



Log # 2020-314

FINAL SUMMARY REPORT¹

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On January 21, 2020, the Civilian Office of Police Accountability (COPA) received an Initiation Report² from the Chicago Police Department reporting alleged misconduct by a member of the Chicago Police Department (CPD). ██████████ alleged that on October 16, 2019, during a domestic dispute, her ██████████ Officer Cortney Jackson, physically abused her.³ Upon review of the evidence, COPA served additional allegations that Officer Jackson attempted to influence the outcome of the COPA investigation. Following its investigation, COPA reached sustained findings regarding all the allegations.

II. SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE⁴

On October 16, 2019, at approximately 0650 hours, CPD Officer Eric Stampley⁵ responded to the University of Chicago Hospital and met with Ms. ██████████ Ms. ██████████ reported that, during a domestic dispute, her ██████████ “Demitri” Jackson, (now known as Officer Cornelius Jackson)⁶ grabbed her by the neck, dragged her down the stairs, and stomped on her right leg. She stated that he also choked her until she thought she was about to lose consciousness. Ms. ██████████ made her way down the street and flagged down a University of Chicago campus police officer⁷ who transported her to the University of Chicago Hospital. She refused to provide a contact number to CPD and refused to have photos taken of her injuries.

According to medical records⁸, Ms. ██████████ provided medical personnel with the same account of the incident as she provided police officers. A physical examination of Ms. ██████████ revealed multiple scratches to anterior and lateral neck, right anterior jaw line, and superior chest

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 police reports, officer interviews, and ██████████ records.

⁵ Att. 2-4

⁶ Ms. ██████████ did not provide the responding officer with the accused’s first name. She also did not inform them that he was a Chicago Police Officer. This investigation revealed that the ██████████ was Cornelius Jackson and that he is a Chicago Police Officer.

⁷ Ms. ██████████ stated that she told the University Officer what happened, but she refused to do a report against the accused. The University of Chicago Police conducted a search of their CAD system and found no record of incidents occurring on October 16, 2019 in the vicinity of ██████████

⁸ Att. 10

wall.⁹ She also sustained a small hematoma, abrasion on the anterior right shin.¹⁰ The medical records state that Ms. [REDACTED] was interested in meeting with a domestic violence counselor and her discharge instructions included contact information for a counselor and indicated that she was going to stay with her daughter and felt safe in that situation.¹¹ The records also indicated her emotional distress was appropriate based on the events she described.¹² On November 15, 2020, Officer Stephanie Arroyo,¹³ who is a CPD Domestic Violence Coordinator,¹⁴ contacted Ms. [REDACTED] via letter. Ms. [REDACTED] responded in December 2019. At this time, Ms. [REDACTED] told the CAPS officer who answered her call that her [REDACTED] was a Chicago Police Officer, however, she still did not make contact with Officer Arroyo.¹⁵ She finally spoke to Ms. [REDACTED] approximately one month later. Ms. [REDACTED] related essentially the same information as she told the responding officer. She added that her [REDACTED] was a police officer assigned to VRI and he was harassing her via telephone. Officer Arroyo was now able to determine that the [REDACTED] was named Cortney Jackson. She also added that she distrusted the police due to her [REDACTED] being an officer. They made arrangements to meet in person, but Ms. [REDACTED] cancelled because she felt sick. When Officer Arroyo followed up approximately ten days later, Ms. [REDACTED] number was disconnected.¹⁷

Ms. [REDACTED] was scheduled to give a statement to COPA on May 3, 2023. However, on May 2, she called the assigned COPA investigator at 5:00pm and again at 9:13pm to say that she no longer wished to drop her complaint. She related a detailed account of the incident that was consistent with the statements she made to CPD and hospital personnel. She stated that while she briefly broke up with Officer Jackson following this incident, she and Officer Jackson are still in a dating relationship. Ms. [REDACTED] related that Officer Jackson told her that he had to appear at COPA regarding the incident that she reported. He provided Ms. [REDACTED] the R/T's contact information on a post-it note and told her that FOP related that she should tell COPA that she has moved on from the incident and does not wish to provide a statement. While neither the FOP or Officer Jackson told her to recant her story or provide misinformation, Officer Jackson did instruct her not to give a statement to COPA.

Ms. [REDACTED] stated that Officer Jackson's attack was unprovoked, and she did not strike or attack Officer Jackson before he assaulted her. Once outside of the building, she ran to a University of Chicago Police car that was parked nearby on 55th Street. She entered the vehicle and told the officer to drive off. Officer Jackson approached the vehicle and attempted to explain. She stated that the University of Chicago Officer told Officer Jackson words to the effect if, "I don't care if this is your girl. I am looking at the visual." Ms. [REDACTED] explained that her clothing

⁹ *Id.* at p. 7.

¹⁰ *Id.* at p. 8.

¹¹ *Id.* at p. 9.

¹² *Id.* at p.8.

¹³ Att. 14, 15. Officer Arroyo gave a statement to COPA on May 16, 2023.

¹⁴ Officer Arroyo reviews all domestic related case reports and reaches out to victims for services such as providing counseling services, information on obtaining Orders of Protections, housing and relocation services, etc

¹⁵ Officer Arroyo obtained the information from the CAPS Officer, informed her sergeant, and attempted to contact Ms. [REDACTED] but was unsuccessful.

¹⁶ : Officer Arroyo updated her lieutenant, who conducted a thorough search and determined the accused officer was Cortney Jackson, who was assigned to VRI at the time.

¹⁷ Att. 15, P. 18-19.

was disheveled, she had scratches on her neck, and she believes that her leg was bleeding. The University of Chicago Police Officer dropped her off at the hospital. Although the officer attempted to gather information from her to do a report, she did not cooperate. A black CPD Officer responded to the hospital and took her report. Ms. [REDACTED] who is a [REDACTED], stated that she injured her right leg and was unable to return to [REDACTED] until November 1, 2019.¹⁸ Ms. [REDACTED] related that she told [REDACTED]¹⁹ one of her former neighbors about the incident.

According to the Call Log²⁰ from the University of Chicago, on October 19, 2019, at approximately 5:33AM, University Officer Iman Saadiq escorted a civilian from 5500 S. Greenwood to 5800 S. Maryland. COPA contacted University Officer Saadiq²¹, who related that he vaguely recalls transporting a female citizen to the hospital to see her sister, but he did not recall anything additional about the incident. He stated that he did not recall having any interaction with a male citizen or police officer and he was unaware of any domestic violence incident that could have taken place.

In a statement to COPA on June 21, 2023, Officer Jackson²² told COPA that when he arrived home from work at approximately 11:30pm, Ms. [REDACTED] was already in the bed. After he took a shower, she confronted him about buying linen that he did not have the money for at the time. The couple argued for hours, and he admitted that, at times, it was elevated and probably heard by his neighbors. At some point, Officer Jackson told her that he was tired and needed sleep, and if he could not get any sleep, he would leave the apartment. Officer Jackson went to the dresser drawer to retrieve some personal belongings. Ms. [REDACTED] approached him and started returning the clothes to the drawer as he packed. Officer Jackson explained that he used one of his hands to grab the clothes and placed his right hand on Ms. Stephen's chest, preventing her from getting to him or grabbing his clothes. After Officer Jackson packed some clothing, he made his way to the front door. Ms. [REDACTED] attempted to refrain Officer Jackson from leaving out of the apartment by pushing and pulling on both him and the door. He said that he may have put his hands on her as he was trying to open the door, but he does not recall.

As Officer Jackson was leaving, Ms. [REDACTED] grabbed the front of his shirt, near the neck area, ripping his collar. Officer Jackson stated that he tried to turn around to go down the stairs, but Ms. [REDACTED] was still holding on to him. He had his back to the stairs and she was holding the front of his shirt, near the collar area. Somehow, both he and Ms. [REDACTED] tumbled down the stairs and Officer Jackson landed on top of her. Officer Jackson got up and tried to walk down the second flight of stairs leading to the front exit door. However, Ms. [REDACTED] once again, was able to catch him and grab hold of his shirt. Ms. [REDACTED] was crying loudly and pleading with him not to leave. The two of them struggled²³ at the front door, leading outside to the courtyard. Officer Jackson managed to open the door and squeeze through the crack with his bag. He stated that during the

¹⁸ According to [REDACTED] Attendance records, Ms. [REDACTED] was not present at work from the date of the incident until November 1, 2019. Att. 22.

¹⁹ Ms. [REDACTED] did not have any contact information for [REDACTED] and stated that [REDACTED] no longer resides in the building. COPA also conducted a canvass in an attempt to locate witnesses and/or video footage but were met with negative results.

²⁰ Att. 55

²¹ See CMS NOTES

²² Att. 19, 20

²³ Officer Jackson stated that Ms. [REDACTED] was pushing the door closed while he was trying to pull it open.

struggle, he never intentionally put his hand on her neck or face but may have done so while he had his arm up and she was moving around.²⁴

Officer Jackson went to his car and placed his bag inside, at which time, he saw Ms. [REDACTED] walk past him. He asked her where she was going, but she did not respond. Officer Jackson followed her while she walked from 53rd to 55th Street. Officer Jackson stated that Ms. [REDACTED] was crying the entire time and the two of them did not communicate. When she made it to 55th Street, she approached a University of Chicago police officer that was sitting inside of his squad car. He overheard Ms. [REDACTED] tell him that she wanted to visit her sister who works at the University of Chicago Hospital. Officer Jackson, who was now standing the passenger side of the squad car, introduced²⁵ himself to the University of Chicago officer and told him that Ms. [REDACTED] was his girlfriend. The officer told Officer Jackson words to the effect of he “got it from here,”²⁶ and he was going to give her a ride to the hospital to see her sister. When the officer pulled off with Ms. [REDACTED] inside, Officer Jackson went to his vehicle and left.

He reported that when he returned to the apartment a few days later, Ms. [REDACTED] was there. At some point after he returned home, she told him that she saw a doctor while she was the hospital.²⁷ Officer Jackson stated that he was not injured during the incident, and he did not observe any injuries to Ms. [REDACTED] nor did she complain of any. Officer Jackson stated that he and Ms. [REDACTED] discussed a few details of the incident, but they did not discuss all the details. He added that a few months after the incident, Ms. [REDACTED] told him that COPA had been talking to her and harassing her, but she was ignoring COPA’s calls.

Officer Jackson related that he was notified of the allegations of this investigation by his Sergeant, about a month prior to his statement to COPA.²⁸ He then went to meet with his FOP representative. While he was at their office, Ms. [REDACTED] called, and he did not answer. When he saw Ms. [REDACTED] later, she began questioning Officer Jackson about his whereabouts earlier that day and accusing him of cheating. Officer Jackson then revealed that he was at the FOP office regarding the incident between him and her. Ms. [REDACTED] reminded him that she did not want to have anything to do with the investigation. Officer Jackson then handed Ms. [REDACTED] a piece of paper, with the COPA’s investigator’s name and phone number and asked her to call the investigator. Officer Jackson stated that he did not tell Ms. [REDACTED] not to cooperate with the investigation or tell her to lie about the incident. Officer Jackson’s attorney provided COPA with a screenshot of texts from the morning of May 3, 2023. In these texts, Officer Jackson said he was meeting with the FOP lawyer, and Ms. [REDACTED] replied “I don’t want to pursue with this I have move pass it![sic]”.²⁹ Officer Jackson categorically denied all allegations. He stated that the only

²⁴ Att. 20, p. 66, ln 2-24.

²⁵ Officer Jackson stated that although he doesn’t recall, it is possible that he told the University officer that he was a police officer.

²⁶ Att. 20, p. 63.

²⁷ Officer Jackson stated that Ms. [REDACTED] did not take a leave of absence or any excessive number of days off following the incident.

²⁸ COPA served allegations on Officer Jackson through his commanding officer on April 27, 2023 and Officer Jackson signed acknowledgment on April 29, 2023. At the time his statement was scheduled for May 4, 2023. Att. 16.

²⁹ Att. 21.

physical contact was when he placed his hands on her chest when he was removing items from the dresser.

III. ALLEGATIONS

Police Officer Cortney Jackson:

1. Grabbed her by the neck and/or applied pressure to her neck without justification
Sustained, Violation of Rules 2, 8 and 9
2. Dragged her down a flight of stairs.
Sustained, Violation of Rules 2, 8 and 9
5. Threw her to the ground.
Sustained, Violation of Rules 2, 8 and 9
5. Stomped and/or kicked her on the leg.
Sustained, Violation of Rules 2, 8 and 9
5. Attempted to influence the outcome of the COPA investigation in that he told [REDACTED] [REDACTED] not to give a statement to COPA and/or he instructed her to provide a false account of the incident.
Sustained, Violation of Rules 1 and 2

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. While both Ms. [REDACTED] and Officer Jackson both related that there was physical contact between the two of them, the material facts some facts are entirely divergent. Ms. Stephen described a violent and unprovoked attack, and Officer [REDACTED] minimized his role in the incident by describing Ms. [REDACTED] as the aggressor and responsible for ripping his shirt.

The preponderance of the evidence demonstrates that Ms. Stephen's account of the incident is credible. Ms. [REDACTED] account of the incident remained consistent. The account that she provided the responding CPD officer and hospital staff on the date of the incident was the same account she provided Officer Arroyo three months later and to COPA approximately three years later. Ms. Stephen's had ample opportunity to recant her account of the incident but did not. Furthermore, the injuries she sustained supported her allegations of being battered. Ms. [REDACTED] related that Officer Jackson grabbed her by the neck and choked her. The doctor at University of Chicago Hospital noted that Ms. [REDACTED] had visible scratches on her neck and jaw line as well as on her chest. Ms. Stephen's injury to her leg could have been a result of being dragged down the stairs and/or being stomped or kicked on the leg as she alleged. Ms. [REDACTED] who is a bus driver and drives with her right foot, said that she did not return to work for more than two weeks after the incident, and the [REDACTED] Attendance Records supports her statement.

Overall, there is no apparent motive for Ms. [REDACTED] to fabricate these allegations. Initially, Ms. [REDACTED] attempted to protect PO Jackson's identity by not providing his full name

to the authorities. She did not reveal additional identifying information until approximately three months later, after she felt threatened by Officer Jackson. Even at that time, she only provided Officer Arroyo with the unit that he was assigned. Furthermore, Ms. [REDACTED] is still in a dating relationship with Officer Jackson.

V. ANALYSIS³⁰

COPA finds that **Allegations #1-4** against Officer Jackson that on or about October 19, 2019, at approximately 5:00AM, in the vicinity of [REDACTED] Officer Jackson 1) grabbed Ms. [REDACTED] by the neck and/or applied pressure to the r neck without justification, 2) dragged her down a flight of stairs, 3) threw her to the ground, and 4) stomped and/or kicked her on the leg are **SUSTAINED**. Department members are prohibited from disrespecting or maltreating an individual, on or off-duty. Officer Jackson denied the allegation, however, as discussed above, Ms. [REDACTED] multiple consistent accounts of the incident were credible. The conduct she described establishes that Officer Jackson did, in fact, maltreat Ms. [REDACTED] during the physical altercation at their home. Ms. [REDACTED] injuries from the incident were so severe that she immediately reported the incident to the police and sought treatment at the hospital. The injuries sustained corroborate her account of the incident. Hospital staff discharged her with instructions consistent with her being a victim of domestic violence. Officer Jackson minimized his role in the incident and, although he stated that they fell down the stairs, he was unable to provide COPA with a reasonable explanation of how it occurred. His explanation also does not account for the scratches to Ms. [REDACTED] neck. Based on the reasons cited coupled with Ms. Stephen's credibility, COPA finds that it is more likely than not that the injuries were caused by Officer Jackson, in the manner described by Ms. [REDACTED] and the allegations are sustained.

COPA finds that **Allegation #5**, that Officer Jackson attempted to influence the outcome of the investigation in that he told Ms. [REDACTED] not to give a statement to COPA and/or instructed her to provide a false statement, is **SUSTAINED**. Ms. [REDACTED] related that Officer Jackson gave her the assigned investigator's phone number and told her to call the investigator and relate that she did not wish to give a statement. Officer Jackson confirms that he gave Ms. [REDACTED] the investigator's number, however, he says that it was after she told him she did not want to be involved in the case. Therefore, it is agreed that Officer Jackson gave Ms. [REDACTED] the contact information.

While Officer Jackson denied that he did so with the intent to influence the outcome of the investigation, the timing of his conduct supports that was his intent. Likewise, even though Ms. [REDACTED] stated that Officer Jackson's request did not impact her decision, the timing suggests that his intent was to do so. Officer Jackson gave Ms. [REDACTED] the contact information two days prior to his statement at COPA. If Officer Jackson goal was not to influence the outcome of the investigation, one would believe that he would have asked or instructed Ms. [REDACTED] to contact COPA a few months after the incident when she told him that COPA was contacting her. He also knew that COPA was in touch with her by this point, so there was no need to provide her with the investigator's name, other than to insert himself into the situation and influence her decision. Additionally, Ms. [REDACTED] volunteered the information to COPA, unaware that Officer Jackson's

³⁰ For a definition of COPA's findings and standards of proof, see Appendix B.

action was against Department Rules and Regulations. Therefore, COPA finds that it is more likely than not that Officer Jackson's intent was to influence the investigation and the allegation is sustained.

VI. DISCIPLINARY RECOMMENDATION

a. Officer Cortney Jackson

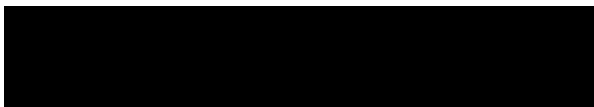
i. Complimentary and Disciplinary History³¹

Officer Jackson has received 43 awards and recognitions and has no recent disciplinary history.

ii. Recommended Discipline

COPA has considered Officer Jackson's complimentary and disciplinary histories. Officer Jackson committed numerous acts of physical abuse in this case. The complainant's injuries are well documented and significant. These are serious violations of policy. Domestic violence is a serious offense. Police officers committing domestic violence seriously undermines public trust in the Department. Officer Jackson did not take accountability for his conduct. This level of behavior warrants significant consequences. Based on this information, COPA recommends **180 day suspension up to separation.**

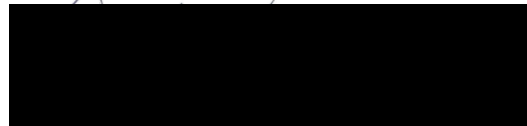
Approved:



Sharday Jackson
Deputy Chief Administrator – Chief Investigator

January 26, 2024

Date



Andrea Kersten
Chief Administrator

January 26, 2024

Date

³¹ Attachment ____.

Appendix A**Case Details**

Date/Time/Location of Incident:	October 16, 2020/5:00AM/ [REDACTED]
Date/Time of COPA Notification:	January 21, 2020/2:05PM
Involved Officer #1:	Cortney Jackson, Star 19075, Employee [REDACTED] DOA December 18, 2000, Unit 002, Male, Black
Involved Individual #1:	[REDACTED] Female, 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

- NA

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.³² For example, if the evidence gathered in an investigation establishes that it is more likely that the conduct complied with Department 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.”³³

³² 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).

³³ *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