



CLOSED CASE SUMMARY

ISSUED DATE: NOVEMBER 8, 2024

FROM: INTERIM DIRECTOR BONNIE GLENN
OFFICE OF POLICE ACCOUNTABILITY 

CASE NUMBER: 2024OPA-0178

Allegations of Misconduct & Director’s Findings

Named Employee #1

Allegation(s):		Director’s Findings
# 1	5.001 - Standards and Duties POL-10. Employees Will Strive to be Professional	Sustained
# 2	5.001 - Standards and Duties POL-11. Employees Will Be Truthful and Complete in All Communication	Sustained

Proposed Discipline

Terminated Prior to Proposed DAR

Imposed Discipline

Terminated Prior to Proposed DAR – Termination

This Closed Case Summary (CCS) represents the opinion of the OPA Director regarding the misconduct alleged and therefore sections are written in the first person.

ADMINISTRATIVE NOTE ON PROPOSED FINDINGS:

When the OPA Director recommends a sustained finding for one or more allegations, a discipline committee, including the named employee’s chain of command and the department’s human resources representative, convenes and may propose a range of disciplinary to the Chief of Police. While OPA is part of the discipline committee, the Chief of Police decides the imposed discipline, if any. See OPA Internal Operations and Training Manual section 7.3 – Sustained Findings.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The Complainant alleged Named Employee #1 (NE#1)—a former SPD recruit—cheated on an assignment while attending the Basic Law Enforcement Academy (BLEA). The Complainant also alleged NE#1 lied about his actions when he was questioned.

ADMINISTRATIVE NOTE:

On October 2, 2024, OIG certified OPA’s investigation as thorough, timely, and objective.

NE#1 separated from SPD on April 11, 2024, while he was a probationary employee. No contractual 180-day timeline applies to this case.

SUMMARY OF INVESTIGATION:

The Complainant—a civilian human resources employee—emailed OPA to report NE#1 was suspected of using artificial intelligence (AI) to complete a work assignment. At the time, NE#1 was a police recruit attending BLEA. The



Complainant also reported that, when confronted, NE#1 denied the allegation, but later admitted his wife used an AI program to write the assignment for him.

OPA investigated the complaint by reviewing the investigation materials completed by the Training Unit. OPA also interviewed two witness employees. NE#1 did not respond to OPA's request to participate in the investigation, and so, was not interviewed.

Training Unit Investigation

At the time of this incident, NE#1 was a probationary, at-will employee assigned to the Training Unit. Accordingly, his alleged conduct was initially investigated by the Chain of Command, which determined the following:

During the first week of BLEA, NE#1 was assigned to write a memo concerning the importance of the police uniform. After the assignment was turned in, the BLEA class scribe alerted the Training Unit that NE#1 may have used AI to complete it. BLEA instructors informed the Training Unit that, at the time, no specific Academy rule prohibited the use of AI to complete assignments.

Witness Employee #1 (WE#1), an SPD Training Unit member, met with the SPD recruit class to discuss the issue. Prior to the meeting, NE#1 specifically told WE#1 that he did not use AI to complete the assignment. While meeting with the entire SPD recruit class, WE#1 informed the group that the SPD recruits were forbidden from using AI to complete any assignments as it is a form of cheating. After the meeting, NE#1 pulled WE#1 aside and reiterated that he did not use AI to complete the assignment but admitted his wife "proofread" his memo.

Another recruit contacted the Training Unit and stated they suspected NE#1 cheated, noting they prompted an AI program with the subject line from NE#1's memo and received a very similar memo. The SPD Training Unit corroborated this by comparing NE#1's memo to his other written work, noting stark differences. An AI detection tool concluded NE#1's memo was AI-generated with a 98-100% confidence level. The Training Unit also showed NE#1's memo to Witness Employee #2 (WE#2), who also works as a college English professor. WE#2 commented on the differences in writing quality between the memo and NE#1's other work and noted the use of uncommon English words. WE#2 concluded with a high level of confidence the memo was written by AI. Other written work from NE#1 was also assessed to be of a noticeably lower level of grammar, spelling, and overall quality.

Later, Training Unit members met with NE#1. NE#1 was asked if he ever used AI to complete the assignment in question. NE#1 responded, "No, I did not." NE#1 did not elaborate further. WE#1 then asked if NE#1's wife used AI, at which point NE#1 admitted his wife used an AI program to write the memo. NE#1 stated he did not proofread the assignment after his wife completed it and said his wife only admitted using AI after the assignment was turned in.

Training Unit staff conferred with BLEA staff, who stated a recruit from another agency who was in NE#1's class had provided a nearly identical explanation when caught using AI—that his wife assisted him by using AI to write an assignment, but he did not proofread the assignment before submitting it.

The Training Unit investigation included underlying documentation, including NE#1's memo, a similar memo produced by AI, results from an AI detection tool analyzing the memo, and examples of NE#1's other written work.

Witness Employee #1



OPA interviewed WE#1, whose recollection of the incident was consistent with the Training Unit investigation. WE#1 noted his suspicion that NE#1 and the other recruit may have colluded due to their identical stories concerning their wives' putative use of AI. WE#1 also expressed doubts that NE#1's wife only admitted using AI later because—had NE#1 truly learned this information after the fact—NE#1 had ample time to come forward but failed to do so.

Witness Employee #2

OPA interviewed WE#2, a civilian employee. In addition to her regular work for SPD, WE#2 is an English professor at a local college. WE#2 has a BA in English and an MA in Creative Writing. WE#2 has been an English professor for about ten years.

WE#2 explained her review of NE#1's memo and her comparison of the memo to NE#1's other written work. WE#2 explained the differences in quality, accuracy of punctuation, sentence complexity, capitalization, vocabulary, and transitions in verb tense. WE#2 also noted the differences in the level of creativity and sophistication between the memo and NE#1's other written work.

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSIONS:

Named Employee #1 - Allegation #1

5.001 - Standards and Duties POL-10. Employees Will Strive to be Professional

The Complainant alleged that NE#1 undermined public trust by submitting AI-generated work and lying about it.

SPD Policy 5.001-POL-10 requires that SPD employees "strive to be professional." The policy further instructs that "employees may not engage in behavior that undermines public trust in the Department, the officer, or other officers" whether on or off duty. SPD Policy 5.001-POL-10.

Even if NE#1's conduct did not rise to the level of dishonesty—which it did—his actions were unprofessional and undermined public trust in him. Assignments at BLEA are intended to assess a recruit's skills. Using AI to complete an assignment or, alternatively, having a significant other complete an assignment is cheating. To the extent that was unclear to NE#1, WE#1 set a clear expectation when he met with the entire SPD recruit class. At the very least, NE#1 knew his wife had completed the memo for him; it was incumbent on him to learn whether she used AI and, if so, report his error and conform to expectations. Instead, NE#1 repeatedly told WE#1 that he did not use AI to complete the assignment. Later, when confronted by evidence, NE#1 continued to minimize his own involvement and stated his wife helped him with multiple other assignments, likely with the assistance of AI, even after WE#1 explicitly stated this was considered cheating.

Accordingly, OPA recommends this allegation be Sustained.

Recommended Finding: **Sustained**

Named Employee #1 - Allegation #2

5.001 - Standards and Duties POL-11. Employees Will Be Truthful and Complete in All Communication

The Complainant alleged that NE#1 was dishonest in his communication with Training Unit staff.

SPD Policy 5.001-POL-11 requires Department employees to be truthful and complete in all communications.



NE#1 was dishonest in multiple ways. First, on a foundational level, it is dishonest in an academic setting to pass off AI-generated writing—or another person’s writing—as one’s own. Second, at the first meeting with WE#1, NE#1 denied using AI and stated his wife “proofread” his memo. Even if, as NE#1 claimed, he was not aware that his wife used AI, this was still dishonest. Proofreading implies another person provided feedback on a writer’s original work. Here, NE#1 stated he provided his work to his wife, which she rewrote entirely with AI, and he turned in without reviewing. This went far beyond any common understanding of “proofreading.” Third, this response was also incomplete. Taking NE#1’s explanation as true, he had no basis to state he did not use AI to complete the assignment. The only truthful and complete statement he could have made to WE#1 would have been that his wife completed the assignment, and he did not know whether she used AI to do so. Fourth, NE#1 was given another opportunity to come clean when he was asked at the follow-up meeting if he ever used AI to complete the memo. His response— “No, I did not”—was dishonest and incomplete for the same reasons as explained above. Fifth, OPA does not credit NE#1’s story that his wife wrote the assignments and used AI without his knowledge. Another recruit in his class provided this exact explanation when caught cheating with AI. NE#1 also appears to have gone out of his way to specifically deny his use of AI—seeking out WE#1 both immediately *before* and *after* the first meeting—at a time when he claimed he was unaware his wife used AI. Instead, it seems far more likely that both he and the other recruit used AI to write their memos. The other recruit apparently came forward with a full explanation. NE#1 lied multiple times to cover up his use of AI.

Accordingly, OPA recommends this allegation be Sustained.

Recommended Finding: **Sustained**