



CITY OF CHICAGO  
OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

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# Recommendation to Reopen Chicago Police Department Disciplinary Investigation

CPD Log #2023-0005451

OIG Case #C2025-000000222

Published October 17, 2025

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Pursuant to the Municipal Code of Chicago (MCC) § 2-56-230(c)(ii), the Public Safety section of the City of Chicago Office of Inspector General (OIG) conducts reviews of individual closed disciplinary investigations conducted by the Civilian Office of Police Accountability (COPA) and the Chicago Police Department's (CPD) Bureau of Internal Affairs (BIA). Based on those reviews, OIG may make a recommendation to reopen the investigation to address a deficiency materially affecting its outcome.<sup>1</sup>

COPA investigated allegations that Officer Pablo Cartagena, Star #12513, failed to complete the required reports related to their use of force on a subject, used excessive force when placing their foot on the chest and/or neck area of a subject, failed to utilize due care by failing to properly secure a firearm, and failed to utilize due care when pointing a firearm in the direction of other CPD members. COPA sustained all allegations and recommended a one to 29-day suspension, in addition to retraining on CPD's policies for the use of force, completion of reports, and proper recovery and securing of firearms.

During its review, OIG identified an allegation brought by COPA on which the agency failed to reach a finding. COPA served Officer Cartagena with an allegation that they called a member of the public a "stupid ass," and questioned Officer Cartagena about their use of the derogatory term. However, COPA did not include the allegation in the electronic case file in its case management system (CMS) or its Final Summary Report (FSR).

OIG recommended that COPA reopen the investigation to address the allegation that Officer Cartagena called a member of the public a "stupid ass."

In response to OIG's recommendations, COPA agreed to reopen the investigation. COPA found that the police officer violated CPD policy related to interacting with bystanders on scene. COPA reached a sustained finding for the allegation that Officer Cartagena violated CPD General Order G02-04, "Prohibition Regarding Racial Profiling and Other Bias-Based Policing," when calling a member of the public a "stupid ass." The recommended discipline remained unchanged.

OIG's letter to COPA containing its recommendations is attached in Appendix A. COPA's response is attached as Appendix B.

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<sup>1</sup> Once BIA or COPA has responded to an OIG recommendation to reopen an investigation, and once the underlying investigation has reached a final disciplinary decision, OIG's recommendation letters and the agencies' responses will be published on OIG's website. In these procedural postures, OIG's recommendations to reopen and the agencies' responses have been available and, from time to time, released pursuant to MCC § 2-56-250 and the Illinois Freedom of Information Act. These recommendations to reopen, issued pursuant to MCC § 2-56-230(c), are separate from OIG's own confidential investigative work, which is governed by the confidentiality provisions set out in MCC § 2-56-110.

# Appendix A | OIG Letter



Deborah Witzburg | Inspector General  
City of Chicago  
Office of Inspector General  
231 S. LaSalle St., 12<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Chicago, IL 60604  
Phone: (773) 478-7799

## Via Electronic Mail

June 17, 2025

LaKenya White  
Interim Chief Administrator  
Civilian Office of Police Accountability  
1615 West Chicago Avenue, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Chicago, Illinois 60622

Re: Log #2023-0005451

Dear Chief Administrator White:

Pursuant to § 2-56-230(c)(ii) of the Municipal Code of Chicago (MCC), the Office of Inspector General's (OIG) Public Safety section conducted a preliminary review of the investigation conducted by the Civilian Office of Police Accountability (COPA) in Log #2023-0005451. OIG recommends this investigation be reopened for COPA to account for all its allegations and findings. Log #2023-0005451 is currently in Command Channel Review.

Log #2023-0005451 concerns allegations that CPD Officer Pablo Cartagena, Star #12513, "Fail[ed] to complete a TRR (Tactical Response Report) related to the arrest and use of force of (the subject), us[ed] excessive force in that you placed your foot on the chest and/or neck area of (the subject), failure to utilize due care in that you failed to properly secure a firearm, and failure to utilize due care in that you pointed a firearm in the direction of other officers."<sup>1</sup> COPA sustained all of these allegations.

However, COPA failed to include, analyze, and reach a finding for its allegation regarding calling a member of the public a "stupid ass." The electronic case file in CMS for Log #2023-0005451 includes two acknowledged Notification of Charges/Allegations forms presented to Officer Cartagena.<sup>2</sup> One of the Notification of Charges/Allegations form lists four allegations brought by the reporting party, Lieutenant Meghann McCauley, Star #402. The second Notification of Charges/Allegations form included in both Attachments 18 and 31 includes an allegation of "Violating CPD Policy G02-04 Prohibitions Regarding Racial Profiling and Other Bias-Based Policing in that you called a member of the public a 'stupid ass'" brought by COPA's former Deputy Chief Administrator – Chief Investigator.<sup>3</sup>

In Officer Cartagena's statement to COPA, Officer Cartagena admitted they made the statement, "stupid ass" based upon what they reviewed in their body worn camera (BWC) footage but could not

<sup>1</sup> Attachment 37, p. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Attachments 28 and 31.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 2.

remember why they made the statement.<sup>4</sup> Officer Cartagena's BWC footage for this incident captures Officer Cartagena stating, "get your stupid ass – keep walking" to an unidentified bystander in the crowd.<sup>5</sup>

COPA's FSR in Log #2023-0005451 does not include COPA's allegation that Officer Cartagena violated CPD Directive G02-04 nor does it make mention of Officer Cartagena making the statement "stupid ass" to a bystander, despite COPA having brought this allegation. Additionally, COPA does not include its allegation that Officer Cartagena violated CPD Directive G02-04 in the CPD section of the Case Management System, despite there being a record of it in COPA's investigative file.

Based on OIG's preliminary review, and without taking any position on any other aspect of the investigation or its findings, OIG recommends COPA reopen this investigation to address in some way the allegation it brought that Officer Cartagena violated CPD Directive G02-04 when they called a bystander "stupid ass."

Please contact Chief Investigative Analyst LaDonna Candia-Flanagan at [lcandia-flanagan@igchicago.org](mailto:lcandia-flanagan@igchicago.org) or (773) 478-5614 with any questions. Please send your response to this recommendation before a final disciplinary decision is made with respect to this investigation and in no case later than the time allowed by MCC § 2-56-245. OIG will consider a failure to respond in the time permitted by ordinance to be a declination of our recommendation. OIG looks forward to COPA's response and recommends that COPA incorporate this letter and its response into the electronic case file to provide for a complete record.

Respectfully,



Tobara Richardson  
Deputy Inspector General for Public Safety  
Office of Inspector General

cc: Deborah Witzburg, Inspector General, OIG  
Samuel Chae, Associate General Counsel for Public Safety, OIG  
LaDonna Candia-Flanagan, Chief Investigative Analyst for Public Safety, OIG  
Angela Snell, Assistant General Counsel, COPA  
Timothy Moore, Deputy Director, Bureau of Internal Affairs, CPD

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<sup>4</sup> Attachment 32, p. 21 and 22.

<sup>5</sup> Attachment 6, at 2:58 – 3:01.

# Appendix B | Department Response



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**RE: Recommendation to Reopen 2023-0002399**

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**From** Angela Snell <Angela.Snell@chicagocopa.org>

**Date** Thu 3/21/2024 2:23 PM

**To** LaDonna Candia-Flanagan <lcandia-flanagan@igchicago.org>; Andrea Kersten <Andrea.Kersten@chicagocopa.org>

**Cc** Robin Murphy <Robin.Murphy@chicagocopa.org>; Yolanda Talley <yolanda.talley@chicagopolice.org>; Tobar Richardson <trichardson@igchicago.org>; Deborah Witzburg <dwitzburg@igchicago.org>; Samuel Chae <schae@igchicago.org>

WARNING - This message is from outside the Office of Inspector General email system. Do not open links or attachments from untrusted sources. Please report suspicious messages using the "Report Phish" button on the Outlook ribbon.

Good afternoon, COPA will re-open this log number. Please let me know of any questions.

Best,

Angie Snell (she/they)  
Assistant General Counsel  
Civilian Office of Police Accountability (COPA)  
1615 W. Chicago Ave.  
Chicago, IL 60622  
Office: 312-746-0186  
Cell: 312-965-2025

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**From:** LaDonna Candia-Flanagan <lcandia-flanagan@igchicago.org>

**Sent:** Friday, March 8, 2024 3:16 PM

**To:** Andrea Kersten <Andrea.Kersten@chicagocopa.org>

**Cc:** Angela Snell <Angela.Snell@chicagocopa.org>; Robin Murphy <Robin.Murphy@chicagocopa.org>; Yolanda Talley <yolanda.talley@chicagopolice.org>; Tobar Richardson <trichardson@igchicago.org>; Deborah Witzburg <dWitzburg@igchicago.org>; Samuel Chae <schae@igchicago.org>

**Subject:** Recommendation to Reopen 2023-0002399

[Warning: External email]

Dear Chief Administrator Kersten:

On behalf of Deputy Inspector General Tobar Richardson, please find attached to this email a recommendation to reopen Log #2023-0002399. Please acknowledge your receipt of this correspondence, and let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

**LaDonna Candia-Flanagan  
(She/Her)**

Chief Investigative Analyst  
Office of Inspector General  
740 N. Sedgwick, Suite 200  
Chicago, IL 60654  
[lcandia-flanagan@igchicago.org](mailto:lcandia-flanagan@igchicago.org)  
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**LaDonna Candia-Flanagan**  
Chief Investigative Analyst for Public Safety

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OIG's authority to produce reports of its findings and recommendations is established in the City of Chicago Municipal Code §§ 2-56-030(d), -035(c), -110, -230, and -240.

For further information about this report, please contact the City of Chicago Office of Inspector General, 231 S. LaSalle Street, 12<sup>th</sup> Floor, Chicago, IL 60604, or visit our website at [igchicago.org](http://igchicago.org).

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