

**Embargoed for Release at:**  
10 am on September 18, 2020

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## **OPA releases first set of findings after in-depth investigations into police behavior at protests**

Seattle — Today the Office of Police Accountability (OPA) released five completed investigations into alleged Seattle Police Department (SPD) employee misconduct at protests following the murder of George Floyd.

OPA was contacted nearly 13,000 times about case [2020OPA-0322](#), an incident in which a young boy was affected by pepper spray. OPA's review of [bystander and body-worn video](#) found that the boy was not individually targeted. He and his father moved towards a protester who had grabbed an officer's baton and was pushing into the police line. An SPD supervisor used pepper spray to move the protester back. In response, the protester ducked, causing the pepper spray to inadvertently affect the boy and his father. OPA deemed the use of pepper spray on the protester consistent with policy based on the protester's actions. While the impact to the boy was an unfortunate result, he was not visible on the video at the time of the pepper spraying and therefore could not have been seen by the supervisor.

Case [2020OPA-0324](#) involved allegations that an officer used excessive force when he placed his knee on an individual's neck during an arrest. OPA did not see evidence that suggested the officer intended to impair the demonstrators' breathing or use a neck or carotid restraint. However, OPA identified that the officer's knee was on the individual's neck for around 13 seconds. This use of force was found to be improper and inconsistent with SPD policy and training. OPA also found that the officer made statements that violated SPD's professionalism policy. This case is currently before Interim Chief Diaz to determine discipline to be imposed.

The other findings released today were for cases [2020OPA-0375](#) (not sustained), [2020OPA-0348](#) (sustained), and [2020OPA-0350](#) (not sustained).

Since May 30th, OPA has been contacted approximately 19,000 times (including the 13,000 mentioned above) about SPD's conduct at and response to various demonstrations. So far, the emails, phone calls, and other feedback have resulted in 118 cases. OPA updates a [website dashboard](#) every two weeks showing progress into demonstration-related complaint investigations and will continue to issue findings on a rolling basis.

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