



Embargoed for Release at:
10 am on October 23, 2020

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OPA releases second set of investigative findings into Seattle police behavior at protests

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

The incident in case [2020OPA-0363](#) occurred on June 7th when demonstrators positioned their bodies on the ground to prevent bicycle officers from leaving a barricaded area. One demonstrator was arrested after refusing to move. [Video analysis](#) indicates that the involved officer forcibly pushed the demonstrator into the ground, causing injury to the demonstrator's head. OPA found that the force was not proportional because of the lack of resistance on the part of the demonstrator and the lack of a physical threat to the officers. Given this, OPA recommended a sustained finding.

The underlying incident in case [2020OPA-0323](#) took place on May 29th when officers prohibited demonstrators from walking down a street and one person refused to comply. As officers attempted to take this person into custody, he physically resisted, struggling with two officers on the ground. He hit the officers with a water bottle, and the officers used force to prevent him from engaging in further similar conduct. OPA concluded that the force used by one officer was appropriate under the circumstances, given that it was an immediate reaction to the threat. However, OPA also concluded that the six to eight punches used by the other officer were excessive, particularly because he failed to modulate his force as the threat subsided. As such, OPA recommended a sustained finding for this officer.

The other findings released today were for cases [2020OPA-0402](#) (not sustained), [2020OPA-0438](#) (not sustained), and [2020OPA-0383](#) (not sustained). OPA compiled a [short video](#) to show the incident in 2020OPA-0383.

Since May 30th, OPA has been contacted over 19,000 times about SPD's conduct at and response to various demonstrations. So far, the emails, phone calls, and other feedback have resulted in 126 cases. OPA is now updating its [website dashboard](#) every three weeks to show progress into demonstration-related complaint investigations.

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