



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**MAYOR LIGHTFOOT SIGNS EXECUTIVE ORDER TO CREATE A PROCESS FOR VICTIMS ALLEGING POLICE MISCONDUCT**

*First-of-its-kind Order creates standard, straightforward process for release of materials, including video recordings, to complainants alleging police misconduct*

**CHICAGO** – Today, Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot signed an Executive Order creating the first City guidelines governing the release of materials directly to subjects of alleged police misconduct. Effective March 7, 2021, the Order creates a standardized, accessible and easy-to-navigate process for complainants to receive access to materials related to alleged police misconduct, including video recordings. Under the new protocol, the first-of-its-kind in Chicago, victims of alleged police misconduct will receive swift access to materials without having to navigate the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) process or be constrained by the limitations of FOIA. This directive complements and expands upon the City's separate Video Release Policy and is part of Mayor Lightfoot's commitment to increase transparency and accountability.

"Since day one of my administration, I have made police accountability and transparency one of my top priorities," said Mayor Lightfoot. "This Order puts in place changes that we have seen are long-overdue in how complainants of alleged misconduct receive the material they need to pursue the recourse and closure they deserve. While we still have a long way to go, this measure represents an important and meaningful step in our journey toward ensuring full public safety accountability and justice in the City of Chicago."

Under the City's existing Video Release Policy, the Civilian Office of Police Accountability (COPA) releases videos only in certain use of force incidents. Furthermore, while documents are sometimes available via FOIA, certain materials may be exempt and, under FOIA, subjects of police misconduct are required to follow the same FOIA process as all members of the public. The new Order signed today will create a streamlined and straightforward process for police misconduct complainants to receive swift access to materials, including body-worn-camera video, even if the incident does not rise to the level that would trigger release to the



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general public under the City's Video Release Policy and without requiring the subject of the incident to navigate the FOIA process.

Under the new Order, complainants that have filed a complaint with COPA alleging police misconduct in which they were the subject of the incident will be given the opportunity to submit a request to COPA for materials related to the incident. COPA will then notify the Chicago Police Department (CPD) and the Department of Law of the request within three days of receiving the request. Provided that the incident is not covered by the City's Video Release Policy, the City will release the following materials to the complainant as soon as practical, but no later than 30 calendar days following the request:

- Video and audio recordings from CPD dash cameras and/or body-worn-cameras; and
- Initial police reports, including original case reports and tactical response reports.

This Order strikes an important balance between preserving the integrity of investigations while being responsive to complainants of alleged police misconduct by limiting law enforcement requests to delay release of materials. Under this Order, all requests for delay will expire 90 days after the request is received from a law enforcement agency, at which time the complainant shall be provided all Incident Related Material, unless production is prohibited by law or court order.

Today's announcement represents Mayor Lightfoot's continued commitment to police accountability and reform. In January of 2020, following a review undertaken by the City's Chief Risk Officer, at Mayor Lightfoot's direction, the Chicago Police Department implemented a series of reforms to the police search warrant policies including: independent collaboration of information received from a third party, and that the third party cannot be paid or receive compensation for the information; that body-worn cameras must be worn and activated; the initiation of a CR investigation in the case of a wrong raid; the addition of provisions to protect children and requiring two internal supervisors sign-off on a warrant before it is presented to the prosecutor and the court.

In response to the police raid on Anjanette Young's home and the City's subsequent actions, Mayor Lightfoot made clear that additional reform was needed to address a number of issues related to that incident. In addition to the comprehensive review of City policies that Mayor Lightfoot requested by the law firm Jones Day, CPD has also created a Search Warrant Committee to conduct a top to bottom review of policy, training, resources and every aspect that touches on obtaining and serving a search warrant.

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