



## City of Punta Gorda, Florida

### OFFICE OF THE HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER

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February 22, 2017

Officer Lee Coel  
c/o Jerry Berry, P.A.  
2670 Airport Road South, Suite 300  
Naples, Fl, USA

Re: Potential Disciplinary Action

Dear Officer Coel:

Please be advised that the City is considering disciplinary action against you, up to and including the potential termination of your employment. The City is considering taking this action for the following reasons:

1. On August 9, 2016, you were involved in an incident in which a citizen, Mary Knowlton, was shot and killed by you during a role-playing exercise. Your conduct during that exercise in failing to take appropriate and reasonable steps to ensure the safety of Mary Knowlton and in failing to ensure that no live ammunition was used during the exercise would, if true, constitute sufficient cause for disciplinary action up to and including potential discharge.
2. Your actions on August 9, 2016, led the State Attorney's Office to file felony criminal charges against you for culpable criminal negligence. In addition to your actions in the underlying incident, the City is also considering disciplinary action to the extent that the pending criminal charges may render you unable to perform your responsibilities as a police officer with the City at the present time or in the reasonably foreseeable future.

The decision as to what, if any, disciplinary action to take regarding this matter has been delegated to me in light of the Police Chief's involvement in the August 9 incident. Before I make a decision regarding this matter, you are afforded the opportunity, at your election, to meet with me for an informal pre-disciplinary conference. At that conference, you will be provided with an opportunity to explain your position and to present to me any information that you would like for me to consider before I make my final decision.

If you would like to take advantage of this opportunity for a pre-disciplinary conference, please let me know by close of business Friday, February 24, 2017, 4:30 p.m. If you elect to have the pre-disciplinary conference, it will be held on **Wednesday, March 1, 2017 at 11:00 AM in the**



**Human Resources Manager's Office, City Hall Annex, 126 Harvey Street, Punta Gorda, FL 33950.** If you choose, you may have a representative present during the conference to assist and advise you. If you elect not to have a pre-disciplinary conference, I will make a decision regarding this matter based on all of the information before me.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Philip Wickstrom  
Human Resources Manager  
City of Punta Gorda

Cc: Brian Koji  
Police Benevolence Association