

Chicago Tribune



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BREAKING NEWS AT CHICAGOTRIBUNE.COM

COPA has closed 143 cases amid stoppage

Some police discipline probes involve alleged repeat offenders

By Sam Charles
Chicago Tribune

A Cook County judge's order kept the Chicago Police Board frozen for much of the first two months of 2024. The Civilian Office of Police Accountability, meanwhile, was busy.

COPA, the agency tasked with probing use-of-force incidents and other misconduct involving CPD officers, closed 143 investigations in January and February, according to records obtained by the Tribune via the Freedom of Information Act. Those investigations involved 302 Chicago cops accused of misconduct.

The findings and recommendations in each case were not yet known, but during February's meeting of the Chicago Police Board, Superintendent Larry Snelling said COPA recommended 28 officers be fired from the Police Department in just the first two months of 2024.

For now, though, the professional fates of those accused officers — and the future of police discipline in Chicago overall — remain clouded ahead of an anticipated ruling from the judge later this month.

Most of the 302 accused are rank-and-file officers, though several supervisors and a handful of district-station detention aides also face allegations of misconduct. The majority of those now-concluded investigations stemmed from incidents that allegedly occurred between 2019 and 2022, records show.

And while the process is stalled, many of the officers in question remain on the city payroll, some on the street and others in roles at the police communications center or writing traffic tickets, according to CPD staffing data and Cook County court records.

The officers faced a wide range of accusations, including the sexual abuse of a minor in the south suburbs, excessive force and civil rights violations, improperly executed search warrants reminiscent of the high-profile wrongful raid at the home of Anjanette Young, submitting false reports, and a conspiracy by three officers to bring bogus criminal charges against a security guard who tried to remove an aggressive cop from

Turn to COPA, Page 9



Ryan Hurley, left, a campaign staffer, hands flyers to state Sen. Natalie Toro, D-Chicago, while canvassing for her reelection in the Bucktown neighborhood in Chicago on March 2. VINCENT ALBAN/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

ELECTION 2024 GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Democratic incumbents face primary competition

Party seeking to keep hold on supermajorities

By Jeremy Gornier, Olivia Stevens and Olivia Olander
Chicago Tribune

Democrats will try to maintain their supermajorities in both chambers of the General Assembly in this year's elections, with several incumbents facing challenges in the March 19 primary and big money pouring into some races.

In 2022, Democrats, aided by a newly drawn map of district boundaries, held on to their supermajority in the Senate and built on it in the House, expanding to 78 members, the most for that chamber in modern times. The Democrats have controlled both chambers of the General Assembly since 2003.

This year, all 118 House seats

Turn to Primary, Page 4



State Senate candidate Graciela Guzman, right, hands out informational flyers to volunteers Yaneri Zuniga, left, and Kyle Sparks, not pictured, as Guzman canvasses in Chicago's Albany Park neighborhood on Feb. 28. Guzman is challenging Toro in the 20th District race. CHRIS SWEDA/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Climate affecting family planning

Some young people expect fewer or no kids because of warming

By Nara Schoenberg
Chicago Tribune

Collin Pearsall has friends who have started having children. But he has chosen a different path — due, in large part, to climate change.

Pearsall worries about the greenhouse gas emissions a child would add to a planet already experiencing the effects of rising temperatures.

And he is concerned about the impact climate change would have on the child: “the feeling of impending doom, every day, for their whole life.”



Collin Pearsall, 30, seen near his home in Chicago's Humboldt Park area on March 1, doesn't want to have a child. He cites climate change as a reason. CHRIS SWEDA/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

When he and his wife discussed having kids, he said, they found they were on the same page: “Why would we want to bring a child into the world with no consent as to whether they want to (deal

with) all these problems?”

Pearsall, 30, of Humboldt Park, is part of a large and increasingly visible group of Americans: people

Turn to Climate, Page 5

New ways sought to get aid deliveries into Gaza

But officials say air, sea shipments fall short of desperate needs

By Wafaa Shurafa and Sammy Magdy
Associated Press

DEIR AL-BALAH, Gaza Strip — A U.S. Army vessel carrying equipment to build a temporary pier in Gaza was heading to the Mediterranean on Sunday, after U.S. President Joe Biden announced plans to increase aid deliveries by sea to the besieged enclave where hundreds of thousands of Palestinians are

going hungry.

The new push for aid came as the Muslim holy month of Ramadan was set to begin Monday in much of the world after officials in Saudi Arabia saw the crescent moon.

Hopes for a new cease-fire by Ramadan faded days ago, with negotiations apparently stalled.

The opening of the sea corridor, along with airdrops by the U.S., Jordan and others, reflected growing alarm over Gaza's deadly humanitarian crisis and a new willingness to bypass Israeli control

Turn to Gaza, Page 9

Bears propose \$2B lakefront stadium plan

The team confirmed it is prepared to provide \$2 billion in private funding for a publicly owned enclosed stadium and park space in Chicago. **Page 2**

‘Oppenheimer’ dominates Academy Awards

Biopic wins best picture and six other Oscars, including best director for Christopher Nolan and best actor for Cillian Murphy. **Arts & Living**

TODAY'S WEATHER



High 66 Low 47

Complete Chicagoland forecast on Page 12

\$4.00 city and suburbs and elsewhere
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