



## OFFICE OF PROFESSIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY

### Closed Case Summary

Complaint Number OPA#2016-0001

Issued Date: 07/06/2016

Named Employee #1	
Allegation #1	<u>Seattle Police Department Manual</u> 5.140 (2) Bias- Free Policing: Officers Will Not Engage in Bias-Based Policing (Policy that was issued 01/01/2015)
OPA Finding	<b>Not Sustained</b> (Unfounded)
Final Discipline	N/A

#### **INCIDENT SYNOPSIS**

The Named Employee was working on shift as a Parking Enforcement Officer.

#### **COMPLAINT**

The complainant alleged that the Named Employee made racially biased comments against him and issued him a citation because of his race.

#### **INVESTIGATION**

The OPA investigation included the following actions:

1. Review of the complaint email
2. Interview of complainant
3. Search for and review of all relevant records and other evidence
4. Interview of SPD employee

## **ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION**

The complainant alleged the Named Employee issued him two parking tickets, one on December 11 and the other on January 4, due to racial bias. The complainant alleged that the Named Employee was singling out “for hire” cars operated by minorities in his enforcement of the “passenger load zone” ordinance. To support this allegation, the complainant reported the following statement allegedly made by the Named Employee, “You people make me sick.” The Named Employee denies making this statement and having any biased motivation for issuing citations to the complainant, or any other vehicle/driver. The OPA investigation reviewed all the citations issued by the Named Employee during the entire month of December. The data show the Named Employee issued 615 citations that month. Only one of those was issued to the complainant’s vehicle. (It should be noted that the Named Employee also issued two citations to the complainant’s vehicle in January, the first on the 4<sup>th</sup> and the second on the 7<sup>th</sup>. All three citations issued to the complainant’s vehicle by the Named Employee were for passenger load zone violations.) During December of 2015, the Named Employee issued 143 citations for passenger load zone violations, 23% of the total citations for that month. The complainant drives a Lincoln, a typical model used by “for hire” drivers. Only 2% of the 143 passenger load zone citations issued by the Named Employee were to Lincolns. The largest percentage of these citations was issued to trucks and vans. Since parking citations do not have a field for noting the race of the driver, OPA was not able to determine the percentage of citations issued to minorities by the Named Employee. It should also be noted that the race of the driver of a vehicle cannot be known through running the license plate of the vehicle. That information could only be known by observing the driver him or herself. The OPA investigation found no evidence to support the complainant’s allegation or to detect any possible pattern of bias in the Name Employee’s citations.

## **FINDINGS**

### **Named Employee #1**

#### Allegation #1

There was no evidence to support the allegation against the Named Employee. Therefore a finding of **Not Sustained** (Unfounded) was issued for *Bias- Free Policing: Officers Will Not Engage in Bias-Based Policing*.

*NOTE: The Seattle Police Department Manual policies cited for the allegation(s) made for this OPA Investigation are policies that were in effect during the time of the incident. The issued date of the policy is listed.*