

STATE OF ILLINOIS |  
COUNTY OF COOK | SS

**COOK COUNTY SHERIFF'S  
MERIT BOARD**

**IN THE MATTER OF:**

**CORRECTIONAL OFFICER  
NICHOLAS J. REED**

**EMPLOYEE [REDACTED]  
STAR #16825**

**DOCKET NO. 2290**

**DECISION**

This matter coming before the Board, pursuant to the filing of Exceptions by the Respondent to the original Proposed Decision, pursuant to Article IX, Section F(2) of the Cook County Sheriff's Merit Board Rules, relative to the hearing held pursuant to notice before Robert F. Hogan, Hearing Officer, on February 5, 2024, the Cook County Sheriff's Merit Board finds as follows:

**Jurisdiction**

Nicholas J. Reed, hereinafter Respondent, was appointed a Correctional office on October 17, 2011. Respondent's position as a Correctional Officer involves duties and responsibilities to the public; each member of the Cook County Sheriff's Merit Board, hereinafter Board, has been duly appointed to serve as a member of the Board pursuant to confirmation by the Cook County Board of Commissioners, State of Illinois, to sit for a stated term; the Board has jurisdiction of the subject matter of the parties in accordance with 55 ILCS 5/3-7001. *et seq*; and the Respondent was served with a copy of the Complaint and notice of hearing and appeared before the Board with counsel to contest the charges contained in the Complaint.

**Issues Presented**

Whether the alleged actions of the Respondent violated any of the General Orders and Rules and Regulations set forth, specifically, Sheriff's Orders 101, Department of Corrections Policy 101 and Cook County Sheriff's Merit Board Rules and Regulations Article X, paragraph B; and what, if any, discipline is appropriate if a violation occurred.

**Findings of Fact**

The Sheriff filed a Complaint on July 22, 2023, and an Amended Complaint on August 2, 2023. The Sheriff is requesting termination of the Respondent. In the Complaint, the Sheriff alleges that the Respondent, on November 14, 2020, committed the crime of Domestic Battery against [REDACTED] with whom he lived at the house of the Respondent's parents in Darien, Illinois. Ms. [REDACTED] was also employed as a Cook County Corrections Officer at the time. The two had a child together.

The Amended Complaint alleges violations of Sheriff's Orders 101, Department of Corrections Policy 101 and Cook County Sheriff's Merit Board Rules and Regulations Article X, paragraph B.

On October 17, 2011, the Respondent was appointed a Correctional Officer. From approximately March 2012 through a later time, Respondent was in a romantic relationship with [REDACTED]. Respondent and [REDACTED] lived together at Respondent's parents' house located in Darien, Illinois. The Respondent and [REDACTED] have a child together, who was born in [REDACTED]

On November 14, 2020, [REDACTED] alleged that Respondent attacked her during an argument by tackling her onto a bed; choking her with his hands; throwing her to the floor; and punching her in the face, shoulder area, and chest. At approximately 9:55 AM, officers from Darien Police Department arrived and observed signs of injury to [REDACTED] face consisting of a laceration to the left side of her lip and redness and swelling to the left side of her face. Officers also observed injuries on [REDACTED] neck and collarbone area that consisted of redness and swelling. Based on [REDACTED] allegations and the Officer's observations, Respondent was arrested and charged with 14 counts of domestic battery. (See testimony of Darien Police Officer [REDACTED] contained in Sheriff's Exhibit #6 at pp84-90, admitted into evidence without objection by the Respondent at transcript pp. 24-25)

On September 14, 2022, after a bench trial, Respondent was found guilty of misdemeanor domestic battery in the Circuit Court of the DuPage County. On February 3, 2023, Respondent was sentenced to Conditional Discharge for a term of 1 year, during which time he was required to abide by various terms of his Conditional Discharge such as completing a counseling program and having no contact with [REDACTED] (See Sheriff's Exhibit #4 admitted into evidence without objection by the Respondent at transcript p. 23)

Cook County Sheriff's Police Officer [REDACTED] testified that he was detailed to the Office of Professional Review in November of 2020 and was assigned to investigate the allegations against the Respondent.

Officer [REDACTED] testified that in furtherance of his investigation, he interviewed the Respondent who provided an audio recorded interview regarding the incident involving [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Officer [REDACTED] testified that the Respondent denied that he battered [REDACTED] on

November 14, 2020, during his audio-recorded interview. The Respondent also stated that he thought that the injuries suffered by [REDACTED] were self-inflicted.

At the conclusion of the investigation, Officer [REDACTED] made a finding that the Respondent battered [REDACTED] on November 14, 2020. He further found that the statements made by the Respondent that he did not batte [REDACTED] on November 14, 2020, were untruthful.

Officer [REDACTED] further testified that he reviewed policies during the investigation to determine whether the Respondent violated CCSO policies. Officer [REDACTED] concluded that the Respondent did in fact violate various portions of Sheriff's Policy 101 Conduct, Department of Corrections Policy 101 Conduct; and Merit Board Rules and Regulations Article X, paragraph B.

The Respondent testified on his own behalf. He testified that he did not physically strike [REDACTED] on November 14, 2020, contrary to the OPR investigation and the Criminal Court's verdict. The Respondent testified that he accepts that he was found guilty but firmly disagrees with the verdict. The Respondent further testified that he is still actively employed at a Cook County Corrections Officer.

### Analysis

The Merit Board finds Respondent clearly violated Cook County Sheriff's Department Policies 101 (Conduct), 101 (Policy); Cook County Sheriff's Department of Corrections Policies 101 (Conduct), 101 (Policy); as well as the Cook County Sheriff's Merit Board Rules and Regulations, Article X, paragraph B. It is clear to the Board that the Respondent committed the offense of Domestic Battery on [REDACTED] at the home of the Respondent's parents on November 14, 2020. The fact that the Respondent contends that [REDACTED] injuries were self-inflicted belies the overwhelming weight of the evidence in this matter and indicates

that the Respondent has not accepted his responsibility for his actions. The Board finds the testimony of the Respondent to lack credibility given the totality of the circumstances surrounding the events that are the basis of this case before the Board.

The Board agrees with the finding of the Circuit Court that the Respondent committed the offense of Domestic Battery.

Additionally, the Board also finds that the Respondent gave untruthful statements to OPR Investigator [REDACTED] when he claimed to have not physically attacked [REDACTED] on November 14, 2020. The evidence is clear that the Respondent was responsible for the documented injuries suffered by [REDACTED] on November 14, 2020.

The nature of the conduct of the Respondent is inconsistent with employment as a law enforcement officer.

Based on the reasons set for the above, the evidence presented, and the testimony of Respondent and witnesses, the Merit Board finds that the Respondent did violate the General Orders and Policies of the Cook County Sheriff's Department, the Cook County Department of Corrections, and the Rules and Regulations of the Cook County Sheriff's Merit Board.

### **Order**

The Merit Board finds that Respondent did violate the General Orders and Policies of the Cook County Sheriff's Department, the Cook County Department of Corrections and the Rules and Regulations of the Cook County Sheriff's Merit Board and that Respondent should be terminated from the Cook County Sheriff's Office effective July 22, 2022.

**JOHN J. DALICANDRO**, Chairman  
**BYRON BRAZIER**, Vice-Chairman  
**VINCENT T. WINTERS**, Secretary  
**KIMBERLY PATE GODDEN**, Board Member  
**TERRENCE J. WALSH**, Board Member  
**MARLA M. KAIDEN**, Board Member  
**WADE INGRAM SR.**, Board Member  
**JAMES J. SEXTON**, Board Member



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**ROBERT F. HOGAN**, Hearing Officer

**COOK COUNTY**  
**SHERIFF'S MERIT BOARD**  
69 West Washington - Suite 1100  
Chicago, IL 60602

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NICHOLAS J. REED  
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This Decision is adopted and entered by a majority of the Members of the Merit Board:

Voted Yes:

John J. Dalicandro, Byron Brazier, Vincent T. Winters, Kimberly Pate Godden, Terrence J. Walsh,  
Marla M. Kaiden, Wade Ingram Sr. and James J. Sexton

Voted No: None

Not Present: None

DATED AT COUNTY OF COOK, STATE OF ILLINOIS, THIS 9<sup>th</sup> DAY OF MAY, 2024.

