



Log # 2022-5092

## FINAL SUMMARY REPORT<sup>1</sup>

### I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On December 1, 2022, the Civilian Office of Police Accountability (COPA) received an initiation report from Chicago Police Department (CPD) Sergeant (Sgt.) Ryan Schaffer.<sup>2</sup> The initiation report documented allegations that Officer Tim Piotrowski harassed ██████████ ██████████ on dates between August 8, 2022, through November 26, 2022, by contacting her via text message against her wishes; harassing her by entering onto her property and leaving items on her property without her consent; harassing her by contacting her via phone calls and emails against her wishes; and by making unwanted contact with her by speaking to her against her wishes and not for professional purposes.<sup>3</sup>

Following its investigation, COPA reached sustained findings regarding all four of the allegations against Officer Piotrowski based on objective verifiable evidence and Officer Piotrowski's own admissions.

### II. SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE<sup>4</sup>

██████████ ██████████ told COPA that she and Officer Piotrowski, ██████████ ██████████ ██████████ ██████████, were involved in a romantic relationship from September 2018 until the end of June 2022, when she broke up with him over the phone.<sup>5</sup> ██████████ ██████████ characterized the relationship as “toxic” and filled with break-ups and reconciliations.<sup>6</sup> Officer Piotrowski continued to communicate with her, often through text messages, but also by phone, email, and personal visits. Beginning around August 8, 2022, ██████████ ██████████ responded to unwanted texts with messages such as, “please stop texting me,” but the communications continued.<sup>7</sup> Around August 14, 2022, a greeting card that suggested Officer Piotrowski wanted to reconcile was left for ██████████ ██████████ at

<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> Att. 1.

<sup>3</sup> 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.

<sup>4</sup> The following is a summary of what COPA finds most likely occurred during this incident. This summary utilized information from several different sources, including CPD reports, text messages, photographs, and interviews of the involved CPD members.

<sup>5</sup> Att. 4, pg. 5, lns. 4 to 10; pg. 11, ln. 19, to pg. 12, ln. 19.

<sup>6</sup> Att. 4, pg. 6, lns. 4 to 5; pg. 6, lns. 15 to 20; pg. 10, lns. 7 to 14.

<sup>7</sup> Att. 2, pg. 1. *See also* Att. 6, copies of text messages from Officer Piotrowski to ██████████ ██████████ starting on August 8, 2022; there are several requests from ██████████ ██████████ to Officer Piotrowski to stop texting her and to leave her alone.

her home.<sup>8</sup> On August 15, 2022, ██████ ██████ responded to additional texts with, “PLEASE STOP TEXTING ME.”<sup>9</sup> On August 25, 2022, a silver Tiffany’s heart necklace with a card and note were hung on the side door knob of ██████ ██████ home.<sup>10</sup> On August 30, 2022, ██████ ██████ told Officer Piotrowski that she asked repeatedly to be left alone, both in person and via text message, and asked him to stop texting, calling, and leaving items on her property.<sup>11</sup> On November 2, 2022, Officer Piotrowski sent an email to ██████ ██████ asking for, among other things, another chance.<sup>12</sup> On November 3, 2022, ██████ ██████ responded, “Leave me alone. Do not text, email, call, come to my residence, or leave items on my personal property. Do not corner me ██████ ██████ to talk and continue talking after I’ve said please leave me alone. I asked you to stop doing these things numerous times and you’ve continued. Please stop.”<sup>13</sup>

In mid-November 2022, ██████ ██████ and Officer Piotrowski attended a gender-based violence training course.<sup>14</sup> They were both scheduled for the same day and time. The instructor discussed gender-based violence; relationships; physical and emotional abuse; harassment; and stalking. ██████ ██████ realized that this is what was happening in her own life, specifically the stalking and harassment. She also learned that it is a crime to text message someone after they ask you to stop.<sup>15</sup> Once the class was completed, ██████ ██████ had her two regular days off. The day she returned to work, Officer Piotrowski approached her in a parking lot as she walked into ██████ ██████.<sup>16</sup> Although the text messages stopped, ██████ ██████ was still afraid Officer Piotrowski’s behavior would continue, but now possibly in different ways.<sup>17</sup> On December 1, 2022, ██████ ██████ initiated this complaint against Officer Piotrowski and prepared a memorandum describing how Officer Piotrowski had communicated with her, both in person and electronically, about personal matters and against her explicit instructions.<sup>18</sup>

When interviewed by COPA, Officer Piotrowski acknowledged the relationship with ██████ ██████ but he stated that they began dating in October 2018 and that they broke up in August 2022.<sup>19</sup> He explained that the decision to part was mutual, but he made it clear it was more ██████ ██████ decision.<sup>20</sup> According to Officer Piotrowski, as a result, there was little communication between them, which he described as “touchy,” partly work-related, but mostly personal.<sup>21</sup> COPA

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<sup>8</sup> Att. 11.

<sup>9</sup> Att. 2.

<sup>10</sup> Atts. 9, 10, 12, 13, and 14.

<sup>11</sup> Att. 2.

<sup>12</sup> Att. 8, pg. 1.

<sup>13</sup> Att. 8, pg. 2.

<sup>14</sup> Att. 4, pg. 15, lns. 19 to 24.

<sup>15</sup> Att. 4, pg. 16, lns. 1 to 14.

<sup>16</sup> Att. 4, pg. 16, ln. 15, to pg. 17, ln. 6.

<sup>17</sup> Att. 4, pg. 16, lns. 10 to 16.

<sup>18</sup> Atts. 1 and 2. ██████ ██████ also made allegations that her supervisors improperly revealed information to Officer Piotrowski about her allegations. The allegations against the supervisory members will be addressed separately in Log #2023-0835 by CPD’s Bureau of Internal Affairs.

<sup>19</sup> Att. 18, lns. 1 to 7.

<sup>20</sup> Att. 18, pg. 10, lns. 8 to 11.

<sup>21</sup> Att. 18, pg. 11, lns. 11 to 13 and 18 to 23.

asked whether or not ██████ ██████ ever asked him to stop communicating with her, and Officer Piotrowski answered that although he was not completely sure, he believed that she might have.<sup>22</sup> Officer Piotrowski later admitted that toward the end of August of 2022, he went to ██████ ██████ home and left cards and a gift that he wanted to give to ██████ ██████ for their anniversary, but was unable to deliver in person because of their current circumstances.<sup>23</sup> Officer Piotrowski also admitted that he continued to contact ██████ ██████ after that point:<sup>24</sup> he sent text messages and emails, and he made phone calls in an attempt to salvage the relationship.<sup>25</sup> Officer Piotrowski explained that in the past, he and ██████ ██████ had been able to put things back together again after splitting up.<sup>26</sup>

### III. ALLEGATIONS

#### Police Officer Tim Piotrowski:

1. On various dates and times between August 8, 2022 and November 21, 2022, at unknown locations, Officer Tim Piotrowski harassed ██████ ██████ by contacting her via text message against her wishes.
  - Sustained, Violation of Rules 2, 3, and 8.
2. On various dates and times between August 19, 2022 and August 29, 2022, at or near ██████ ██████ ██████ ██████, Officer Tim Piotrowski harassed and/or made unwanted contact with ██████ ██████ by entering onto her property and/or leaving items on her property without her consent.
  - Sustained, Violation of Rules 2, 3, and 8.
3. On various dates and times between August 30, 2022 and November 14, 2022, at unknown locations, Officer Tim Piotrowski harassed ██████ ██████ by contacting her via phone calls and/or email(s) against her wishes.
  - Sustained, Violation of Rules 2, 3, and 8.
4. On various dates and times between November 18, 2022 and November 26, 2022, at unknown locations, Officer Tim Piotrowski made unwanted contact with ██████ ██████ by speaking to her against her wishes and not for professional purposes.
  - Sustained, Violation of Rules 2, 3, and 8.

### IV. CREDIBILITY ASSESSMENT

This investigation did not reveal any evidence that caused COPA to doubt the credibility of any of the individuals who provided statements. ██████ ██████ provided consistent accounts of Officer Piotrowski's behavior both to CPD and to COPA, and her account is supported by her contemporaneous notes and by copies of email messages, text messages, notes, and cards sent to

<sup>22</sup> Att. 18, pg. 11, ln. 27, to pg. 12, ln. 3.

<sup>23</sup> Att. 18, pg. 13, lns. 16 to 23.

<sup>24</sup> Att. 18, pg. 12, lns. 6 to 8.

<sup>25</sup> Att. 18, pg. 12, lns. 9 to 17.

<sup>26</sup> Att. 18, pg. 18, lns. 12 to 16, and pg. 19, lns. 9 to 11.

her by Officer Piotrowski. While Officer Piotrowski attempted to minimize and explain some of his actions, he admitted to engaging in the behaviors described in the allegations.

## V. ANALYSIS<sup>27</sup>

COPA finds **Allegations 1, 2, 3, and 4** against Officer Piotrowski to be **Sustained**. Based on the evidence discussed above and Officer Piotrowski's own admission, it is more likely than not he repeatedly contacted ██████████ ██████████ via text, email, and telephone, spoke to her in person about non-work-related matters, and left items for her on her property after their personal relationship ended, and after she asked him to stop communicating with her.

██████████ ██████████ demonstrated the veracity of the allegations when she provided printouts of text messages, which started on or about August, 8, 2022, that established she repeatedly told Officer Piotrowski to stop texting her in response to his newly sent messages.<sup>28</sup> She also provided photographs of a gift along with copies of a note and multiple greeting cards;<sup>29</sup> a phone log that documented unanswered calls from Officer Piotrowski between August 11, 2022 and November 14, 2022;<sup>30</sup> and a copy of the email from Officer Piotrowski dated November 2, 2022.<sup>31</sup>

Officer Piotrowski admitted that he communicated with or attempted to communicate with ██████████ ██████████ after they had broken up and after she repeatedly asked him to stop. His explanation that he did all of these things in an effort to salvage their relationship is not a legitimate justification for his actions,<sup>32</sup> given ██████████ ██████████ repeated demands for him to stop. Officer Piotrowski's failures to comply with ██████████ ██████████ repeated demands not to communicate with her violated the core values of CPD and Rules 2, 3, and 8.<sup>33</sup>

## VI. DISCIPLINARY RECOMMENDATION

### a. Officer Tim Piotrowski

#### i. Complimentary and Disciplinary History<sup>34</sup>

Officer Piotrowski has received twenty-five honorable mentions, ten complimentary letters, and twelve additional awards and commendations, including an Annual Bureau Award of

<sup>27</sup> For a definition of COPA's findings and standards of proof, *see* Appendix B.

<sup>28</sup> Att. 6.

<sup>29</sup> Att. 9 to 13.

<sup>30</sup> Att. 7.

<sup>31</sup> Att. 8.

<sup>32</sup> Att. 18, pg. 12, lns. 14 to 17.

<sup>33</sup> CPD's core value of respect "means that we treat each other . . . as we would like to be treated: with compassion and dignity. Within [CPD], we strive to ensure all members are supported and empowered, regardless of rank or position." Att. 21, General Order G01-01(IV)(A)(5), Vision, Mission Statement, and Core Values (effective May 21, 2019, to present).

<sup>34</sup> Att. 22.

Recognition. Officer Piotrowski has not been subject to disciplinary action within the past five years.

**ii. Recommended Discipline**

COPA has found that Officer Piotrowski violated Rules 2, 3, and 8 by contacting [REDACTED] via text messages against her wishes, by entering onto [REDACTED] [REDACTED] property and leaving items on her property without her consent, by contacting [REDACTED] [REDACTED] via phone calls and email messages against her wishes, and by speaking to her against her wishes and not for professional purposes. Officer Piotrowski admitted his actions but attempted to minimize them. He ceased contacting [REDACTED] [REDACTED] after this investigation was initiated. While Officer Piotrowski did not explicitly threaten [REDACTED] [REDACTED] he knew, or should have known, that his actions caused her to experience significant emotional distress. Also, as an experienced police officer, he should have recognized that by repeatedly contacting [REDACTED] [REDACTED] against her express wishes, his behavior could be considered stalking. Considering these facts, along with Officer Piotrowski's complimentary history and lack of recent disciplinary history, COPA recommends a suspension of 15-30 days.

Approved:

[REDACTED]

May 28, 2024

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Shannon Hayes  
*Director of Investigations*

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Date

**Appendix A**

**Case Details**

Date/Time/Location of Incident:	August 8, 2022 / [REDACTED] / [REDACTED] Ave., and other dates, times, and locations.
Date/Time of COPA Notification:	December 1, 2022 / 1:45 am
Involved Member #1:	Police Officer Tim Piotrowski, Star #12164, Employee ID # [REDACTED] DOA: September 11, 2000, Unit: 018, Male, White
[REDACTED] [REDACTED]:	[REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

**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**

- G01-01, Vision, Mission Statement, and Core Values (eff. May 21, 2019, to 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.<sup>35</sup> 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.”<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> See *Avery v. State Farm Mut. Auto. Ins. Co.*, 216 Ill. 2d 100, 191 (2005) (“A proposition proved by a preponderance of the evidence is one that has been found to be more probably true than not true.”).

<sup>36</sup> *People v. Coan*, 2016 IL App (2d) 151036, ¶ 28 (quoting Illinois Pattern Jury Instructions, Criminal, No. 4.19 (4<sup>th</sup> 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