

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS
EASTERN DIVISION**

ANTHONY BANKS,

Plaintiff,

v.

CITY OF CHICAGO, OFFICER
WALTER, OFFICER VENEGAS,
UNKNOWN CHICAGO TACTICAL
POLICE OFFICERS, UNKNOWN
SERGEANT, and LIEUTENANT NARO,
Defendants.

Case No. 25-cv-10203

COMPLAINT

NOW COMES the PLAINTIFF, ANTHONY BANKS, by and through his attorney, Blake Horwitz, Esq., of The Blake Horwitz Law Firm, Ltd., and complaining of the DEFENDANTS, CITY OF CHICAGO, OFFICER WALTER, OFFICER VENEGAS, UNKNOWN CHICAGO TACTICAL POLICE OFFICERS, UNKNOWN SERGEANT, and LIEUTENANT NARO, states as follows:

I. JURISDICTION

1. The jurisdiction of the Court is invoked pursuant to the Civil Rights Act, 42 U.S.C. § 1983; the Judicial Code, 28 U.S.C. §1331 and §1343(a); the Constitution of the United States; and this Court's supplementary jurisdiction powers.

II. PARTIES

2. PLAINTIFF ANTHONY BANKS ("PLAINTIFF") is a resident of the State of Illinois and was, at all times relevant, employed as a police officer with the Chicago Police Department ("CPD") and assigned to the 11th District.

3. DEFENDANT OFFICER WALTER (hereinafter, “DEFENDANT WALTER”), at all times relevant, was employed by and acting on behalf of the CPD and under the color of state law.

4. DEFENDANT OFFICER VENEGAS (hereinafter, “DEFENDANT WALTER”), at all times relevant, was employed by and acting on behalf of the CPD and under the color of state law.

5. DEFENDANT UNKNOWN SERGEANT (hereinafter, “DEFENDANT SERGEANT”), at all times relevant, was employed by and acting on behalf of the CPD and under the color of state law.

6. DEFENDANT LIEUTENANT NARO (hereinafter “DEFENDANT NARO”), at all times relevant, was employed by and acting on behalf of the CPD and under the color of state law.

7. DEFENDANTS UNKNOWN TACTICAL OFFICERS (collectively, “DEFENDANT UNKNOWN OFFICERS” and individually, “DEFENDANT UNKNOWN OFFICER”), at all times relevant, were employed by and acting on behalf of the CPD and under the color of state law.

8. The DEFENDANT CITY OF CHICAGO (hereinafter, “DEFENDANT CITY”) is a duly incorporated municipal corporation and is the employer and principal of the DEFENDANT OFFICERS.¹ At all times material to this Complaint, the DEFENDANT OFFICERS were acting under the color of state law, ordinance, and/or regulation, statutes, custom, and usages of the DEFENDANT CITY.

¹ DEFENDANT WALTER, OFFICER VENEGAS, DEFENDANT SERGEANT, and DEFENDANT UNKNOWN TACTICAL OFFICERS are referred to collectively as “DEFENDANT OFFICERS.”

9. At all relevant times, the DEFENDANT OFFICERS and DEFENDANT NARO were agents and/or employees of the DEFENDANT CITY.

III. FACTS

10. On or about March 17, 2025, PLAINTIFF responded to a scene while on duty in the 11th District.

11. At the scene, PLAINTIFF observed a heated exchange between a DEFENDANT UNKNOWN OFFICER and a visibly pregnant woman. PLAINTIFF observed the DEFENDANT UNKNOWN OFFICER bump into the woman, which escalated the confrontation.

12. PLAINTIFF attempted to de-escalate the situation by stepping between the DEFENDANT UNKNOWN OFFICER and the pregnant woman and asking the DEFENDANT UNKNOWN OFFICER to calm down.

13. Later that day, when PLAINTIFF returned to the police station, he was approached in the doorway by the same DEFENDANT UNKNOWN OFFICER, who aggressively questioned PLAINTIFF's conduct at the scene and accused PLAINTIFF of interfering with his team.

14. Several DEFENDANT OFFICERS then encircled PLAINTIFF, who is African-American.

15. After being surrounded by several DEFENDANT OFFICERS, PLAINTIFF was not free to leave.

16. One DEFENDANT UNKNOWN OFFICER told PLAINTIFF, "Go back where you came from."

17. Another DEFENDANT UNKNOWN OFFICER said, "Go back to the third district," which is known for having predominantly African-American officers.

18. Another DEFENDANT UNKNOWN OFFICER mumbled under his breath, “Nah n*gga,” a racial slur directed at PLAINTIFF.

19. Two Chicago Police sergeants who witnessed the confrontation, intervened, and helped PLAINTIFF separate from the DEFENDANT OFFICERS.

20. PLAINTIFF reported the incident to his lieutenant, DEFENDANT NARO, who dismissed PLAINTIFF’s concerns and instead informed PLAINTIFF that officers in the station were angry with him and instructed PLAINTIFF to leave early.

21. While enroute home, DEFENDANT NARO called PLAINTIFF and ordered him to return to the station to write a statement (“To/From”). This To/From was a sensitive, confidential internal document used to investigate wrongdoing.

22. On March 18, 2025, a fellow officer from PLAINTIFF’s former district (District 3) informed PLAINTIFF that the To/From had been leaked online.

23. The To/From statement was in fact, leaked online by a Chicago police officer.

24. That night, on March 18, 2025, PLAINTIFF received a graphic and threatening email containing a racist image on his department-issued phone. The image depicted a caricature of an African-American man with a gun in his mouth, reading: “When is a n*gger the most frustrated”? “When he tries to blow his own brains out.” (Attached as Exhibit A).

25. This image was sent by one of the DEFENDANT OFFICERS who encircled PLAINTIFF, as alleged above.

26. The image was sent to PLAINTIFF’s work phone.

27. PLAINTIFF is now on medical leave due to emotional distress, trauma, and fear for his safety.

28. On July 31, 2025, Plaintiff received a right-to-sue letter from the EEOC regarding his EEOC Charge.

COUNT I
§1983 Fourth Amendment Seizure
(Against DEFENDANT OFFICERS)

29. PLAINTIFF realleges paragraphs 1 – 28 as though fully set forth herein.

30. On or around March 17, 2025, DEFENDANT OFFICERS surrounded PLAINTIFF, while on duty and in uniform, prevented PLAINTIFF from leaving, and detained PLAINTIFF without lawful authority or probable cause.

31. PLAINTIFF was not free to leave while surrounded by the DEFENDANT OFFICERS.

32. The actions of DEFENDANT OFFICERS directly and proximately caused PLAINTIFF to suffer, without limitation, pain and suffering, humiliation, emotional distress, and mental anguish.

33. The actions of DEFENDANT OFFICERS were the direct and proximate cause of the injuries that PLAINTIFF sustained as a result of DEFENDANT OFFICERS violating PLAINTIFF's constitutional rights, as alleged above.

WHEREFORE, PLAINTIFF respectfully requests that this Court award PLAINTIFF compensatory damages, punitive damages, costs, and attorneys' fees, as well as any other relief this Court deems just and equitable.

COUNT II
False Imprisonment
(Against DEFENDANT OFFICERS)

34. PLAINTIFF realleges paragraphs 1 – 28 as though fully set forth herein.

35. One or more of the DEFENDANT OFFICERS restricted PLAINTIFF's movement.

36. One or more DEFENDANT OFFICERS restricted PLAINTIFF's movement unreasonably and without probable cause.

37. PLAINTIFF's personal freedom was curtailed against his wishes by one or more of the DEFENDANT OFFICERS.

38. PLAINTIFF's detention by one or more of the DEFENDANT OFFICERS was unreasonable and unlawful.

39. As a result of one or more DEFENDANT OFFICERS' unlawful conduct, PLAINTIFF suffered and continues to suffer from emotional and psychological injuries, physical injuries, and other damages.

WHEREFORE, PLAINTIFF respectfully requests that this Court award PLAINTIFF compensatory damages, punitive damages, and costs, as well as any other relief this Court deems just and equitable.

COUNT III
Violation of Civil Rights under 42 U.S.C. § 1983
(Equal Protection & Substantive Due Process)
(Against DEFENDANT OFFICERS and DEFENDANT NARO)

40. PLAINTIFF realleges paragraphs 1 – 28 as though fully set forth herein.

41. DEFENDANT OFFICERS and DEFENDANT NARO, under color of law, subjected PLAINTIFF to racially motivated harassment, retaliation, and the unauthorized dissemination of confidential information, depriving PLAINTIFF of equal protection under the Fourteenth Amendment

42. The DEFENDANT OFFICERS' and DEFENDANT NARO's conduct was outrageous, discriminatory, and inflicted intentional emotional harm on PLAINTIFF.

WHEREFORE, PLAINTIFF respectfully requests that this Court award PLAINTIFF compensatory damages, punitive damages, costs, and attorneys' fees, as well as any other

relief this Court deems just and equitable.

COUNT IV
42 U.S.C. § 1981 – Racial Discrimination in Employment
(Against DEFENDANT OFFICERS)

43. PLAINTIFF realleges paragraphs 1 – 28 as though fully set forth herein.

44. PLAINTIFF, an African-American employee, was subjected to hostile and discriminatory treatment by DEFENDANT OFFICERS because of his race.

45. DEFENDANT OFFICERS' actions—including the use of racial slurs, exclusion, and physical intimidation—interfered with PLAINTIFF's conditions of employment in violation of 42 U.S.C. § 1981.

46. DEFENDANT OFFICERS' conduct was intentional, malicious, and in reckless disregard of PLAINTIFF's rights.

WHEREFORE, PLAINTIFF respectfully requests that this Court award PLAINTIFF compensatory damages, punitive damages, costs, and attorneys' fees, as well as any other relief this Court deems just and equitable.

COUNT V
Title VII – Racial Discrimination
(Against DEFENDANT CITY)

47. PLAINTIFF realleges paragraphs 1 – 46 as though fully set forth herein.

48. PLAINTIFF was subjected to a racially hostile work environment, discrimination, and disparate treatment by CPD officers and supervisors.

49. Defendant CITY failed to prevent or correct the discrimination and was deliberately indifferent to the violations, in violation of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act.

50. As a result, PLAINTIFF has suffered emotional distress, reputational harm, and career setbacks.

WHEREFORE, PLAINTIFF respectfully requests that this Court enter Judgment in his favor and against the DEFENDANT CITY and award compensatory damages, court costs, attorneys' fees, and such other relief that this Court deems just and equitable.

COUNT VI
Respondeat Superior
(Against DEFENDANT CITY)

51. PLAINTIFF realleges paragraphs 1 – 46 as though fully set forth herein.

52. At all relevant times, DEFENDANT CITY was the employer and/or principal of INDIVIDUAL DEFENDANTS as their employer.

53. At all relevant times, DEFENDANTS were employed by DEFENDANT CITY.

54. INDIVIDUAL DEFENDANTS' conduct described in this Complaint occurred within the scope of their employment with DEFENDANT CITY.

55. As the INDIVIDUAL DEFENDANTS' employer, DEFENDANT CITY is liable for their conduct committed within the scope of their employment.

WHEREFORE, should this Court find any INDIVIDUAL DEFENDANTS liable for any state-law claims described in this Complaint, PLAINTIFF prays for judgment against DEFENDANT CITY as their principal and employer pursuant to the doctrine of *respondeat superior* and such other additional relief as this Honorable Court deems just and equitable.

COUNT VII
Indemnification Pursuant to 745 ILCS 10/9-102
(AGAINST DEFENDANT CITY)

56. PLAINTIFF realleges paragraphs 1 – 55 as though fully set forth herein.

57. DEFENDANT CITY is the employer of the DEFENDANT OFFICERS.

58. In the event that the DEFENDANT OFFICERS are found liable for their actions performed in the course of their employment, the DEFENDANT CITY must indemnify such employee for this verdict pursuant to 745 ILCS 10/9-102.

59. Pursuant to the Illinois Tort Immunity Act, 745 ILCS 10/9-102, DEFENDANT CITY is liable for any judgments for compensatory damages arising from DEFENDANT OFFICERS' actions.

WHEREFORE, should the DEFENDANT OFFICERS in their individual capacities be found liable for any of the alleged counts in this cause, PLAINTIFF demands that, pursuant to 745 ILCS 10/9-102, DEFENDANT CITY pay any judgment obtained against any of the DEFENDANT OFFICERS.

JURY DEMAND

PLAINTIFF demands trial by a twelve-person jury.

Respectfully submitted,

s/Blake Horwitz
Plaintiff's Attorney

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The ILND 44 civil cover sheet and the information contained herein neither replace nor supplement the filing and service of pleadings or other papers as required by law, except as provided by local rules of court. This form, approved by the Judicial Conference of the United States in September 1974, is required for the use of the Clerk of Court for the purpose of initiating the civil docket sheet. (See instructions on next page of this form.)

I. (a) PLAINTIFFS**ANTHONY BANKS**

(b) County of Residence of First Listed Plaintiff
(Except in U.S. plaintiff cases)

(c) Attorneys (firm name, address, and telephone number)

The Blake Horwitz Law Firm, (312) 676-2100**DEFENDANTS****CITY OF CHICAGO, et. al.**

County of Residence of First Listed Defendant
(In U.S. plaintiff cases only)

Note: In land condemnation cases, use the location of the tract of land involved.

Attorneys (If Known)

II. BASIS OF JURISDICTION (Check one box, only.)

- ☐ 1 U.S. Government Plaintiff
- ☐ 2 U.S. Government Defendant
- ☒ 3 Federal Question
(U.S. Government not a party.)
- ☐ 4 Diversity
(Indicate citizenship of parties in Item III.)

III. CITIZENSHIP OF PRINCIPAL PARTIES (For Diversity Cases Only.)

(Check one box, only for plaintiff and one box for defendant.)

- | | PTF | DEF | | PTF | DEF |
|---|----------------------------|----------------------------|---|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Citizen of This State | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | Incorporated or Principal Place of Business in This State | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 |
| Citizen of Another State | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | Incorporated and Principal Place of Business in Another State | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 |
| Citizen or Subject of a Foreign Country | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | Foreign Nation | <input type="checkbox"/> 6 | <input type="checkbox"/> 6 |

IV. NATURE OF SUIT (Check one box, only.)

CONTRACT	TORTS	PRISONER PETITIONS	LABOR	OTHER STATUTES
<input type="checkbox"/> 110 Insurance	PERSONAL INJURY	<input type="checkbox"/> 510 Motions to Vacate Sentence	<input type="checkbox"/> 710 Fair Labor Standards Act	<input type="checkbox"/> 375 False Claims Act
<input type="checkbox"/> 120 Marine	<input type="checkbox"/> 310 Airplane	<input type="checkbox"/> 530 General	<input type="checkbox"/> 720 Labor/Management Relations	<input type="checkbox"/> 376 Qui Tam (31 USC 3729 (a))
<input type="checkbox"/> 130 Miller Act	<input type="checkbox"/> 315 Airplane Product Liability	<input type="checkbox"/> 535 Death Penalty	<input type="checkbox"/> 740 Railway Labor Act	<input type="checkbox"/> 400 State Reapportionment
<input type="checkbox"/> 140 Negotiable Instrument	<input type="checkbox"/> 320 Assault, Libel & Slander	Other:	<input type="checkbox"/> 751 Family and Medical Leave Act	<input type="checkbox"/> 410 Antitrust
<input type="checkbox"/> 150 Recovery of Overpayment & Enforcement of Judgment	<input type="checkbox"/> 325 Federal Employers' Liability	<input type="checkbox"/> 540 Mandamus & Other	<input type="checkbox"/> 790 Other Labor Litigation	<input type="checkbox"/> 430 Banks and Banking
<input type="checkbox"/> 151 Medicare Act	<input type="checkbox"/> 330 Motor Vehicle Product Liability	<input type="checkbox"/> 550 Civil Rights	<input type="checkbox"/> 791 Employee Retirement Income Security Act	<input type="checkbox"/> 450 Commerce
<input type="checkbox"/> 152 Recovery of Defaulted Student Loan (Excludes Veterans)	<input type="checkbox"/> 340 Marine	<input type="checkbox"/> 555 Prison Condition		<input type="checkbox"/> 460 Deportation
<input type="checkbox"/> 153 Recovery of Veteran's Benefits	<input type="checkbox"/> 345 Marine Product Liability	<input type="checkbox"/> 560 Civil Detainee - Conditions of Confinement		<input type="checkbox"/> 470 Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations
<input type="checkbox"/> 160 Stockholders' Suits	<input type="checkbox"/> 350 Motor Vehicle Product Liability		PROPERTY RIGHTS	<input type="checkbox"/> 480 Consumer Credit
<input type="checkbox"/> 190 Other Contract	<input type="checkbox"/> 360 Other Personal Injury		<input type="checkbox"/> 820 Copyright	<input type="checkbox"/> 485 Telephone Consumer Protection Act (TCPA)
<input type="checkbox"/> 195 Contract Product Liability	<input type="checkbox"/> 362 Personal Injury - Medical Malpractice	<input type="checkbox"/> 370 Other Fraud	<input type="checkbox"/> 830 Patent	<input type="checkbox"/> 490 Cable/Sat TV
<input type="checkbox"/> 196 Franchise		<input type="checkbox"/> 371 Truth in Lending	<input type="checkbox"/> 835 Patent - Abbreviated New Drug Application	<input type="checkbox"/> 850 Securities/Commodities/Exchange
	PERSONAL PROPERTY	<input type="checkbox"/> 380 Other Personal Property Damage	<input type="checkbox"/> 840 Trademark	<input type="checkbox"/> 890 Other Statutory Actions
		<input type="checkbox"/> 385 Property Damage Product Liability	<input type="checkbox"/> 880 Defend Trade Secrets Act of 2016 (DTSA)	<input type="checkbox"/> 891 Agricultural Arts
REAL PROPERTY	CIVIL RIGHTS	BANKRUPTCY	FORFEITURE/PENALTY	SOCIAL SECURITY
<input type="checkbox"/> 210 Land Condemnation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 440 Other Civil Rights	<input type="checkbox"/> 422 Appeal 28 USC 158	<input type="checkbox"/> 625 Drug Related Seizure of Property 21 USC 881	<input type="checkbox"/> 861 HIA (1395ff)
<input type="checkbox"/> 220 Foreclosure	<input type="checkbox"/> 441 Voting	<input type="checkbox"/> 423 Withdrawal 28 USC 157	<input type="checkbox"/> 690 Other	<input type="checkbox"/> 862 Black Lung (923)
<input type="checkbox"/> 230 Rent Lease & Ejectment	<input type="checkbox"/> 442 Employment			<input type="checkbox"/> 863 DIWC/DIWW (405(g))
<input type="checkbox"/> 240 Torts to Land	<input type="checkbox"/> 443 Housing/Accommodations	IMMIGRATION		<input type="checkbox"/> 864 SSID Title XVI
<input type="checkbox"/> 245 Tort Product Liability	<input type="checkbox"/> 445 Amer. w/ Disabilities-Employment	<input type="checkbox"/> 462 Naturalization Application		<input type="checkbox"/> 865 RSI (405(g))
<input type="checkbox"/> 290 All Other Real Property	<input type="checkbox"/> 446 Amer. w/Disabilities - Other	<input type="checkbox"/> 463 Habeas Corpus - Alien Detainee (Prisoner Petition)		FEDERAL TAXES
	<input type="checkbox"/> 448 Education	<input type="checkbox"/> 465 Other Immigration Actions		<input type="checkbox"/> 870 Taxes (U.S. Plaintiff or Defendant)
				<input type="checkbox"/> 871 IRS—Third Party 26 USC 7609

V. ORIGIN (Check one box, only.)

- ☒ 1 Original Proceeding
- ☐ 2 Removed from State Court
- ☐ 3 Remanded from Appellate Court
- ☐ 4 Reinstated or Reopened
- ☐ 5 Transferred from Another District (specify)
- ☐ 6 Multidistrict Litigation - Transfer
- ☐ 8 Multidistrict Litigation - Direct File

VI. CAUSE OF ACTION (Enter U.S. Civil Statute under which you are filing and write a brief statement of cause.)**Civil Rights Act, 42 U.S.C. § 1983, Racial Discrimina****VII. PREVIOUS BANKRUPTCY MATTERS** (For nature of suit 422 and 423, enter the case number and judge for any associated bankruptcy matter previously adjudicated by a judge of this Court. Use a separate attachment if necessary.)**VIII. REQUESTED IN COMPLAINT:**

☐ Check if this is a class action under Rule 23, F.R.C.P.

Demand \$**CHECK Yes only if demanded in complaint:****Jury Demand:** ☒ Yes ☐ No**IX. RELATED CASE(S) IF ANY** (See instructions):**Judge****Case Number****X. Is this a previously dismissed or remanded case?**

☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, Case #

Name of Judge**Date:** August 26, 2025**Signature of Attorney of Record** s/ Blake Horwitz