



Commendable Conduct

Two officers responded to a fight at a DESC. The subject was in an elevator brandishing a chain. The officers attempted to de-escalate the situation, but eventually one officer had to use force to seize the chain and take the subject into custody.

The subject alleged that the officers engaged in biased policing and used excessive force, but [OPA concluded](#) this was not the case. One of the officers, who was an FTO at the time, received a training referral for failing to report the bias allegation to a supervisor.

Although these officers were in a difficult situation, they conducted themselves consistent with the expectations of the Department. They were calm, respectful, and treated the subject with dignity, even though he was non-compliant and posed a threat of harm. While OPA is required to investigate allegations of bias and excessive force, this does not mean that the officers did anything wrong. On the contrary, OPA passed these commendations along to the officers' respective chains of command.

Unsubstantiated Misconduct Screening

About a year ago, OPA worked with patrol lieutenants and sergeants to develop a pilot program in which allegations that are clearly refuted by evidence can be handled by the chain of command instead of being referred to OPA. In these instances, supervisors are tasked with conducting a preliminary investigation and sending OPA an email listing the allegations and reasons why they can be conclusively disproved. OPA then reviews the information, looks at relevant video, and either concurs with a chain of command review or requests a referral.

Between 75 and 100 cases have been handled this way since the program began. OPA has proposed that the program be officially integrated into policy 5.002 and that future screenings take place through BlueTeam. The revised policy has been approved by the Court and is now with the Department for implementation.

If you have questions, feedback, content requests, or to add/remove your name from this distribution list, please contact Anne Bettesworth, OPA Deputy Director of Public Affairs, at anne.bettesworth@seattle.gov.