



CITY OF CHICAGO



COMMUNITY COMMISSION FOR
PUBLIC SAFETY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

VIA EMAIL

June 17, 2023

Superintendent Larry Snelling
Chicago Police Department
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RE: Comments from the Community Commission for Public Safety and Accountability in Response to CPD Draft General Order G01-11

Superintendent Snelling,

Pursuant to 2-80-110 of the Municipal Code of Chicago, the Community Commission for Public Safety and Accountability (Commission) is submitting its comments and suggestions on the Chicago Police Department's (Department) draft General Order G01-11, "Community Commission for Public Safety and Accountability."

The Commission recognizes and appreciates the purpose behind a policy that outlines what CCPSA is, the role of CCPSA in relation to the Department, and how Department members and leadership interact with the Commission and District Councils. Establishing a baseline of standards and expectations is a critical step to fulfilling the Superintendent's 2024 goals on community policing.

Commission's Comments and Suggestions

1. Divide the Provisions Outlining Department Responsibilities into a Commission Section and District Council Section

The current order lists Department responsibilities and expectations regarding its interactions with the Commission and the District Councils. The Commission recommends establishing two clear sections in the order, one that is Commission-specific and one that is District Council-specific. Doing so will provide more clarity and structure to how the Department engages with the different parts of CCPSA.

The Commission also welcomes discussion on how to build more guidance regarding the communications between the Department and Commissioners.

2. Hyperlink to the CCPSA Ordinance and Include Verbatim Language from Key Sections of the Ordinance

The current order includes important language drawn from the CCPSA Ordinance, Municipal Code of Chicago 2-80. Inclusion of this language provides a critical opportunity to ensure Department members understand what CCPSA is and how it relates to the Department. The Commission agrees with the Department's recommendation to include a hyperlink to the order that directs readers to the relevant sections of the municipal code, especially considering the possibility that the CCPSA Ordinance could be amended in the future. The Department should still have the most salient and pertinent sections of the Ordinance reprinted within the order itself. The Commission requests that the language from the Ordinance is verbatim so as not to inadvertently change the legislative meaning.

3. Provide more Description regarding the "Authorized Designee" in the Superintendent's Office and for the Point of Contact at Each Police District

The current order's introduction of an "authorized designee" within the Superintendent's office will benefit the long-term relationship between the Department and CCPSA by ensuring the Department has a dedicated point of contact for the Commission. The Commission suggests the Department consider adding language that describes what types of "coordination" roles and functions the designee will play. The language could describe the designee's oversight over the following: how Commanders fulfill their responsibilities with District Councils, how the Department fulfills record requests, and how the Department addresses questions from District Councils that require attention from Area representatives.

The order also establishes the requirement that each Police District designate a point of contact for the local District Council. The Commission recommends adding language describing the role of the District point of contact, including the minimum rank of the contact, the contact's functions and expectations, and the contact's role in District leadership.

4. Raise Awareness about the Open Meetings Act

As the Commission and Department collaborate to outline how the Department relates with Commissioners and District Councilors, it may be useful to inform Department members of the basic legal obligations Commissioners and District Councilors must comply with under the Illinois Open Meetings Act. Specifically, Department members may benefit from learning that no more than two

Commissioners can meet to discuss public business without requiring a properly noticed public meeting, and since District Councils are three-member bodies, no members of the same District Council can meet to discuss the public business of the Council outside a public meeting. Informing Department members of these issues will help Department members understand the legal constraints Commissioners and District Councilors operate under when arranging meetings and communicating with each other, the public, and outside agencies. It may also be beneficial to underscore that whereas Commissioners and District Councilors carry these legal obligations, Department members are not liable for attending a meeting of Commissioners or District Councilors where they violate the Open Meetings Act.

The Commission recognizes that G01-11 may not be the appropriate means for informing Department members of CCPSA's Open Meetings Act obligations. The Commission therefore recommends collaborating with the Department to identify the most appropriate and effective way to communicate this information to Department members.

5. Revise the Requirement of Department Attendance and Participation at District Council Public Meetings

The current order states that Commanders or Captains should make efforts to attend every public meeting of the associated District Council, and if they cannot attend, a District representative of the rank of Lieutenant or higher must attend the public meeting. The Commission appreciates the importance of the Department engaging directly with District Councils and collecting community and Council input from the District Council's public meetings. District Councilors have expressed concerns that on some occasions, it is not prudent to require Department attendance. The Commission recommends adding that the District Council can waive the attendance requirement, in which case District leadership should confer with the Council about any expectations regarding future attendance, such as attending a subset of meetings per year or attending only regular meetings and not special meetings.

The Commission notes that while District Councils may waive the requirement and request that Department representatives not attend, District Councils cannot prohibit attendance of Department representatives at public meetings pursuant to state and federal law.

The Commission welcomes discussion over whether the Department may lower the minimum rank requirement for Department attendance at District Council meetings.

The Commission recommends adding additional language describing the expectation that Department representatives must “actively participate in District Council public meetings when called upon by the District Councils”. District Councilors have requested additional information about the reasoning, intentions, and limitations to this provision. More clarity would be helpful.

The Commission recommends that the Department add brief language establishing for Commanders and District leadership what the Department would like them to do at the public meetings, i.e., to collect community input, be available for community questions, and take notes of pertinent information from the Councils.

6. Add more Language around District Commander Meetings with Members of District Councils

The current order introduces a requirement that Commanders offer a meeting to each member of a District Council. The Commission recommends adding more guidelines on arranging these meetings with reasonable advance notice while also providing reasonable expectations and flexibility for accommodating schedules of the District Councilors and the Commander or District leadership. The Commission also recommends providing more explicit language specifying that the Commander will offer a meeting to each individual member of the District Council.

7. Add more Structure to Record Requests

The current order establishes that record requests by District Councilors will be documented, tracked, and transmitted, unless the records are already easily accessible to the public. The Commission recommends adding follow-up requirements, including a timeline for providing status updates to the requesting District Councilor and an explanation for any unmet requests. If the records are publicly available, the Department should advise the District Councilor of how to obtain the records. The language should also be broadened to encompass requests for information, data, and answers to questions, rather than limiting it to requests for records.

The Department should also develop separate guidelines with a non-exhaustive list of the types of records and information that the Department can share upon request and the types that the Department is prohibited from disclosing. The guidelines could be included in a resource guide or exist as a separate document.

The Department should also explore developing a visible system, portal, or mechanism for District Councilors to check on the status of a request. The system could include a way for Councilors to upload requests and download results. The

system could be visible for all District Councilors to reduce the occurrence of redundant requests.

As a final note, multiple District Councilors expressed interest in having the means to contact Area representatives to provide information and answer questions. The Department should work to ensure that either the District or the authorized designee are positioned to field District Councilor requests that are geared toward the Area.

8. Add more Description and Structure to District Reports and Add Provisions on District Strategic Plans

The current order establishes a “periodic” district report that will include input gathered from District Council public meetings and the District Councilors themselves. The Commission recommends making the reports quarterly and providing a reasonable amount of time for the local District Council to review the reports after they have been finalized. District Council members should then have an opportunity to submit an addendum to the report with any additional input.

The Commission recommends adding language that explains the purpose and function of the district reports, who will review the reports when they go “up the chain of command”, and who will be responsible for addressing issues and concerns from community and District Council input in the reports.

The Commission also recommends that the Department add provisions to the order stating that each District Council will have a reasonable opportunity prior to and during the development of the District Strategic Plan to provide suggestions and feedback. The District Commander should arrange with the District Council an opportunity for the Council to facilitate public comments on the plan in development and provide regular updates on the plan’s implementation. The order should include a reference to Special Order S02-03-02, which delineates the requirement of District Strategic Plans.

9. Provide Opportunities for District Council Engagement with Rank-and-File, Roll Calls, Community Policing Area Coordinators, and Youth Coordinators

The Commission recommends the Department add language that encourages and facilitates communication between District Councils and rank-and-file members of the Department. The Department should consider adding provisions that establish opportunities for District Councilors to attend designated roll calls held for the purpose of providing pertinent information to officers. The language could also provide a line of communication between District Councils and the Community Policing Area and Youth Coordinators.

10. Training

The order currently does not describe how the Department will train its members on the order. Incorporating a clear, structured, and transparent training section will help ensure the Department is able to fully implement the order. The Commission recommends designing a training that invites District Councilors to participate, including a potential joint training for District Councilors and their corresponding District Commanders. The Department should determine the best methods and processes for training in this order and detail those requirements in the order.

The Commission recognizes the importance of a well-designed policy that educates Department members on CCPSA and establishes standards and expectations for the relationships between the Department and the Commission and District Councils. The guidelines included in this policy will build a stronger and more organized process for CCPSA and the Department to achieve its goals of improving the quality of policing and public safety across Chicago's many communities. The Commission looks forward to continuing productive collaboration with the Department in reviewing the next draft of the order and completing the policymaking process.

Sincerely,

Commission President Anthony Driver, Jr.
Commission Vice President Remel Terry

CC:

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