began to exit apartment.¹⁷ [REDACTED] could be heard saying, "stop pulling my hair" and "why are you pulling my hair" many times.¹⁸ Officer Ceron continued to hold onto [REDACTED] braids, at times gripping his hair with both hands, as she escorted him down two flights of stairs.¹⁹ (See Figures 1 to 3, below.) Officer Ceron told COPA the staircase was very narrow, allowing one person at a time, so she decided she would be the officer in front of [REDACTED] to guide him down.²⁰ Furthermore, Officer Ceron stated [REDACTED] was thrashing his body around, which was a safety concern due to their elevated position, as [REDACTED] could attempt to throw himself or an officer over the railing.²¹ Officer Ceron stated that she released her grip on [REDACTED] hair once they made it to the ground floor and out of the lobby area door.²²

⁹ Att. 9 at 18:30; Att. 11 at 18:38.

¹⁰ Att. 9 at 18:40 to 20:45; Att. 11 at 18:40 to 20:45.

¹¹ Att. 25 at 2:53 to 6:53.

¹² Att. 48, pg. 11, lns. 5 to 22.

¹³ Att. 25 at 6:50.

¹⁴ Atts. 2, 10, 12, 14, 16 and 18.

¹⁵ Att. 11 at 30:15 to 30:22; Att. 48, pg. 15, lns. 6 to 14.

¹⁶ Att. 54; Att. 9 at 30:22 to 30:39; Att. 11 at 30:24 to 30: 38; Att. 15 at 11:35 to 11:50; Att. 48, pgs. 15 to 16.

¹⁷ Att. 11 at 30:43 to 30:51.

¹⁸ Att. 11 at 30:23 to 31:12.

¹⁹ Atts. 52 to 58; Att. 9 at 30:50 to 31:15; Att. 15 at 12:00 to 12:20; Att. 11 at 30:50 to 31:10.

²⁰ Att. 48, pg. 18, lns. 1 to 10.

²¹ Att. 48, pg. 18, lns. 10 to 16.

²² Att. 48, pg. 18, lns. 17 to 23.

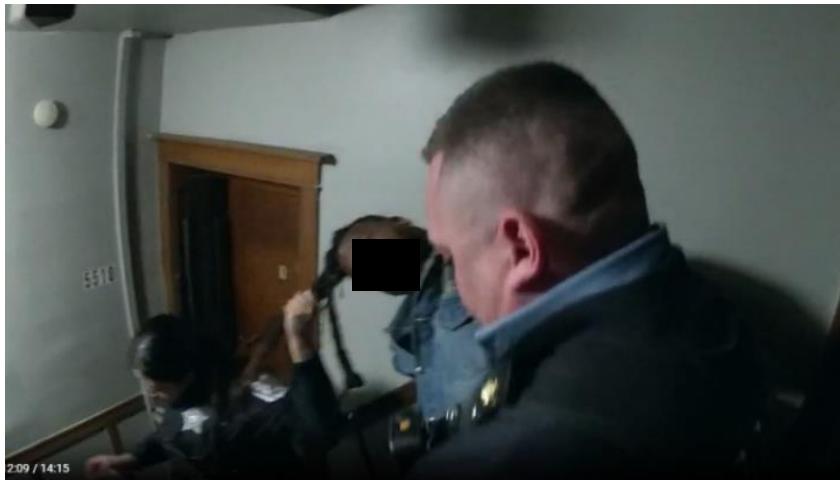


Figure 1: Screenshot from Officer Hector DeLeon's BWC showing Officer Ceron pulling [REDACTED] down the stairs by the hair. (Att. 55.)

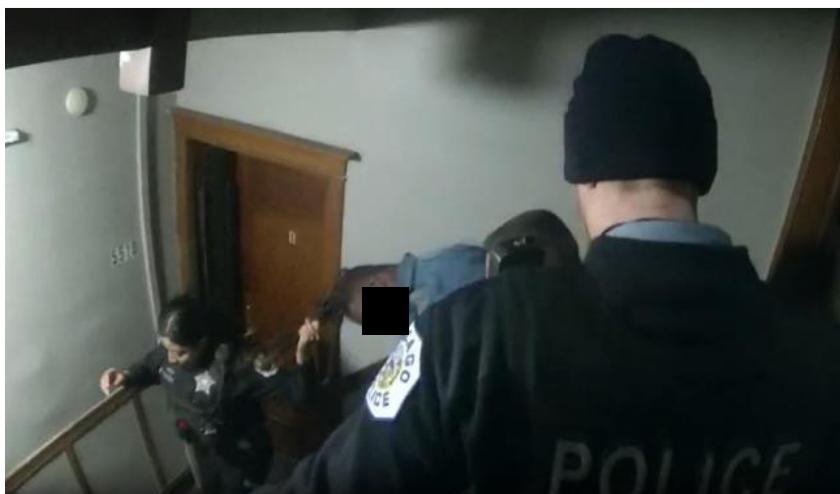


Figure 2: Screenshot from Officer Ryan Harrison's BWC showing Officer Ceron pulling [REDACTED] down the stairs by the hair. (Att. 57.)

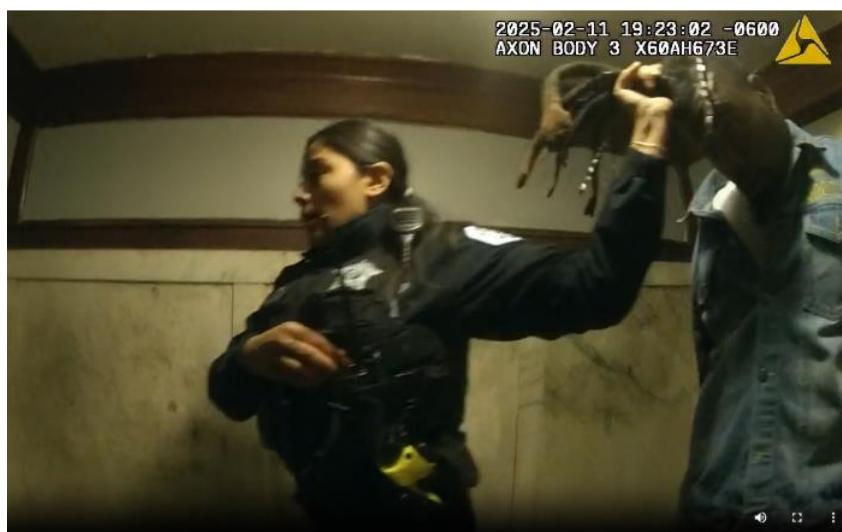


Figure 3: Screenshot from Officer Christian Neyland's BWC showing Officer Ceron leading [REDACTED] out of the apartment vestibule by the hair. (Att. 52.)

Officers Ceron and Harrison transported [REDACTED] to 7th District station where he was processed. Officer Ceron sustained a minor laceration to a finger on her left hand but did not seek any medical attention.²³ [REDACTED] did not sustain any visible injuries during the incident.

Lt. Claeson subsequently reviewed the Tactical Response Report (TRR) documenting Officer Ceron's use of force against [REDACTED]. He noted that after officers had gained control of [REDACTED] Officer Ceron continued to pull [REDACTED] braids while leading him down two flights of stairs. Lt. Claeson concluded that Officer Ceron's use of force appeared to be "excessive and not within department control tactics and use of force policy."²⁴

III. ALLEGATIONS

Officer Leticia Ceron:

1. Pulling [REDACTED] hair without justification.
 - Sustained, Violation of Rules 2, 3, 6, 8, and 9.

Sgt. Nicholas Rumsa:

1. Failing to intervene in and/or report Officer Leticia Ceron's use of force.
 - Not Sustained

IV. CREDIBILITY ASSESSMENT

The credibility of an individual relies primarily on two factors: 1) the individual's truthfulness and 2) the reliability of the individual's account. The first factor addresses the honesty of the individual making the statement, while the second factor speaks to the individual's ability to accurately perceive the event at the time of the incident and then accurately recall the event from memory.

As part of this investigation, COPA interviewed Officer Montoya on April 21, 2025, Sgt. Rumsa on April 24, 2025, Officer Harrison on May 21, 2025, and Officer Ceron on June 3, 2025. The involved CPD members provided accounts of this incident that were largely consistent with each other and with the available BWC recordings and reports. Thus, COPA finds the members' statements about this incident generally credible. Furthermore, this investigation did not reveal any additional evidence that caused COPA to question the credibility of any of the sworn individuals who provided statements regarding the use of force allegations.

COPA interviewed [REDACTED] on March 28, 2025.²⁵ COPA found [REDACTED] to be candid and forthcoming during her interview; she noted the unnecessary nature of the hair pulling while also acknowledging that she wanted [REDACTED] out of her residence.²⁶ [REDACTED] account was also consistent with the available BWC recordings and CPD reports.

²³ Att. 48, pg. 19, lns. 1 to 22.

²⁴ Att. 12, pg. 6.

²⁵ Att. 33 and 34.

²⁶ Att. 34, pgs. 3 to 4, 6, and 10 to 12.

████████████████████ was not interviewed on the advice of his counsel.²⁷

V. ANALYSIS²⁸

a. Officer Ceron

COPA finds allegation #1 against Officer Ceron, that she pulled ██████████ hair without justification, is **sustained**. CPD policy provides that members are only authorized to use force that is objectively reasonable, necessary, and proportional, under the totality of the circumstances, to ensure the safety of a member or a third person, stop an attack, make an arrest, control a person, or prevent escape.²⁹ This means that CPD members may use only the amount of force necessary to serve a lawful purpose. The amount and type of force used must be proportional to the threat, actions, and level of resistance a person offers.³⁰ Furthermore, CPD policy prohibits members from using force against a person who is fully restrained and controlled with handcuffs or other restraining devices, unless the member must immediately act to prevent injury or escape.³¹

Here, ██████████ was an active resister when he was inside the apartment, as he attempted to avoid physical control by pulling away from the officers and stiffening his body.³² Stiffening of ██████████ arms did not allow for officers to handcuff him using one set of cuffs, but rather they had to use two sets of handcuffs to fully secure ██████████.³³ These initial actions permitted Officer Ceron to use force to overcome ██████████ resistance and place him into custody. However, as Officer Ceron escorted ██████████ to the CPD vehicle, she continued to grab and pull ██████████ by his hair, down two flights of narrow staircases.³⁴ Officer Ceron told COPA the staircase was very narrow, allowing one person at a time, so she decided she would be the officer in front of ██████████.³⁵ She explained that she maintained control of ██████████ hair because he was thrashing his body around, they were in an elevated position, and ██████████ could have attempted to throw himself or an officer over the railing.³⁶

The available evidence, however, does not support Officer Ceron's justification for pulling ██████████ hair as she led him down the stairs. The BWC video shows that ██████████ was handcuffed behind his back and flanked by officers, including one officer who was behind ██████████ and physically holding onto him. ██████████ was cooperative in walking down the stairs

²⁷ See Note CO-1431857 and Att. 49.

²⁸ For a definition of COPA's findings and standards of proof, *see* Appendix B.

²⁹ Att. 59, G03-02 (III)(B), De-escalation, Response to Resistance, and Uses of Force (effective June 28, 2023, to present).

³⁰ Att. 59, G03-02 (III)(B)(3).

³¹ Att. 60, G03-02-01 (II)(G), Response to Resistance and Force Options (effective June 28, 2023, to present).

³² Att. 2, pg. 4; Att. 30, pg. 2; Att. 37, pgs. 11 to 12; Att. 16, pg. 2.

³³ Att. 37, pg. 12, lns. 2 to 7; Att. 10 pg. 2.

³⁴ Att. 11 at 30:48 to 31:22.

³⁵ Att. 48, pg. 18, lns. 1 to 10.

³⁶ Att. 48, pg. 18, lns. 10 to 16.

and no longer presented a significant level of resistance. Instead, he repeatedly asked Officer Ceron, “Why are you pulling my hair? I already got the cuffs on.”³⁷

While it was reasonable for Officer Ceron to use force to gain control of [REDACTED] in order to handcuff him, she continued to use that force by pulling [REDACTED] by the hair down two flights of stairs. COPA finds Officer Ceron’s actions were not objectively reasonable, necessary, or proportional, and her use of force caused more safety concerns than it alleviated. This is consistent with the assessments of Officer Ceron’s supervisors, who reviewed the relevant BWC footage and also concluded that Officer Ceron’s use of force did not comply with CPD policy.³⁸

For these reasons, COPA finds that Officer Ceron’s use of force violated rules 2, 3, 6, 8, and 9; accordingly, this allegation is sustained.

b. Sgt. Rumsa

COPA finds Allegation #1 against Sgt. Rumsa, that he failed to intervene in and/or report Officer Ceron’s use of force, is **not sustained**. CPD supervisors are responsible for the performance of subordinate members directly observed or under their direct command.³⁹ When a supervisor observes a CPD member engage in misconduct, they must ensure a complete and comprehensive investigation is initiated in accordance with CPD complaint and disciplinary procedures.⁴⁰

Here, Sgt. Rumsa told COPA that he did not recall observing Officer Ceron’s actions toward [REDACTED] while on scene.⁴¹ The available video footage shows Sgt. Rumsa stepped out of the bedroom and into the apartment building’s hallway while [REDACTED] was being handcuffed.⁴² Additionally, Sgt. Rumsa stayed in the hallway as the officers escorted [REDACTED] down the stairs and could be seen following all of the officers out of the building.⁴³ COPA considered several factors in assessing the likelihood that Sgt. Rumsa may have been unable to observe what occurred, including the narrowness of the hallway and stairwell, the number of officers present that could have blocked his view, and his position on the stairs when they descended.

Because COPA cannot prove by a preponderance of evidence that Sgt. Rumsa observed Officer Ceron’s misconduct while on scene, and taking into consideration that a log number was obtained shortly after the incident, COPA finds the allegation against Sgt. Rumsa is not sustained.

³⁷ See, e.g., Att. 11 at 30:33 and 31:02.

³⁸ Att. 12; Att. 41, pg. 11, lns. 23 to 24.

³⁹ Att. 61, G01-09(III)(B), Supervisory Responsibilities (effective May 10, 2021, to June 30, 2025).

⁴⁰ Att. 61, G01-09(IV)(B)(1).

⁴¹ Att. 41, pg. 10, lns. 15 to 23. However, after Sgt. Rumsa reviewed the BWC footage of the incident, he acknowledged that Officer Ceron’s conduct was “obviously...outside of the use of force paradigm.” Att. 41, pg. 11, lns. 23 to 24.

⁴² Att. 25 at 7:07 to 7:31.

⁴³ Att. 25 at 7:31 to 8:05.

VI. DISCIPLINARY RECOMMENDATION

a. Officer Leticia Ceron

i. Complimentary and Disciplinary History⁴⁴

Officer Ceron has been employed as a CPD officer since February 16, 2021. She has received 17 various awards, including one Department Commendation and 15 Honorable Mentions. Officer Ceron has no finalized disciplinary history.

ii. Recommended Discipline

COPA has found that Officer Ceron violated Rules 2, 3, 6, 8, and 9 when she pulled [REDACTED] down the stairs by the hair without justification. In aggravation, Officer Ceron's actions were a clear and unambiguous violation of CPD's use of force policy. She used excessive force against [REDACTED] when he was fully restrained, on a staircase, and vulnerable. Additionally, while Officer Ceron acknowledged pulling [REDACTED] hair and offered an explanation for her actions, she did not express remorse or contrition during her COPA statement.

In mitigation, COPA notes that Officer Ceron had been a police officer for just four years at the time of this incident, and some of her errors can be attributed to inexperience and/or inadequate training.

For these reasons, and considering Officer Ceron's complimentary and lack of disciplinary history, COPA recommends she receive a **1 to 29 day suspension and retraining** regarding CPD's use of force policy.

Approved:



Steffany Hreno
Acting Deputy Chief Administrator

10/17/2025

Date

⁴⁴ Atts. 50 to 51.

Appendix A**Case Details**

Date/Time/Location of Incident:	February 11, 2025/ 7:26 pm/ [REDACTED] Chicago, IL, 60636
Date/Time of COPA Notification:	February 11, 2025/ 9:17 pm
Accused Member #1:	Leticia Ceron, star #16275, employee ID # [REDACTED] DOA: February 16, 2021, Unit: 007, female, white Hispanic
Accused Member #2:	Nicholas Rumsa, star #1371, employee ID # [REDACTED] DOA: December 16, 2009, Unit: 007, male, white
Involved Member #1	Michael Montoya, star #18760, employee ID # [REDACTED] DOA: February 16, 2021, Unit: 007, male, white Hispanic
Involved Member #2	Ryan Harrison, star #7331, employee ID # [REDACTED] DOA: January 31, 2022, Unit: 007, male, 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.

Applicable Policies and Laws

- G03-02, De-escalation, Response to Resistance, and Uses of Force (effective June 28, 2023, to present).
- G03-02-01, Response to Resistance and Force Options (effective June 28, 2023, to present)
- G01-09, Supervisory Responsibilities (effective May 10, 2021, to June 30, 2025).

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.⁴⁵ 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.”⁴⁶

⁴⁵ 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).

⁴⁶ *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