

# Delaware Criminal Justice Council

## 11 Del. C. §9210 Authorized Disclosures

### Agency Information

Law Enforcement Agency: \_\_\_Georgetown Police Department\_\_\_\_\_

Date of Incident: \_\_\_\_\_03/21/2024\_\_\_\_\_

### Incident Details

Law Enforcement Officer has discharged a firearm at a person.  Yes |  No

Law Enforcement Officer's use of force that results in serious physical injury.  Yes |  No

An investigation that results in a sustained finding that a Law Enforcement Officer engaged in a sexual assault or sexual harassment. For purposes of this paragraph, "sexual assault" means the commission or attempted initiation of a sexual act by means of force, threat, coercion, extortion, or offer or implication of leniency or official favor, under the color of authority. Propositioning sex or commission of a sexual act while an officer is on duty is deemed a "sexual assault."  Yes |  No

An investigation that results in a sustained finding that a Law Enforcement Officer engaged in dishonest conduct. This includes, but is not limited to sustained findings of perjury, false statements, filing false reports, witness tampering, and destruction, falsification, or concealment of evidence.  Yes |  No

A sustained finding of domestic violence by a Law Enforcement Officer.  Yes |  No

### Detailed Narrative

Please include a detailed narrative of the incident. A "detailed narrative" means a complete description of the facts, steps taken to further an investigation, evidence collected, conclusions reached, the names of officers involved for whom misconduct was substantiated, any discipline assigned in connection with the event, and the employment status of disciplined officers. 11 Del. C. § 9200(b)(1).

The detailed narrative may not reveal the name or any personal identifying information of a victim or witness. In a domestic violence case where revealing the name of the officer would also allow identification of the victim, the officer's name may be redacted.

The Criminal Justice Council shall post the narratives they receive under this paragraph on their website within 30 calendar days of receipt.

I. Complete Description of the Facts:

- (1) On March 21, 2024, Cpl. Katie Couchman was scheduled for a mandatory appointment at 0800 hours. At 0638 hours, Cpl. Couchman text the appointment location that she would be unable to attend the appointment due to a trial scheduled for that morning. There was no scheduled trial on March 21, 2024, for Cpl. Couchman. A late fee of \$350 was received by Georgetown Police Department for the missed appointment. Cpl. Couchman advised Administrative Assistant, Linda Zelo, that she had to cancel the appointment due to a trial that was scheduled and advised she wasn't needed for the trial after all because the defendant took a plea. There was no trial therefore no plea. Cpl. Couchman was charged with (2) counts of Untruthfulness and (1) count of Violation of the rules.
- (2) Cpl. Couchman was scheduled to work "power car" 10am to 10pm, June 28 – 30, 2024. Power car is a shift that overlaps Day and Night shift. She had vacation scheduled to start July 1, 2024. Monday, July 1, 2024, officers from June 30 day and night shift contacted Deputy Chief Joel Diaz in reference to Cpl. Couchman arriving at work late and leaving early on June 30, 2024. According to Cpl. Couchman's payroll timesheet she worked 10am – 10pm on June 30, 2024. According to officers she came to work 2 hours late at 12pm and left at 8pm. This discrepancy resulted in 4hours pay for unworked hours. Cpl. Couchman was charged with (1) count of Untruthfulness, (1) count of Violation of the rules, and (1) count of Poor Judgement

II. Investigatory Steps:

- (1) An IA investigation was ordered by Chief Ralph Holm and conducted by Lt. Matt Barlow of the Georgetown Police Department. Lt. Barlow gathered evidence from the doctor's office pertaining to the billing of the late cancelation fee. He interviewed relevant parties to include Cpl. Couchman. He reviewed the agencies subpoena book and the court's calendar for March 21, 2024.
- (2) Lt. Joel Diaz received information from Cpl. Couchman's platoon partners and reviewed Cpl. Couchman's payroll submission. CAD notes were checked which confirmed a discrepancy. Lt. Diaz notified Chief Holm who then assigned the new allegations to Lt. Barlow's investigation pertaining to a late cancellation.

III. Evidence Collected: N/A

- (1) Statements from Chief Holm, Assistant Linda Zelo, a copy of the invoice for the late cancellation, the doctor's notes determining the excuse was not acceptable and approving the late fee. Cpl. Couchman's payroll submission showing she did not request Court Stand by pay for March 21, 2024.
- (2) Statements from Pfc. Thomas, Pfc. Leppert, CAD notes that showed the dates and times Cpl. Couchman worked, the time she went on and off duty with Suscom, Cpl. Couchman's payroll submission. Video of the back parking lot of the Police Department showing Cpl. Couchman getting picked up at 8pm to start vacation.

IV. Conclusions Reached: N/A

- (1) Investigation sustained all allegations and Cpl. Couchman was charged with 2 counts Untruthfulness and 1 count of Violation of the Rules. Cpl. Couchman requested a hearing on the matter, and on June 3, 2024, all three charges were Substantiated.
- (2) Investigation sustained all allegations and Cpl. Couchman was charged with 1 count Untruthfulness, 1 count of Violation of the Rules and 1 count of Poor Judgement. Cpl. Couchman requested a hearing on the matter, and on June 3, 2024, all three charges were Substantiated.

- V. The names of officers involved for whom misconduct was substantiated:  
(1) Corporal Katie Couchman  
(2) Corporal Katie Couchman
- VI. Any Discipline Assigned in Connection with the Incident:  
(1) Count 1, **Untruthfulness** – Termination of employment with the Town of Georgetown.  
Count 2, **Untruthfulness** – Termination of employment with the Town of Georgetown.  
Count 3, **Violation of the Rules** – Suspended 4 hours  
(2) Count 4, **Untruthfulness** – Termination of employment with the Town of Georgetown.  
Count 5, **Violation of the Rules** – Suspended 4 hours  
Count 6, **Poor Judgement** – Suspended 4 hours
- VII. The Employment Status of Disciplined Officers:  
Corporal Katie Couchman was suspended with pay following the administrative hearing pending the written findings of the Board. Cpl. Couchman's employment was terminated effective August 4, 2024.