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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 13, 2014

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**CITY OF CHICAGO OPENS POLICE MISCONDUCT FILES TO THE PUBLIC
TO INCREASE TRANSPARENCY, ACCOUNTABILITY**

Public Now Able to View CPD Internal Investigation Files Into Alleged Police Misconduct

In a continued effort to enhance transparency and police accountability, Mayor Rahm Emanuel announced today that the City of Chicago will begin making internal investigation files into alleged police misconduct open to public scrutiny.

"The men and women of the Chicago Police Department bravely serve our communities, working to ensure that every Chicagoan in every neighborhood shares the same sense of security and safety," said Mayor Emanuel. "As part of their efforts, it is imperative to build trust and partnership between residents and the police. And this new policy is a step forward in that effort."

Consistent with the new policy, the Chicago Police Department (CPD) will release investigative files relating to allegations of police misconduct in response to Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests. Standard FOIA exemptions, including those pertaining to burdensomeness, will apply to all requests. Responsive records also will be redacted to make certain that no information is released that might compromise investigations or witness confidentiality, including names of complainants or informants.

"By allowing access to these records, the Chicago Police Department will further demonstrate that it takes allegations of police misconduct seriously," said Chicago Police Supt. Garry McCarthy.

The City is implementing the new policy after working closely with CPD and civil rights attorneys to proactively resolve litigation that had targeted the City's long-standing policy of treating police misconduct investigations the same as other personnel matters which are explicitly exempted under FOIA.

"The City of Chicago had the option to continue to litigate this matter, but ultimately we concluded that – with proper safeguards in place – it will serve a greater public good to allow these investigations to be subject to open records laws," said Chicago Corporation Counsel Steve Patton.

The ability to obtain and view internal investigative reports on police officers has been the subject of past litigation. This policy change stems from a case filed in 2009 by independent journalist

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Jamie Kalven. Historically, several thousand complaints about police misconduct have been made annually, though the complainant failed to complete the required paperwork on fewer than half those cases.

“This is a great step forward, and this new level of transparency will help to build confidence in those communities that have historically distrusted the police,” said Alderman Howard Brookins, Jr.

Among the public interest law firms and other organizations working with the city on the matter were The People’s Law Office; the University of Chicago’s Civil Rights and Police Accountability Project; and the plaintiff’s firm of Loevy & Loevy.

“Civil rights advocates have pressed the City of Chicago for years to provide the public with access to records on investigations on alleged police misconduct, and those requests have consistently been denied,” said Craig B. Futterman, clinical professor of law at the University of Chicago and founder of the school’s Civil Rights and Police Accountability Project. “We applaud the policy sea change on this matter brought about by the Emanuel administration.”

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