



NEWS RELEASE

Chicago Police Department

David O. Brown
Superintendent

For Immediate Release
May 14, 2021

Contact: Office of News Affairs
312-745-6110

CHICAGO POLICE DEPARTMENT ANNOUNCES REVISED SEARCH WARRANT POLICY

Revised policy strengthens search warrant development and service procedures; reaffirms commitment to human dignity and professionalism

CHICAGO – Mayor Lori Lightfoot and Chicago Police Department (CPD) Superintendent David O. Brown today announced a revised search warrant policy that strengthens the Department's commitment to human dignity, respect and professionalism by improving its search warrant investigation and development procedures. The revised policy will be effective May 28, 2021.

"These critical revisions to CPD's search warrant policies and procedures come at a pivotal moment in our journey as we work to bring about true police reform," said Mayor Lightfoot. "Furthermore, they are just one of many reforms that CPD has and will continue to make in order to ensure that accountability, transparency, and human dignity are the guiding principles of policing here in Chicago."

A draft version of the revised policy underwent public comment earlier this year, with the Department receiving more than 800 comments that were considered as the policy was developed. The public comment period builds on the Department's dedication to transparency and building community trust citywide.

"The revisions of this search warrant policy reflect our dedication to protecting public safety, while prioritizing and respecting the rights of the residents we serve," said Superintendent Brown. "This revised policy would not have been possible without the input of our community members."

The Department will continue to review the revised policy to ensure appropriate development, approval, service, supervision and accountability throughout the search warrant process. Clarifications or revisions to the policy will be made as necessary based on the review, which is expected to be completed later this year. Following the review and any necessary updates, the policy will be made available for a second public comment period.

"Gaining insight and wisdom from everyday Chicagoans is essential as CPD moves forward with necessary reforms that will best protect the residents they serve," said Joyce Chapman, 5th (Calumet) District Community Policing Advisory Panel and District Advisory Council Chair. "While this revised policy is significant progress, this is also another step in a respectful dialogue between police and the community."

This revised policy is another step in the Department's reform efforts, instituted under Mayor Lightfoot's leadership. This follows revisions made to the search warrant policy in January 2020, which enhanced accountability during search warrant service by requiring the activation of body-worn cameras on-scene and requiring log numbers to be generated for raids at incorrect addresses.

Highlights of the revised policy include:

Prior to service of a search warrant

- Enhancing internal coordination and supervision over executions of search warrants, including requiring high-ranking supervisors of deputy chief or above to review all search warrants for real property or locations where occupants could be present.
- Requiring an independent investigation to verify and corroborate information used to develop a search warrant prior to approval.
- Requiring a pre-service planning session with search warrant team members identifying potential occupants of the service location, paying attention to potentially vulnerable individuals (including children, elderly, persons with disabilities and individuals with limited English proficiency).
- Limiting no-knock search warrants, which will only be served by SWAT, only to situations in which there is a reasonable suspicion that knocking and announcing would be dangerous to the life or safety of the officers serving the warrant or another person. No-knock search warrants must also be personally reviewed and approved by a bureau chief.

During service of a search warrant

- Reaffirming respect of human dignity and professionalism toward all individuals involved when serving search warrants.
- Having a lieutenant or above on-scene when serving a search warrant.
- Ensuring each participating member serving a search warrant is assigned a functioning body-worn camera and utilized in accordance with the Department's [body-worn camera policy](#).
- Requiring a sworn female Department member to be present during the service of search warrants.

Following service of a search warrant

- Requiring a Department supervisor to generate a log number when being notified of, or becoming aware of any wrong raid or alleged, suspected or apparent violation of the Department's rules and regulations, directives or orders by any sworn or civilian Department member.
- Defining a wrong raid as a search warrant that is served at a location that is different than the location listed on the search warrant or an incident where a Department member serving a search warrant encounters, identifies or should reasonably have become aware of circumstances or facts that are inconsistent with the factual basis for the probable cause documented and used to obtain the search warrant.
- Ensuring the presence of children during search warrant service is documented in post-service records.
- Conducting after-action reviews of wrongfully served search warrants, which will include a review of the search warrant documentation and relevant recorded evidence. The Superintendent will arrange for an annual evaluation of all after-action reviews that have been conducted.

The full revised search warrant policy can be viewed [HERE](#).

###