



CHICAGO POLICE TRAINING TEACHES OFFICERS THAT THEIR LIVES MATTER MORE THAN COMMUNITY LIVES

Second Report of the Community
Representatives of Chicago's Use of Force
Working Group

March 2023

Public Report on Chicago Police

Training on the Use of Force

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION	3
I. TRAINING MODULES	6
II. SUCCESSES	8
III. SHORTCOMINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	9
Concern 1: CPD Training Wholly Excludes Community Perspective.	9
Concern 2: CPD Training Reinforces A Culture that Pits Police Against the Community.	10
Concern 3: CPD Training Prioritizes Officer Safety Above Community Safety.	12
Concern 4: CPD Fails to Teach Officers to Minimize Police Violence.	13
Concern 5: CPD Training Teaches Officers How to Cover Up and Justify Unnecessary and Illegal Police Violence.	14
Concern 6: CPD Teaches Officers to Use Tasers and Chemical Weapons in Circumstances When They are Prohibited by CPD Policy.	15
Concern 7: CPD Training Fails to Acknowledge the Existence and Effects of Racism and Bias within CPD.	16
Concern 8: CPD Training Failed to Pay Sufficient Attention to Officer Wellness.	17
Concerns and Areas for Improvement in Simulations	18
Instructional and Structural Concerns	20
CONCLUSION	24

INTRODUCTION

This Report from community representatives of Chicago's Use of Force Community Working Group offers our feedback on the Chicago Police Department's (CPD) training on de-escalation and the use of force. The Working Group was first convened in the summer of 2020 in response to the requirements of the federal civil rights Consent Decree designed to bring an end to the CPD's pattern of police brutality and racial discrimination. Over the course of two years, the Working Group persuaded the CPD to make transformative changes to its policies governing police use of force.¹ Last fall, we issued a [Public Report](#) on CPD's new policies, including areas still in need of change.² The new policies, if implemented and enforced on the ground, have the potential to dramatically reduce unnecessary CPD violence and improve public safety.

The recent murder of Tyre Nichols by members of the Memphis Police Department serves as a stark reminder of all that is at stake in Chicago. CPD's pattern of civil rights violations, which led to the Consent Decree, persist because of a culture of violence, racism, and denial similar to the police culture that enabled officers in Memphis to believe that they could beat and kill Mr. Nichols with impunity. The United States Department of Justice found that CPD has long maintained a culture that has led officers to believe that they could abuse Black people with impunity.³ As a result of this culture, CPD continues today to use force against Black people at 11 times the rate that it uses force against whites.⁴ CPD has earned approximately the same number of complaints of misconduct in 2022 as it did in 2019, the first year of the Consent Decree.⁵ More importantly, Black people remain 13 times more likely than whites to be victimized by CPD abuse.⁶ Because of this problematic culture, the people of Chicago have paid nearly a billion dollars over the past decade for ongoing CPD abuse in civil rights judgments and settlements alone.⁷

¹The underlying principle behind CPD's transformed policies is the sanctity of all human life. The new policies seek to prioritize de-escalation of conflict, limit CPD violence to circumstances in which it is necessary, and reduce police violence to the least amount necessary under the circumstances.

²CPD's de-escalation and force policies, while vastly improved, remain in immediate need of change. The CPD has failed to adopt a number of Working Group recommendations that would curb unnecessary police violence and harm, and we continue to urge the Department to implement these critical changes. Our Public Report, which can be accessed at <https://www.law.uchicago.edu/clinics/mandel/police>, provides a summary of policies in need of change and the reasons for those recommended changes.

³See United States Dept. of Justice, Investigation of the Chicago Police Department (Jan. 13, 2017) at pages 10, 18, 41, 47, 52, 75, 111 (finding a "culture in which officers expect to use force and not be questioned," a culture that has "tolerated racially discriminatory conduct... that facilitates unreasonable force and corrodes community trust," "the pervasive cover-up culture among CPD officers, which the accountability entities accept as an immutable fact," a "culture in which supervisors turn a blind eye to misconduct," and "code of silence." The DOJ investigation is available at <https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/justice-department-announces-findings-investigation-chicago-police-department>.

⁴Office of the Chicago Inspector General Information Portal, <https://informationportal.igchicago.org/tactical-response-reports-overview/> (last visited February 22, 2023).

⁵Civilian Office of Accountability (COPA) 2022 Annual Report at p. 19, <https://www.chicagocopa.org/news-publications/publications/annual-reports/>.

⁶Id. at p. 21 (showing that Black people filed complaints of CPD misconduct at 13 times the rate of white people).

⁷Geoffrey Cabbage, Analysis: Cost of Chicago Legal Judgments and Settlements, Better Government Association (Nov. 7, 2022), <https://www.bettergov.org/2022/11/07/budget-analysis-city-of-chicago-legal-judgment-and-settlement-spending/>.

The City of Chicago and CPD's leadership have touted training as a primary remedy to change that culture. The City is investing \$170 million dollars of taxpayer money in a controversial new police academy with the promise by the former Superintendent of CPD that it will be used to end misconduct and "put COPA out of business."⁸ With so much at stake, the people of Chicago have the right to demand that CPD training is in fact designed to change CPD culture. The new policies that we worked so hard to achieve will be worthless if they are not implemented and made real on the ground.

This Report documents shortcomings we observed in CPD training on police use of force. Despite improved policies, CPD training continues to foster the same problematic culture that led to the Consent Decree in the first place.

- CPD training lacks any perspective from the community (p.9);
- CPD training reinforces an "us against them" culture that pits police officers against community members and teaches officers to fear the people of Chicago—to see everyone who is not the police as a potential threat (p.10);
- Instead of teaching officers to honor the sanctity of *all* human life, CPD training teaches officers that their lives are worth more than the lives of community members (p.12);
- CPD training fails to teach officers to minimize police violence (p.13);
- Rather than challenge CPD's culture of denying the reality of police abuse, CPD training teaches officers how to justify and even cover up unnecessary police violence (p.14);
- CPD training fails to acknowledge the reality of racism and bias within the Department or teach officers the impact of their biases on decisions to use force against community members (p.16).

Structurally, CPD's one-day eight-hour module is not nearly enough time to adequately train officers to embrace new practices for interacting with community members, especially officers who are set in their ways. Class sizes were far too large, and the quality of instruction varied significantly. Trainings were scheduled immediately after many officers had just completed a night shift, leaving officers exhausted and unfocused. Overall, engagement was poor, and trainings offered no mechanism to address officer hostility and resistance to use of force policy changes. In addition, officers are not required to complete any test or assessment to demonstrate they are actually learning and adopting the new approach and policies governing CPD use of force.

⁸Sarah Schulte, Controversy surrounds new \$170M public safety training center on West Side, ABC (Jan. 25, 2023), <https://abc7chicago.com/chicago-fire-police-academy-news-department/12735451/>.

Real change must be made to CPD training. Broadly speaking, CPD must (1) revise and re-envision course content that reinforces harmful attitudes and conduct, (2) reframe trainings to center community members and harm reduction; (3) stop teaching officers that their lives matter more than the people they serve, (4) meaningfully address bias and racial profiling; (5) design training to account for officer resistance and hostility to change; and (6) hold officers accountable by evaluating their learning progress. In sharing our observations with the community, we seek to promote transparency about CPD trainings so that Chicagoans can evaluate what our officers are being taught and where millions of dollars of our resources are going and hold CPD accountable for making these necessary changes.

We divide this report into three parts:

- Part I provides a description and some observations of the training modules;
- Part II highlights what we see as the greatest successes in the training;
- Part III describes shortcomings and provides specific recommendations for immediate change.

We urge the people of Chicago, including members of the Police Department and the Community Commission on Public Safety and Accountability, to support our recommendations and demand change to CPD's De-escalation and Use of Force training.

I. TRAINING MODULES

The first module briefly introduced the officers to the Critical Decision-Making Model. It then presented scenarios that demonstrated opportunities for de-escalation and the importance of officers' ongoing critical assessment of the situation. The scenarios and teaching in Module 1 accomplished these aims. After showing a video involving officers use deadly force, the lead trainer asked a series of good questions: What could we have done to avoid shooting? Did we need to be in the room in the first place? Did we create the circumstance that required force? He also led a good discussion on alternatives and resources including calling CIT for assistance. The module included several other helpful scenarios that taught de-escalation strategies and critical assessments of developing situations, including a car stop; a scenario of a man videotaping in front of a police station; and the investigation of potential sex trafficking and abuse of young girls.

The Second Module was by far the worst of the Modules. It was divided into two sections. The focus of the first was on treating people fairly, overcoming bias, and improving relationships in the community's officer's work. The second was on teaching officers how to justify uses of force based on the Supreme Court case of *Graham v. Connor*. The problems in this module arose from a combination of uninspired instruction (with the first instructor simply reading from PowerPoint slides and going through the motions); the use of poor videos as substitutes for live instruction; and failures to engage the class in interactive conversations.

Attempts to engage the class were half-hearted, not well thought out, and ineffective. For example, when a trainer tried to spark a conversation on the importance of documenting "positive community interactions" (PCIs), he received a hostile reception. Officers expressed frustration with this as "mostly bullshit for numbers" and a "waste of our time." The trainers' attempts to "sell" PCIs fell on deaf ears. There was no buy-in in the room. We agree that CPD's instructions for documenting positive community interactions are fatally flawed and need to be reconsidered.

The Module also included a useful scenario on the duty to intervene when an officer is using excessive force. The trainer showed video of an officer from another jurisdiction repeatedly punching a teenager who was crawling out of a window. However, instead of building a conversation around preventing and responding to excessive force, the conversation focused on why the teen had "challenged" the officer, blaming the teenager for his own abuse. One officer remarked that the situation would have been different "before cameras" and implied that the duty to intervene was about avoiding litigation, rather than preventing officers from unnecessarily hurting people. The trainers made no attempt to generate conversation that in any way challenged, much less rebutted, these problematic comments.

The third and final classroom module centered on the practical applications of the revised Use of Force policy. The participants went through the various threat levels that a person might present and discussed the types and amount of force available to police at each threat level under CPD's policy on Force Options. The topics covered in Module 3 were appropriate and the primary instructor was engaging. The trainer gave accurate instructions on the overarching factors that guide de-escalation and force decisions. He made effective use of a scenario in which a person made general threats to kill someone with a knife when there was no one nearby or at risk of immediate harm. The trainer taught officers not to close the distance, but to use time, distance, and communication to defuse a situation and avoid creating the need to use force. "If you have distance, you got time. Play the game. You can ask from a distance, 'What's going on? Why are you so upset? Anything we can do to help?' It sounds like bullshit, but our job has changed." He offered another good scenario for de-escalation involving a traffic stop with someone blaring loud music. However, many of the other takeaways from Module 3 were deeply problematic and in direct opposition with the core principles that underlie the recent changes to CPD force policy. We discuss some of the particular issues in Section III below.

Following the classroom modules, officers participated in simulations. There were two scenarios that involved drilling, keeping distance from a person, as well as looking for cover to protect the officers without the need to use force. There was a brief training on physical tactics with limited hands-on drilling, in which an instructor demonstrated methods for detaining, maneuvering, manipulating, and tackling people in arrest and crowd control situations. We were generally impressed with the trainer's knowledge, competence, and consideration of the varying familiarity and facility of the trainees with these tactics. While the training seemed fine as a stand-alone module, it was poorly integrated into the curriculum as a whole. The relationship between this module and the others was far from apparent. The final scenario of the day exposed the police officers to a fellow officer engaging in excessive force and taught the duty to intervene. We provide greater detail and suggestions for improving this simulation in Section III below.

II. SUCCESSES

Effective Instruction in Module One

There were instructors that were able to hold the classroom's attention despite the early hour. Some did an excellent job in driving home lessons about officers' duty to de-escalate and tactics for doing so, including that officers must avoid creating an exigent circumstance or need to use force by their own actions. Particularly impressive examples of teaching include an instructor who responded effectively to an experienced officer's resistance to the suggestion that officers should call for backup during potentially dangerous traffic stops instead of confronting the individual and unnecessarily endangering both officers and the individual.

Positives of Live Simulations

The live simulations were generally effective teaching tools. They forced even reticent officers to engage, recognize that there was something they could learn from the trainers, and actually see the value of the policy changes to their effectiveness as police officers.

We were also impressed with the trainers' debriefing sessions immediately following each simulation. The trainers generally did a good job drawing out valuable lessons during these reviews of the trainees' decision making and giving them opportunities to try again.

III. SHORTCOMINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Substantive Areas of Concern

Concern 1: CPD Training Wholly Excludes Community Perspective.

1. The most glaring absence during the training was the perspective of community members. None of the material, including audio and video, is taught from a community perspective or is given from a community voice. Everything is taught from the perspective of law enforcement.
2. Officers are never asked to consider any scenario involving an interaction between police officers and community members from the perspective of the community members. In addition to teaching empathy, that lens would give officers perspective on how to better de-escalate conflict and minimize the need to use or escalate force. We strongly recommend that CPD bring community members into the training to provide this perspective and engage officers in scenarios and simulations.

Recommendation - Bring community members into the training.

1. Bring in community members, particularly people from communities who have been most impacted by CPD violence, to lead or co-lead training segments.
2. Ask community representatives to provide first-hand accounts regarding the impact of police uses of force in their communities and issues of trust they have with Chicago police officers.
3. Ask questions in the training that prompt officers to put themselves in the position of the person they're interacting with to improve engagement in the training and develop greater empathy for community members. Consider introducing role plays in which officers are asked to play a community member interacting with the police and build classroom discussions in which trainees playing the roles of community members share their perspectives on those police interactions. Role plays should vary between interactions in which officers take a command-and-control approach with displays of force versus one that emphasizes procedural justice and de-escalation.
4. Give community members an active role in simulations and allow them to share perspective on how they felt and acted based on the way officers approached and treated them in simulated interactions. CPD should also have trainees play the roles of community members in role plays to give officers perspective on how their words and conduct positively and negatively impact community members.

Recommendation - Scrap the CPD's "positive community interaction" program, which has neither the support of officers nor the community.

1. Work with community-based organizations to develop alternative methods of teaching positive community engagement and evaluating officer interactions with community members.
2. Teach officers how much every interaction matters and how those interactions fundamentally impact community members' views of the Police Department.

Concern 2: CPD Training Reinforces a Culture that Pits Police Against the Community.

1. Aspects of the training operated to separate officers from the communities they serve—to see themselves apart from the community, rather than as a part of and accountable to people in the community. Trainers reinforced common perceptions among officers that: (1) the community does not understand police officers or their jobs; (2) the media is out to get the police; and (3) only fellow police officers understand and have the interests and backs of other police officers. We provide a few examples below.



- Ex. 1: One trainer told the classroom “People will try to bait us... Our job is hard as shit, but this is the job we have. We have each other. The world is against us, but we have each other. We have one another to get through the day.”
- Ex. 2: Some trainers explicitly embraced “us against them” language. A trainer instructed: “Why do we use force? Because of *their* actions.” “How do we justify using force? Again, *their* actions. *They* came at us. *They* refused to comply...”
- Ex. 3: The training left many officers feeling that it is even more important that they stick together, because the public and media do not have their backs. Following statements by trainers that the media is unfair to police, nearly every trainee who spoke in a later conversation about community engagement blamed “social media” or “secondary sources” for the negative perceptions community members have of CPD. They also blamed negative public perceptions of CPD on scandals that occurred in the distant past. The instructors did not acknowledge or share recent examples of community members’ negative experiences with members of the CPD. The takeaway from the training was not that there is any need to reexamine current practices with respect to CPD violence and force, but rather that negative community perception of CPD is merely the result of media portrayals and the actions of police officers of twenty years ago. One long-time officer referred to CPD’s approach to community engagement as “usually bullshit for numbers,” not something that the CPD or its officers should think has any real value.

2. Trainers also continue to use dehumanizing language that reinforces the “us against them” mentality.
 - › Instructors continue to use language that dehumanizes community members—the same dehumanizing terms that the CPD agreed to remove from policy and training, based on the recommendations of the Community Use of Force Working Group. Instructors continue to refer to community members as “subjects,” “offenders,” and “bad guys,” rather than as “people.” This has meaningful consequences for force and de-escalation decisions officers’ perception of people as threats.
 - › Instructors also routinely referred to people in the community as “civilians.” The “police/civilians” distinction unconsciously reinforces “us versus them” and “warrior” mindsets. CPD trainers should abandon the militaristic language of “civilians,” and refer to community members simply as “people.”

Recommendation - Stop feeding an “us against them” culture that otherizes the community members whom officers are sworn to serve and protect.

1. Teach officers to see themselves as part of and accountable to the communities they police.
2. Develop classroom modules and simulations that counteract rather than reinforce an “us against them” culture.
3. Stop teaching officers that people in the community do not understand police officers or their jobs, and that the media is out to get the police. Stop teaching officers that only police officers understand and have the interests of other police officers at heart.
4. Stop teaching officers to view every community member as a potential threat.
 - › Avoid scenarios that reinforce officer hyper-vigilance and promote the mindset that officers must treat every community member as a potential threat.
 - › Avoid language that casts everyone and everything other than fellow officers as a threat.
5. Stop referring to people as “subjects,” “bad guys,” “targets,” “offenders,” “suspects,” and “civilians.”

Concern 3: CPD Training Prioritizes Officer Safety Above Community Safety.

1. One of the central messages delivered repeatedly throughout CPD's training taught officers to prioritize themselves and their own safety over that of everyone else. This message directly contradicts and undermines CPD's own stated first principle in its force policies of prioritizing the sanctity of all human life. Training needs to shift focus from being solely about officer safety to being about community safety—prioritizing the value of all human life.
2. A common theme present throughout the training is that officers' foremost jobs are to "go home" at the end of the day. That is, the point of their work is to stay alive, not to protect and serve the community. CPD shouldn't be teaching its officers that their lives matter more than the people they serve. Officers are armed public servants, and this is a training about use of force; officers are supposed to be uniquely in the position to protect people who would otherwise not be protected.
 - Ex. 1: Instructor: "What's the most important part of the job?" Class group response: "Going home." Instructor: "Yeah. As much as we preach de-escalation and procedural justice..., we gotta make split second decisions. The most important part of the job is to go home."
 - Ex. 2: Questions about how much force officers can use were consistently framed in terms of, "What can you do to make sure that you will go home?"
 - Ex. 3: One trainer asked what do you do when a 15-year-old kid in school becomes an assailant? He answered his own question: De-escalation "goes out the window. Because we come first. Our most important job is to go home."
3. When teaching about chokeholds, the trainer encouraged rather than discouraged officers to consider chokeholds when restraining people "because officers' lives come first." The instructor taught, "Chokeholds are okay as a last resort, unlike what the news says." While this may seem like a small point, that sends a far different message than instruction consistent with CPD policy teaching students that "Chokeholds are prohibited, except when necessary, as a last resort to protect against an immediate threat to life."

Recommendation - Stop teaching officers that their lives matter more than the people they serve.

1. Teach officers that the sanctity of *all* life is the core principle underlying CPD De-escalation and Force policy.

Concern 4: CPD Fails to Teach Officers to Minimize Police Violence.

1. CPD fails to teach officers that when using force, they are required to use the least amount of force necessary under the circumstances. Training on this requirement was almost wholly absent from the sessions and was often contradicted in the training modules.
2. Rather than teaching officers to use the least amount of force necessary under the circumstances, some trainers encouraged officers to use the maximum amount of force permissible under the circumstances, according to CPD force options. That the use of severe force may be an option if a person qualifies as an active resistor does not mean that the officer is permitted to use the force when it is not necessary under the circumstances or when other effective less severe options are available.
3. Instructors taught officers that they *should* escalate force when “subjects” escalate, rather than officers *can* escalate if necessary under the circumstances.
4. Instruction on force options framed uses of force as an escalatory process, which undermined restricting force to the least amount necessary under the circumstances and principles of de-escalation.
5. Trainers embraced the need for split second decisions as a justification for unnecessary and avoidable uses of force. However, research is clear that “split second” decisions are almost always avoidable and constructed misperceptions by officers feeling pressure to rapidly “neutralize” perceived threats. Officers should be taught to avoid manufacturing these decision points, which often result in poor decisions when under momentary and often self-imposed pressure.
6. Instructors wrongly emphasized that a primary goal of interactions with community members is to get the community member to comply with CPD commands. CPD has a long history of using extreme and unnecessary force, such as firing tasers at people to force community members to do what officers want them to do. The emphasis on “compliance” presupposes the right of law enforcement to force a person to do something that they are unwilling to do. Even when officers have such authority, CPD instructors should teach officers to explain and persuade, rather than resort to brute force, unless that person’s actions pose an immediate threat to another person’s safety. Contrary to instructions in the training, CPD’s new policy prohibits officers from firing their Taser at a person to force the person to comply with their commands.

Recommendation - Prioritize harm mitigation.

1. Stop teaching officers that they should use the *maximum* force available at a given threat level, and instead teach CPD policy that officers are required to use the *least* amount of force necessary in every circumstance.
2. Stop teaching officers that uses of force typically and necessarily require a series of “split-second decisions.” Instead, show officers that most “split-second decisions” are *unnecessary* in practice. Teach officers strategies on how to avoid creating the need for otherwise unnecessary split-second decisions.

Concern 5: CPD Training Teaches Officers How to Cover Up and Justify Unnecessary and Illegal Police Violence.

1. There is a real difference between teaching officers to accurately document police uses of force and teaching officers how to justify their actions live on video and after the fact. We were alarmed by training that emphasized “effective paper-writing” to justify force that elevated the value of covering your back-side over truthful reporting.
2. We were similarly alarmed that teaching officers how to justify police uses of force took precedence over teaching officers how to avoid using force in the first place or restricting the force that they use to the least amount of force necessary under the circumstances. For example, the *Graham v Connor* video in the second module directly undermines CPD policy on eliminating unnecessary force. The video shows an instance of extreme force used against a completely innocent man who was suffering a diabetic seizure to illustrate how police reports after the incident can be written to justify unnecessary uses of force. The training focuses on ‘what happens if I get sued,’ as opposed to teaching officers to limit force to the least amount necessary and use tactics to avoid creating the need to use any force whatsoever. The video teaches officers how to paper over their force incidents to justify the force they used and avoid being sued and held accountable, rather than teaching officers when and how to restrict their use of force. *Graham v. Connor* should be a lesson in avoiding unnecessary escalation, not a lesson on how to evade accountability.
3. CPD training similarly teaches officers about how to use video to justify unnecessary uses of force in real time. Trainers warned officers that because there will be video, it’s important to think about what you say and how you will look on video. Instead of teaching officers to avoid unnecessary uses of force, they instructed officers on how they can use cameras as a tool to justify officer force—what they should say and do while the video is rolling to justify unnecessary uses of force. For example, one instructor suggested that an officer can say, “Oh. You’re trying to fight?” or “stop resisting,” to create a record on video to justify a physical response by police. The instructor’s emphasis was on using the camera to give a real-time narrative justifying force, rather than embracing cameras as a means of accurately documenting what happened.
4. The same was true with teaching officers how to write their official police reports to justify CPD violence. The instructors taught officers that the emphasis must be on the “subject’s” actions and behavior. “We used force, because they came at us, they raised their hands, threatened us...”
5. One officer complained to a trainer that an arrestee who jerks their arms away while being handcuffed will effectively force him to file a use of force report, indicating this was unfair and burdensome. The trainer counseled him to affirmatively file such a report because it will allow him to tell his side of the story when there is a complaint about unjust use of force later.

Recommendation - Stop teaching officers how to cover up and justify unnecessary violence.

1. Teach officers to truthfully and accurately document instances in which they use force against people.
2. Stop teaching officers how they can do and say things on video that obscure unnecessary uses of force.
3. Stop teaching officers how to write reports to justify unnecessary uses of force.
4. Stop teaching officers that force mitigation and harm reduction are about avoiding litigation, rather than about prioritizing the sanctity of life. Scrap the problematic Graham v. Connor video and replace it with training on force mitigation and the “necessity” standard—that force must not be used unless it is necessary. Graham v. Connor should be a lesson in avoiding unnecessary escalation, not a lesson on how to evade accountability.

Concern 6: CPD Teaches Officers to Use Tasers and Chemical Weapons in Circumstances Where CPD Policy Prohibits their Use

1. Training on the Use of Tasers wrongly instructs officers that they may fire Tasers at people who are actively resisting arrest even when they do not pose any threat to another person’s physical safety.
2. Training on O.C. Spray wrongly taught officers that they may discharge O.C. spray into an occupied car with the permission of a sergeant.



Recommendation - Teach officers the prohibitions and restrictions on the use of tasers and O.C. spray.

Concern 7: CPD Training Fails to Acknowledge the Existence and Effects of Racism and Bias within CPD.

1. CPD should use examples of ongoing issues of bias within the CPD. The failure to acknowledge bias and discrimination within the CPD sends a message that the Department does not think that is a real issue in Chicago or that it is anything that the Department cares about.
2. The videos that CPD offers as the primary means of teaching how bias affects police uses of force are worse than ineffective. They lacked substance and any specificity and failed to provide officers anything they could relate to. The videos put officers to sleep. When addressing bias, sensitivity training, community engagement, and anti-discrimination, training videos should be avoided, especially if they were created outside of CPD.
3. In Fall of 2021, CPD trainers showed us video of a scenario from another jurisdiction that CPD was using to teach bias in its use of force training. Rather than focus on the more typical example in which bias causes officers to wrongly see Black and Brown people as threats, the scenario showed a white middle-aged woman, whom the police did not see as a threat when she actually posed a threat. The scenario demonstrated that a white woman police expect not to be a threat could actually be an active shooter and kill you, not that a Black man who police see as a threat may, in fact, be unarmed. The point was to illustrate the ways that racial and gender biases caused officers to overlook threats to their safety. However, rather than try to correct officers' misperception of Black and Brown people as threats, the scenario taught officers that it is more important to see everyone as a potential threat. Research and our experience show that hyper-vigilance is already a problem among CPD officers that results in unnecessary uses of force. This scenario teaches officers to be even more hyper-vigilant, further alienates officers from community members, and reinforces the problematic us against them mentality, in which the only people officers can trust are fellow officers.

Recommendation - Teach officers how their biases affect their decisions to use force.

1. Acknowledge the Reality of Racial and Other Biases within the CPD.
2. Provide trainees with examples of ongoing issues of bias within the CPD with specific attention to bias against Black and Brown people and people with disabilities.
3. Replace the poor video lectures on procedural justice and bias with live instruction.
4. Employ simulations and video scenarios that draw from actual CPD bodyworn cameras or other video footage in which officers wrongly see Black and Brown people as threats when they are not.
5. Use multiple modalities to train officers to see Black and Brown community members as people and recognize that most people are not threats to officers or others.
6. Develop open and honest classroom discussion on the harms of racial profiling.
7. Require officers to take an Implicit Association Test (IAT) at the beginning of the bias module, to give them a frame of reference for their own biases. Until CPD officers begin to see their own biases, they will not make an effort to address them.

Concern 8: CPD Training Fails to Pay Sufficient Attention to Officer Wellness.

1. Trainers discussed “breaking tunnel vision,” but they did not offer trainees with resources or strategies for reducing stress and learning how to manage psychological exhaustion. Suggestions for managing stress merely included general recommendations, such as “doing yoga,” and “eating right.”
2. Resources for officer wellness and stress-reduction strategies are inadequate. Passing mentions of the topic without resources (i.e., names, phone numbers, emails) are of no real use. If CPD plans to touch upon these topics at the training, which it should, resources for officers must be included.
3. We also note that officers’ sleep deprivation is a severe impediment to their judgment in simulated and real-life use-of-force scenarios. It is a serious problem that officers reported getting 4 hours of sleep or less per night and that many seemed to think this was enough to function while they drive heavy vehicles and carry weapons in the community.

Recommendation - Provide officers with concrete resources and strategies for officer wellness and stress management.

Concerns and Areas for Improvement in Simulations

Concern 1: Gun Drawing and Pointing are Still First Reactions

1. Despite having just gone through the classroom training on de-escalation, in the simulations, most officers reached for their guns as a first reaction to any potential threat. The fact that it was standard practice for experienced officers to reflexively reach for their guns in each simulation highlights the need for improved policy and training in this area. CPD has no policies or training on when it is and is not appropriate for officers to draw their firearms.



Our observations in the training strongly support our previous recommendation that CPD must immediately establish policy and training that prohibit officers from drawing their guns unless they have an objectively reasonable belief that deadly force may become necessary.

2. Similarly, we observed repeated instances in which experienced officers inappropriately pointed their firearms at people in the simulations. We reiterate that CPD urgently needs to adopt our earlier recommendation that would prohibit officers from pointing a gun at a person unless the person presents an immediate threat of death or serious bodily injury to an officer or other person.
3. There were no opportunities for officers to return to or repeat the simulations to give them opportunities to “unlearn” bad habits through repetition.

Recommendation - Focus on eliminating the reflexive drawing and pointing of guns.

1. Prohibit officers from drawing their guns unless they have an objectively reasonable belief that deadly force may become necessary.
2. Establish policy and training that prohibit officers from pointing a gun at a person unless the person presents an immediate threat of death or serious bodily injury to an officer or other person.
3. Build time into training for instructors to call attention to and correct improper conduct (e.g., immediately reaching for firearm). Have officers repeat simulations to create opportunities to learn from repetition and begin to build muscle memory. This is especially important if CPD hopes to break bad habits and old practices that contravene CPD’s new de-escalation and force policies.

Concern 2: Body-worn Cameras Were Not Used in Drills.

1. The trainees were given practice body worn cameras, but none of the drills involved using them or having their presence be a factor. Why did CPD give the officers practice body cams in the simulations, if they are never instructed to use them? We continue to see repeated violations of body camera policies by CPD officers in practice. It is critically important that CPD use these simulations in training to teach compliance with these policies. E.g., simulations where they need to practice turning the camera on and teaching them when it is appropriate to turn their cameras off.

Recommendation - Incorporate the use of body-worn cameras into training simulations.

1. Ensure that officers are trained regarding when to turn them on and off.
2. Consider using real body-worn cameras during simulations. Retain footage for reference, examination, and review.

Concern 3: Duty to Intervene and the Code of Silence.

1. The final scenario of the day was meant to expose the police officers to a fellow officer engaging in excessive force. Officers responded to a call involving two people robbing a third person, with an undercover police officer present. They follow the two actors playing robbers into a side room where one stands in the center of the room and the other exits through a side door. The group enters and assists the plainclothes officer in handcuffing the visible robber. The group is meant to be aware that there is a second person who then reappears. When the second robber is handcuffed, the plainclothes officer then pretends to punch and kick them. The simulation would be far more effective if the officers being trained were forced to respond to excessive force that was being inflicted by an officer or supervisor with whom they regularly worked.
2. In addition, this or another scenario could have been used to teach CPD force-reporting and anti-retaliation policies, as well as generate classroom discussion on the challenges in practice of reporting a fellow officer for using excessive force. CPD will never be able to remedy the code of silence, if it fails to address it in all aspects of its training, especially when it comes to training on the use of force.

Recommendation - Develop simulations and scenarios to address the police code of silence and prohibitions on retaliation.

Instructional and Structural Concerns

Concern 1: CPD Training Fails to Engage Officers in the Classroom.

1. A consistent problem across the classroom modules was a lack of engagement of the trainees.

Ex. 1: Most officers arrived at the training tired and disengaged. Some officers were nodding off or even asleep completely. Many officers arrived at the training at 7 A.M. after working night shifts. Some officers had worked as many as fifteen days in a row.

Ex. 2: One instructor acknowledged that he allows officers to sleep because he knows they were coming off of shifts. CPD's failure to provide officers with opportunities for adequate rest before these trainings reinforces trainees' beliefs that the force training and new policies are not worthy of their time or attention. Time should be set aside for trainings instead of having officers attend after long shifts or weeks of back-to-back work.

2. The one-day, eight-hour design for de-escalation and force training inhibits trainees' ability to retain material, and it is inconsistent with best teaching and learning practices. Shorter sessions over time, with opportunities to integrate material into practice and ask questions at future sessions, would be far more effective.



3. The large class sizes also contributed to lack of officer engagement. The roughly 30 officers per trainer made it challenging to keep people engaged and build conversations. Phone use and tardiness among trainees went unaddressed despite clearly detracting from class participation and engagement.

4. The amount of time CPD has devoted to this material is grossly inadequate. CPD's new governing policies and principles on the sanctity of life, de-escalation, and the use of force are among its most important policies central to the Consent Decree. Eight hours is not enough time to cover the material or to effectively teach the important changes to CPD policy and how to implement them in the field. Many topics were rushed and underdeveloped, leaving critical concepts unexplained and leaving no time for questions or engagement. CPD must devote far more time than eight hours, if it hopes to adequately train officers on these policies and strategies and techniques to implement them on the ground.

5. The Superintendent's decision to remove officers from the training division is especially concerning in light of the inappropriately large class sizes, the difficulty in providing officers with the amount of training they need, the challenges of engaging trainees, and the inconsistent quality and commitment of the trainers. Bringing in other officers from the field who may not be qualified, prepared, or motivated to teach these subjects is a recipe for failure.

6. The inconsistent quality of training and instructors also contributed to officer disengagement. While some trainers tried to engage the class, others did little more than read off the power point slides and did not seem at all motivated to actually teach the policies in a substantive way. Officers didn't appear to pay much attention to or engage with trainers who were reading directly from the power points.
7. We appreciate that CPD chose some Black officers to lead the trainings. In general, the Black instructors selected were by far the most effective teachers that we experienced in the trainings. We observed that as a general matter, female officer-trainees tended to perform better in the live simulations than their male counterparts, especially in terms of their effectiveness in de-escalation and restricting force to when necessary. Despite their superior performance in the simulations, CPD did not assign a single female officer to lead any of the force trainings that we observed.
8. By far, the worst part of the training in terms of classroom engagement was the use of training videos as a substitute for live instruction. The procedural justice and bias videos were sterile and full of buzzwords, lacked substance, and lacked anything that would hold officer interest. Everyone disengaged. Officers got on their phones, went to sleep, and otherwise found distractions. Even the instructor was yawning as he played the videos. Relegating the training on important topics like procedural justice and bias to videos sends the bad message to trainees that the CPD doesn't think that these are important enough subjects to engage officers in live instruction.
9. All the videos with scenarios for discussion took place outside of Chicago. It would be far more effective, relevant, and engaging to the trainees if CPD used examples from Chicago. Officers would be far less able to dismiss the scenarios as having taken place in different contexts. CPD bodyworn camera video would provide excellent material to review and critique good and bad interactions between police and community members and CPD, and to make concrete opportunities for de-escalation. What went right or wrong? What did the officer do that was particularly effective or problematic? How could CPD uses of force have been avoided? We recognize that there are challenges to using Chicago videos in which officers in the video may be known and some incidents may be subject to ongoing investigations, but CPD should look for ways to overcome obstacles to using Chicago-based examples.
10. CPD needs to be far more thoughtful about how to solicit, embrace, and respond to class resistance and thoroughly prepare instructors with strategies for doing so. It was clear that most of the officers who participated in the training did not want to be there and acted like it was a waste of their time. Experienced officers were powerfully resistant to being taught to do things differently than they have throughout their careers. The pervasive attitude was that the new policies and training were "bullshit"—that they weren't going to be told by the trainers how they should do their jobs. When one participant was asked how long he had been a police officer, he replied, "Twenty-six years." The trainer asked, "Then what are you doing here today?" to which the officer responded, "I've been asking myself that question." For the trainings to have any chance at being effective, CPD must design them to account for a resistant audience.

Recommendation: Create a classroom environment that facilitates officers' engagement and understanding of CPD's new de-escalation and force policies.

- 1. Schedule trainings in ways that give officers the opportunity to arrive well-rested and ready to engage.** Training should not be scheduled shortly after the completion of an officer's shift or when the officer has worked for more than 5 days without any break.
- 2. Devote more time to de-escalation and force training, and space the training over multiple days.** CPD's one-day, eight-hour training is not nearly enough to teach experienced officers CPD's new policies and approach to de-escalation and use of force.
- 3. Divide trainings into smaller groups.** Smaller groups are likely to foster more engagement and allow instructors to dedicate time and attention to eliciting and addressing officer resistance to CPD's new policies and approach to force.
- 4. Invest more time and thought into selecting officers to lead these training and preparing officers to effectively do so.**
 - › CPD must prioritize placing model officers and effective teachers from diverse backgrounds in the Training Division. We strongly recommend that CPD select more women to lead trainings both in the classroom as well as simulations.
 - › We are deeply concerned about the Superintendent's plan announced last summer to remove officers from the Training Division and to replace them with officers from the field who have not been adequately prepared and may not be motivated to teach these modules, much less teach them well.
- 5. Do NOT rely on video lectures to teach modules on de-escalation and use of force.** Live instruction with class discussion is critical to the success of these trainings.
- 6. When using a video scenario to build an interactive classroom conversation, use examples from Chicago,** including those of everyday interactions with community members, instead of focusing predominantly on extreme uses of force and exclusively on scenarios arising in other jurisdictions.

Recommendation - Expect officers to resist changes to CPD force and de-escalation policies and plan accordingly.

1. Invest greater thought into how to engage a reluctant audience, break bad habits, elicit and embrace push-back, and be prepared for resistance and a culture that remains hostile to many of the new De-Escalation and Force policies at the heart of these trainings.
2. Make conscious efforts to generate open and honest discussion during the classroom components of the training. CPD and its trainers have to ask themselves several important questions:
 - › What can CPD do to get officer “buy-in” to the new policies and approach to policing in Chicago?
 - › How can CPD consciously foster the conditions for honest conversation and open debate about scenarios involving interactions with community members, uses of force, and opportunities for de-escalation?
 - › How can CPD training generate compliance with these policies in practice using both “carrots” and “sticks.”
 - › How can instructors most effectively demonstrate that the new policies are better for both officers and the community—why following the policies is not only the right and ethical thing to do, but is also in officers’ interest (e.g., how it will make officers more effective; how it will make officers safer; how it will improve community relations and interactions on the street; how it will make officers’ jobs better; how it will improve public safety).
3. At the same time, CPD must demonstrate its institutional commitment to the policies: “Make no mistake. We mean what we say. These policies are core to our mission. And officers will be held accountable for violating them.”

Concern 2: CPD Fails to Test Police Officers on What They Learned.

1. There was no test or assessment that measured whether the officers were retaining information at the end of the training.

Recommendation - Assess officers’ knowledge and hold them accountable.

1. **Test the trainee-officers on what they learned immediately following the training.** Testing the officers at the conclusion of the class would better help inform the instructors on what they need to emphasize, and it would also encourage the officers to stay engaged throughout the class if they knew they had to complete an assessment on what they learned. Ideally this would include assessment in drill scenarios in addition to written examinations.
2. **These assessments should have stakes.** Officers who demonstrate that they have not internalized the principles and methods that are being shared should be required to retake the training and be prevented from working in the field until they pass the exam.

CONCLUSION

We observed serious deficiencies in CPD training that must be corrected. The training is ineffective at reaching officers, it reinforces a mentality that pits the police against the people who they are sworn to protect and serve, and it teaches officers to prioritize police lives above all else.

CPD training matters. The Community Use of Force Working Group invested a great deal of time and resources to transform CPD's policies on the use of force. Absent effective training and systems of accountability, the new policies will serve as little more than an empty promise and the more than \$170 million in public funds invested in the City's new training facility will have gone to waste.

We urge the Community Commission on Public Safety to demand community involvement and transparency in the training process. Moreover, the Community Commission and City Council should hold public hearings on CPD training and our recommendations. We urge all Chicagoans to join us in our continuing efforts to build a better and safer Chicago by pushing the CPD to implement the common-sense recommendations we offer in this Report.