



City of Chicago Civilian Office of Police Accountability (COPA)

Chief Administrator

INTRODUCTION

In 2015 the Mayor appointed a Police Accountability Task Force, which issued its report in 2016. That report included detailed research and analysis of police performance and laid out a series of recommendations, including the creation of a new civilian oversight agency to replace the prior oversight agency. As a result, the City of Chicago designed and created the Civilian Office of Police Accountability. Its mission is to provide a just and efficient means to fairly and timely conduct investigations in an open and transparent way. Chicago is seeking a Chief Administrator to lead the agency, advance its performance, and ensure a strong accountability system that safeguards, protects and respects the rights of both civilians and police officers.

ORGANIZATION

The City of Chicago Civilian Office of Police Accountability is a civilian-staffed municipal agency that became effective on September 15, 2017 after a transition from the predecessor agency. COPA registers all allegations of misconduct made against Chicago Police Department (CPD) members. COPA performs administrative investigations of all allegations of CPD misconduct that concern the use of excessive force, coercion through a threat of violence, bias-based verbal abuse, domestic violence, and improper search and seizure. In addition, COPA investigates all instances in which a CPD member discharges his or her firearm or Taser in a manner that strikes or could potentially strike an individual and all incidents of an officer involved death. It is COPA's mission to conduct investigations that are thorough, independent, and timely.

COPA has a budgeted staff of 151 employees, with approximately 90 investigators and an approved 2021 budget of \$18.4 million. COPA takes in approximately 4,500 complaints annually and actively investigates about 2,000 of these cases.

The City of Chicago is currently recruiting a new COPA Chief Administrator. The Chief Administrator, who reports directly to the Mayor, is the chief executive of COPA and directs an agency that has oversight of the second largest police department in the United States. The Chief Administrator is responsible for guiding all aspects of COPA, including setting appropriate personnel levels, training investigators and other staff, overseeing investigations, and conducting regular quality reviews. COPA regularly collaborates with the State's Attorney, the FBI, and the Department of Justice, and the Chief Administrator has a key role in establishing and maintaining these partnerships. Finally, the Chief Administrator serves as the public face of COPA, representing the Office in proceedings before the City Council, the Police Board and at other public meetings throughout the diverse communities that make up Chicago.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES

- Receive and register all complaints against members of the Chicago Police Department.
- Conduct investigations into complaints against members of the Police Department alleging excessive force, domestic violence, coercion, improper search or seizure of either individuals or property, unlawful denial of access to counsel, or verbal abuse.

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- Conduct investigations into all incidents in which a Police Department member discharges: (a) a firearm in a manner that either strikes or could potentially strike another individual, (b) a stun gun (TASER) in a manner that results in death or serious bodily injury, or (c) in the Chief Administrator's discretion, other weapons discharges and/or other use or Police Department-issued equipment as a weapon that results in death or serious bodily injury.
 - Conduct investigations into incidents, including those in which no allegation of misconduct is made, where a person dies or sustains a serious bodily injury while detained or in Police Department custody, or as a result of police actions.
 - Conduct investigations into all incidents of an "officer-involved death," as the term is defined in 50 ILCS 727/1-5, in accordance with applicable law.
 - Forward all other complaints than those described above to the Police Department's Bureau of Internal Affairs.
 - In the Chief Administrator's discretion, review lawsuits or claims against the Police Department or its members, or against the City of Chicago alleging misconduct that falls within COPA's jurisdiction, where the lawsuit or claim subsequently settled or resulted in a judgment against the Police Department, member or the City, for consideration to reopen a prior investigation or open a new investigation of alleged misconduct.
 - Recommend to the Police Superintendent, with respect to incidents within the jurisdiction of COPA, appropriate disciplinary or other remedial action against Police Department members found to be in violation of any applicable rules.
 - Based on information learned through investigations, make recommendations to the Police Superintendent, the Chairman of the City Council Committee on Public Safety, and the Police Board revisions of the Police Department's policies, practices, collective bargaining agreements, programs and training in order to improve accountability, effectiveness, integrity and transparency of the Police Department.
 - At the Chief Administrator's discretion, review and investigate the facts of individual civil lawsuits and criminal proceedings in order to identify and investigate incidents of alleged police misconduct or to make recommendations to improve Police Department policies and practices within its jurisdiction.
 - Conduct investigations to determine whether members of the Police Department are engaging in patterns or practices of misconduct, and where such a finding is made, recommend revisions to the Police Department's policies, practices, programs, and training in order to address and eliminate such patterns or practices.
 - Establish a mediation program, promulgate rules for such a program, and refer appropriate complaints for mediation except for complaints alleging excessive force that results in death or serious bodily injury or cases of domestic violence involving physical abuse or threats of physical abuse.
 - Set rules and procedures for the conduct of COPA and its investigations consistent with due process of law, equal protection under the law, and all other applicable local, state and federal laws, including achieving and maintaining compliance with COPA's obligations under the Consent Decree entered in *Illinois v. Chicago*, 17-cv-6260.
 - Set minimum qualifications and appropriate screening procedures for all persons to be considered for employment by COPA and to set appropriate staffing levels to carry out the powers and duties of the office.
 - Address Police Department personnel and community groups, and inform the public on the mission, policies and operations of COPA.
 - Appear before the Committee on Finance at public hearings at which proposed settlements of lawsuits against the Police Department or its members are submitted for approval and reply to questions related to COPA investigations involving Policing Department members who are named parties.

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- Issue quarterly and annual reports providing information based on data regarding the activities of the office.
 - Additional details about duties and responsibilities are outlined in this ordinance.
<http://www.chicagocopa.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/COPA-Ordinance.pdf>

NOTE: *The list of essential duties is not intended to be inclusive; there may be other duties that are essential.*

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

The Chief Administrator shall have the following minimum qualifications:

- An attorney with substantial experience in criminal, civil rights, and/or labor law, or corporate and/or governmental investigations; or an individual with substantial experience in law enforcement oversight, or investigating employee or other wrongdoing;
- Knowledge of law enforcement and criminal law, particularly of internal investigations of wrongdoing and use of force;
- A commitment to and knowledge of the need for and responsibilities of law enforcement, as well as the need to protect basic constitutional rights of all affected parties;
- Demonstrated integrity, professionalism, sound judgment, and leadership;
- The ability to work with diverse groups and individuals.

The Chief Administrator cannot be a current or former sworn employee of the Chicago Police Department, a non-sworn employee of the Chicago Police Department within the last five years, or an employee of the Cook County State's Attorney's Office within the last five years.

PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS

- **EXPERIENCE:** 10 years of experience as an attorney in criminal, civil rights, and/or labor law, or corporate and/or governmental investigations; or 10 years of experience in law enforcement oversight, or investigating employees, or other allegations of wrongdoing; and prior experience in management.
- **EDUCATION:** Law degree strongly preferred. Other graduate degree also acceptable.

WORKING CONDITIONS

- General office environment

EQUIPMENT

- Standard office equipment (e.g., telephone, printer, photocopier, fax machine).

PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS

- No specific requirements

CORE COMPETENCIES

- **Leadership** – Experience showing integrity, professionalism, sound judgement, and independence.

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- **Community relations** – Experience in community relations and outreach with the demonstrated ability to build strong, yet independent working relationships with diverse constituents and community representatives.
 - **Cultural sensitivity** – Knowledge of and sensitivity to the needs and concerns of individuals from diverse cultures, backgrounds, and orientations
 - **Management** – Knowledge of organization and management practices and methods, including goal setting, program development and implementation, employee supervision, personnel management, employee relations, team building, budget development, and financial management.
 - **Collaboration** – Experience collaborating with senior executives, staff, and diverse groups/individuals to achieve goals.
 - **Executive Presence/Communication** – Ability to engender confidence internally and externally through clear communication, credibility and leadership.

OTHER

Term

The Chief Administrator shall serve a term of four (4) years, and at the conclusion of such term may be considered for reappointment. The Chief Administrator may be removed from office prior to the conclusion of such term only for cause in accordance with Section 2-78-155 of the ordinance.

Annual Salary

\$171,720 (budgeted for FY21)

Location

Employees must be a resident of the City of Chicago. Proof of residency is required at the commencement of employment.

TO APPLY

- Please send all required materials to COPAsearch@cityofchicago.org
- Required Materials:
 - Resume
 - Cover Letter
 - Written response (1,000 word maximum) to the following question: What are the largest challenges currently facing police oversight in Chicago? And what is your vision to address them?
 - A video (max 2 minutes) that introduces yourself and highlights your application. The video can be filmed on a cellphone. Instructions for uploading the video will be provided upon receipt of the other application materials.
- Deadline
 - Applications will be accepted through August 27, 2021

THIS POSITION IS A SHAKMAN EXEMPT POSITION

All employees of the City of Chicago must demonstrate commitment to and compliance with applicable state and federal laws, and City ordinances and rules; the City's Ethics standards; and other City policies and procedures.

The City of Chicago will consider equivalent foreign degrees, accreditations, and credentials in evaluating qualifications.

Residency Requirement: All employees of the City of Chicago must be actual residents of the City as outlined in 2-152-050 of the City of Chicago Municipal Code. Proof of residency will be required.

If you would like to request a reasonable accommodation due to disability or pregnancy in order to participate in the application process, please contact the City of Chicago, Department of Human Resources, at 312-744-4976 or disabilityaccommodations@cityofchicago.org. Please be prepared to provide information in support of your reasonable accommodation request.

ALL REFERENCES TO POLITICAL SPONSORSHIP OR RECOMMENDATION MUST BE OMITTED
FROM
ANY AND ALL APPLICATION MATERIALS SUBMITTED FOR CITY EMPLOYMENT.
The City of Chicago is an Equal Employment Opportunity and Military Friendly Employer.

City of Chicago

Department of Human Resources

Lori E. Lightfoot, Mayor

Christopher Owen, Commissioner

City of Chicago
Department of Human Resources