



Log # 2024-0004487

FINAL SUMMARY REPORT¹

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On May 13, 2024, Sgt. Eriberto Claudio initiated this Log Number on behalf of ██████████² ██████████ alleged that at approximately 8:43 pm on Friday May 10, 2024 in the vicinity of 3844 W. Flournoy Avenue, two Chicago Police Department (CPD) officers, now known to be Officers Cordell Curtis and Darrell Willis, pushed him in the chest and ignored his requests for their names and badge numbers.³ In his statement to COPA,⁴ ██████████ added that the two officers improperly searched nearby residential premises and vehicles, and that Officer Curtis directed profanity at him and struck him with a CPD vehicle. Upon review of the evidence, COPA served additional allegations that the officers improperly failed to activate their body worn cameras (BWC) while engaged in law enforcement activity. COPA reached sustained findings against Officer Curtis regarding the allegations of driving without due regard and not sustained and unfounded findings for the remaining allegations against both officers.

II. SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE⁵

██████████ was leaving a friend's house on Flournoy Avenue, waiting for an rideshare service when two marked CPD vehicles arrived, and four officers exited.⁶ There was some verbal interaction between the officers, ██████████ and other members of the public who were present. Officers looked into the windows of parked cars with their flashlights. Officer Curtis opened the door to ██████████ parked car and looked inside. The conversation between the officers and the involved members of the public became heated.

Officers Curtis and Willis entered their CPD vehicle to leave. ██████████ was positioned in front of the vehicle driven by Officer Curtis and appeared to be using his cellphone.⁷ Officer Curtis

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, pg. 2.

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 Atts. 14, 21.

⁵ 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 interview, officer interviews, 9-1-1 calls, ambulance and medical records.

⁶ Att. 21, pg. 3, ln. 20 to pg. 4, ln. 2.

⁷ Att. 12, at 1:34 to 1:43. ██████████ was holding his cellphone in front of his face and not to his ear. Because the officers' BWCs were not activated at this point, they did not capture ██████████ telephone conversation. ██████████ first call to 911

placed the CPD vehicle into gear, turned the steering wheel to the left and the police vehicle moved forward, appearing to strike ██████ on the right side of his body.⁸ ██████ fell backwards to the ground.⁹ Officers Curtis and Willis exited the vehicle and activated their BWCs.¹⁰ ██████ called 911 a second time and reported that an officer “ran” him over.¹¹

An ambulance transported ██████ to ██████ Hospital where he refused care and walked out of the emergency room.¹² ██████ went to ██████ Hospital the following day complaining of persistent headache and neck pain and some pain in his right knee.¹³ Medical personnel determined that ██████ had a concussion but had not sustained any acute intracranial abnormality or cervical spine fracture,¹⁴ and found “no acute fracture or dislocation of the right knee.”¹⁵

III. ALLEGATIONS

Officer Darrell Willis:

1. Pushed ██████ without justification.
 - **Unfounded**
2. Searched residential premises without justification.
 - **Not Sustained**
3. Searched vehicles without justification.
 - **Not Sustained**
4. Failed to provide his name and badge number upon request by ██████ in violation of Rule 37.
 - **Not Sustained**
5. Failed to activate his Body Worn Camera for the entirety of the period during which he was engaged in a law enforcement activity.
 - **Not Sustained**

Officer Cordell Curtis:

1. Directed profanity towards ██████ without justification.
 - **Not Sustained**
2. Pushed ██████ without justification.
 - **Not Sustained**

coincided with the time of the vehicle strike and, therefore, it was more likely than not that ██████ was talking to the 911 call taker when Officer Curtis struck him with the CPD vehicle.

⁸ Att. 11, at 1:21 to 1:23; Att. 12, at 1:51 to 1:52.

⁹ Att. 12, at 1:53.

¹⁰ Att. 12, at 1:57 to 2:00; Att. 11, 1:27 to 2:00.

¹¹ Att. 30, at 00:12 to 00:29.

¹² Att. 10, pg. 2.

¹³ Att. 36, pg. 16.

¹⁴ Att. 36, pg. 27.

¹⁵ Att. 36, pg. 28.

3. Struck [REDACTED] with a CPD vehicle without justification.
 - **Not Sustained**
4. Drove without due regard for the safety of all persons in violation of General Order G03-03.
 - **Sustained, Violation of Rules 2, 3, 6, and 10**
5. Searched residential premises without justification.
 - **Not Sustained**
6. Searched vehicles without justification.
 - **Not Sustained**
7. Failed to provide his name and badge number upon request by [REDACTED] in violation of Rule 37.
 - **Not Sustained**
8. Failed to activate his Body Worn Camera for the entirety of the period during which he was engaged in a law enforcement activity.
 - **Not Sustained**

IV. CREDIBILITY ASSESSMENT

The credibility of an individual relies primarily on two factors: the individual's truthfulness and 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.

COPA interviewed [REDACTED] Officer Curtis, Officer Willis, and witness Officer Jimmy Figueroa.¹⁶ Although there was no evidence to call the truthfulness of any of the individuals who did provide evidence into question, there were significant gaps in the evidence that called into question the ability of the witnesses to accurately recall events from memory. A lack of video evidence for the entirety of the incident impeded COPA's investigation.

V. ANALYSIS¹⁷

A. Allegations against Officer Willis

COPA finds the allegation that Officer Willis pushed [REDACTED] to be unfounded. Although [REDACTED] initially told Sgt. Claudio that both officers pushed him, he amended his allegation in his statement to COPA to specify that only Officer Curtis pushed him.

¹⁶ Atts. 14, 39, 40, and 46. COPA also attempted to interview non-CPD witnesses but we unable to do so. See CMS Notes CO-1413996, CO-1414087, CO-1417162, CO-1419282, CO-1419283, and CO-1419285. Attempts to recover supposed video evidence from the complainant (See CMS Note CO-1430764, as well as earlier notes cataloging the attempt to recover this supposed video evidence) suggested that perhaps the involved members of the public were unwilling to further cooperate with the COPA investigation.

¹⁷ For a definition of COPA's findings and standards of proof, see Appendix B.

COPA finds the remaining allegations against Officer Willis to be not sustained. ██████ alleged that Officer Willis searched vehicles and residences without justification and refused to provide his name and badge number. ██████ claimed that he video-recorded the incident and captured the alleged actions, ██████ failed to provide the video recording to COPA despite COPA's numerous attempts to obtain the video recording and the statements of the named civilian witnesses. In his statement to COPA, Officer Willis denied these allegations and BWC buffering footage partially corroborated his denial regarding the alleged searches. There is insufficient evidence to substantiate or rebut these allegations, so they are not sustained.

COPA also alleged that Officer Willis failed to activate his BWC while engaged in law enforcement activity. Officer Willis said he was initially engaging in a consensual encounter with someone on the street and did not have his camera activated. He turned the camera on after the vehicle made contact with ██████. It is not clear to COPA whether Officer Willis actually engaged in law enforcement action prior to his activation of the BWC, so this allegation is not sustained.

B. Allegations against Officer Curtis

Similarly, there is insufficient evidence to support the majority of the allegations against Officer Curtis, namely that he pushed and directed profanity at ██████ intentionally struck ██████ with a CPD vehicle, searched vehicles and residences without justification, and failed to provide his name and badge number). Officer Curtis did not activate his BWC prior to the traffic crash and the BWC buffer period did not capture any physical or verbal contact between Officer Curtis and ██████ and did not show Officer Curtis searching vehicles beyond looking inside them or residences.

Regarding the allegation that Officer Curtis failed to activate his BWC while engaged in law enforcement activity, COPA was unable to determine whether the pre-recorded activity amounted to the kind of law enforcement activity that requires activation of the BWC. CPD policy requires law-enforcement-related activities to be electronically recorded.¹⁸ Law-enforcement-related activities include, but are not limited to, responding to and engaging in calls for service, investigatory stops, traffic stops, foot and vehicle pursuits, arrests, use of force incidents, emergency vehicle responses where fleeing suspects or vehicles may be captured on video leaving the crime scene, high risk situations, and any other instances when enforcing the law.¹⁹ In this instance, Officer Curtis told COPA that he thought he saw "contraband" inside ██████ vehicle and opened the unlocked door of the vehicle to confirm; when the officer realized that the object he saw was not a weapon, he then closed the door.²⁰ The officer added that although initially he did not consider it necessary to activate his BWC, but acknowledged that, in retrospect, he should have

¹⁸ S03-14 (V)(A), Body Worn Cameras (effective August 8, 2024, to present).

¹⁹ S03-14 (II)(I).

²⁰ Att. 48, pg. 18, lns. 3 to 18.

activated his BWC when he opened the vehicle doors.²¹ COPA appreciates Officer Curtis' candor in his statement and his reflection on his own actions, but there is insufficient evidence to prove whether his failure to record this activity constitutes a violation of policy.

On the other hand, COPA concludes that Officer Curtis drove without due regard for the safety of all persons in violation of General Order G03-03.

CPD policy regarding vehicle emergency operating procedures allow for police vehicles to, for instance, exceed speed limits or disregard regulations governing direction of movement.²² To use these special privileges, the CPD member must be operating an authorized emergency vehicle, which is defined as "[a] marked police vehicle that has in operation emergency-roof lights and siren . . . that are used to respond to an emergency situation or to pursue an actual or suspected law violator."²³ Importantly, CPD policy does "not relieve Department members from the responsibility of driving with due regard for the safety of all persons", even when they are operating authorized emergency vehicles.²⁴

The essential facts are not in dispute: ██████ was positioned in front of the CPD vehicle driven by Officer Curtis after the officers entered the vehicle, Officer Curtis began to move the vehicle forward and turn it to the left, the CPD vehicle and ██████ collided. Officer Curtis was convinced that ██████ was *not* struck by the CPD vehicle, as such, but rather that ██████ intentionally jumped into the police vehicle.²⁵ On the other hand, Officer Willis spoke of the incident in a manner that was consistent with ██████ being struck by the CPD vehicle²⁶ and this interpretation is in closer accord with what is depicted on Officer Willis' BWC footage²⁷.

Officer Curtis told COPA that he turned the steering wheel to the left to ensure there was "nothing obstructing me, vehicles or people."²⁸ Officer Curtis initially believed that ██████ was "off to the right side of the vehicle,"²⁹ but after reviewing his partner's BWC footage, Officer Curtis acknowledged where ██████ was standing. Officer Curtis stated that he did not recall seeing ██████ in front of the CPD vehicle.³⁰

VI. DISCIPLINARY RECOMMENDATION

²¹ Att. 48, pg. 24, lns. 3 to 9.

²² G03-03 (III)(C)(3)(c and d) (citing 625 ILCS 5/11-205).

²³ G03-03 (III)(C)(2).

²⁴ G03-03 (III)(A) (emphasis omitted).

²⁵ Att. 48, pg. 14 ("Q. Could you -- when you say he "flopped on the vehicle," what do you -- do you mean by that? Do you -- is it your thought that he intentionally threw himself on to the vehicle? A. Yes, sir. Yeah. Without a doubt. I knew -- I know for sure that, like, he jumped on to the vehicle.").

²⁶ Att. 47, pg. 11, lns. 8 to 10.

²⁷ Att. 12, from 01:37 to 01:54.

²⁸ Att. 48, pg. 11, lns. 3 to 10.

²⁹ Att. 48, pg. 12, lns. 7 to 11.

³⁰ Att. 48, pg. 13, lns. 16 to 19.

a. Officer Cordell Curtis

In fashioning a recommendation, COPA may consider the nature of the disciplinary offense and its consequences, the nature of any property involved, the officer’s position, the officer’s complimentary and disciplinary history, as well as any information provided by any person impacted by the misconduct.

1. Complimentary and Disciplinary History³¹

Officer Curtis was appointed to CPD June 16, 2021, and has received 26 awards, including 22 honorable mentions. He received three SPARs in 2024, resulting in two reprimands and a one-day suspension. Two of those instances of sustained summary discipline involved preventable accidents. Indeed, the officer admitted having been involved in previous “fender benders” when he provided his statement to COPA.³²

2. Recommended Discipline

COPA recommends the officer **be suspended for a period of 1-29 days**. In aggravation, COPA notes Officer Curtis’ failure to take accountability for his actions in operating the vehicle, the fact that this incident involved a victim who is a member of the public who suffered from pain after the incident, the fact that his behavior prior to the sustained allegation escalated the incident, and these actions exposed CPD to civil liability and further erosion of public trust. Additionally, and perhaps most importantly, Officer Curtis was twice disciplined in 2024 for other driving-related misconduct, the same thing at issue in this incident. The only mitigating factor COPA identified is that Officer Curtis had a relatively short time with CPD at the time of this incident, which happened less than three years after he joined CPD.

Approved:



November 13, 2025

Shannon Hayes
Acting Deputy Chief Administrator – Chief Investigator

Date

³¹ Att. 51.

³² Att. 48, pg. 25, lns. 8 to 13.

Appendix A

Case Details

Date/Time/Location of Incident:	May 10, 2024 / 8:43 pm / 3844 W. Flournoy Street
Date/Time of COPA Notification:	May 13, 2024 / 7:08 pm
Involved Member #1:	CURTIS, Cordell; star #7722; employee ID# [REDACTED] Date of Appointment: June 16, 2021; Unit of Assignment: 010; ³³ Male; Black.
Involved Member #2:	WILLIS, Darrell; star #13798; employee ID# [REDACTED] Date of Appointment: June 16, 2021; Unit of Assignment: 018; Male; Black.
Involved Individual #1:	[REDACTED] DOB: [REDACTED], 1988; 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 37:** Failure of a member, whether on or off duty, to correctly identify himself by giving his name, rank and star number when so requested by other members of the Department or by a private citizen.

Applicable Policies and Laws

- G03-03: Emergency Use of Department Vehicles (effective March 18, 2022, to present)
- S03-14: Body Worn Cameras (effective December 29, 2023, to August 7, 2024)

³³ Currently detailed to Unit 214 (Deputy Chief – Area 4).

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.³⁴ 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.”³⁵

³⁴ 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).

³⁵ *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