

Issued Date: June 3, 2026

From: Deputy Director Nelson R. Leese (on behalf of Director Bonnie J. Glenn)
Office of Police Accountability 

Case Number: 2025OPA-0475

Allegations of Misconduct & Director's Findings

Named Employee #1

1. **Allegation #1:** 5.001 – Standards and Duties, 5.001-POL-15. Employees Obey any Lawful Order Issued by a Superior Officer
Finding: Not Sustained - Unfounded (Expedited)
 2. **Allegation #2:** 5.001 – Standards and Duties, 5.001-POL-11. Employees Will Be Truthful and Complete in All Communication
Finding: Not Sustained - Unfounded (Expedited)
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This Closed Case Summary (CCS) represents the opinion of the OPA Director regarding the misconduct alleged and therefore sections may be written in the first person.

Executive Summary:

On November 20, 2025, Named Employee #1 (NE#1) voiced opposition to two initiatives during a press conference. Multiple complainants—including a member of SPD's command staff (Complainant)—alleged that NE#1 was insubordinate and dishonest.

Administrative Note:

This case was approved for Expedited Investigation. That means OPA, with the Office of Inspector General's (OIG) agreement, believed it could issue recommended findings based solely on its intake investigation without interviewing the named employee. As such, OPA did not interview the named employee in this case.

On February 5, 2026, OIG certified OPA's investigation as thorough, timely, and objective.

Summary of the Investigation:

Multiple complainants filed OPA complaints, alleging that NE#1 represented SPD while voicing opposition to initiatives during a press conference and made false statements.

OPA investigated the complaints by reviewing email correspondence and the press conference video, as well as videos on YouTube and X. OPA also interviewed the Complainant and a witness employee. These interviews were consistent with email correspondence.

Email correspondence among SPD command staff, including the Complainant, deliberated on whether to allow NE#1 to speak at an upcoming press conference. The emails indicated that NE#1 requested permission to speak and indicated she would follow whatever guidance she was given. The Complainant would allow NE#1 to speak as a law enforcement officer, but not as an SPD officer. Other members of command staff agreed with this approach.

On November 20, 2025, NE#1 spoke at the press conference. NE#1 identified herself as a “police detective with nearly 30 years of experience,” a mother of girls in sports, and a coach. NE#1 clarified that she had spent “nine years investigating hate crime and bias incidents” and “many other years investigating crimes against children, sexual assault, and domestic violence.” NE#1 then voiced her concerns regarding the initiatives, opining that they stigmatize LGBTQ+ children and expose them to danger. NE#1 also articulated her beliefs about the consequences of these initiatives. For example, she stated, “I believe this initiative would increase the risk of sexual abuse for girls participating in sports.” NE#1 then concluded, “These initiatives will not make the world safer, kinder, or more inclusive for our children. They are poorly reasoned, unnecessary, and cruel. And I urge everyone to say, ‘No’ to these two initiatives.”

In a YouTube video, a political commentator alleged that NE#1, while using her SPD badge and expressing her personal political ideology, “manufactured information on child sex abuse.”

Analysis and Conclusions:

Named Employee #1 – Allegation #1

5.001 – Standards and Duties, 5.001-POL-15. Employees Obey any Lawful Order Issued by a Superior Officer

The complainants alleged that NE#1 represented SPD while voicing opposition to initiatives during a press conference.

Department employees must obey any lawful order issued by a superior officer. SPD Policy 5.001-POL-15. Failure to obey lawful orders from a superior officer constitutes insubordination. *Id.* Orders may, among other forms of communication, be issued directly, relayed through a subordinate employee or current department training, or published in notices.

This allegation is unfounded. NE#1 complied with the Complainant's instructions by identifying herself at the press conference as a law enforcement officer, not as an SPD employee. Moreover, under the balancing test set forth in *Pickering v. Board of Education*, 391 U.S. 563 (1968), the First Amendment protected NE#1's speech. NE#1 did not identify herself as an SPD employee, did not wear her uniform, was off duty when she expressed her opinions, sought prior approval before speaking at the press conference, and complied with the guidelines set forth by SPD command staff. Overall, NE#1 spoke on a matter of public concern as a private citizen, and there was no evidence of her speech disrupting SPD's operations. Finally, NE#1's speech was likely separately protected under state law through RCW 41.06.250 (protecting the right of public employees for "participating fully" in campaigns related to "initiatives").

Accordingly, OPA recommends that this allegation be Not Sustained – Unfounded (Expedited).

Recommended Finding: **Not Sustained – Unfounded (Expedited)**

Named Employee #1 – Allegation #2

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

The complainants alleged that NE#1 made false statements.

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

This allegation is unfounded. NE#1's statements were merely expressions of her opinions regarding the consequences of the initiatives. On several occasions, NE#1 prefaced her statements with, "I believe," indicating her intent to express her beliefs on these issues of public concern. Overall, OPA found no evidence of NE#1 intentionally making statements that she knew were false.

Accordingly, OPA recommends that this allegation be Not Sustained – Unfounded (Expedited).

Recommended Finding: **Not Sustained – Unfounded (Expedited)**

Footnote 1. The OPA Director may designate a civilian OPA Deputy Director to "perform such duties and have such powers as the OPA Director may prescribe and delegate." Seattle Ordinance 125315, Council Bill 118969, subchapter I, section 3.29.100(B).