



CLOSED CASE SUMMARY

ISSUED DATE: OCTOBER 30, 2024

FROM: DEPUTY DIRECTOR BONNIE GLENN ON BEHALF OF DIRECTOR GINO BETTS, JR.
OFFICE OF POLICE ACCOUNTABILITY

CASE NUMBER: 2024OPA-0203

Allegations of Misconduct & Director’s Findings

Named Employee #1

Allegation(s):		Director’s Findings
# 1	5.140 – Bias-Free Policing, 5.140-POL-2. Officers Will Not Engage in Bias-Based Policing	Not Sustained - Unfounded (Expedited)

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.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Named Employee #1 (NE#1) responded to a call for service involving threatening texts. The Complainant—the putative suspect—alleged that NE#1 was racially biased against her.

ADMINISTRATIVE NOTE:

During its intake investigation, OPA identified Witness Supervisor #1 (WS#1) failing to screen the Complainant’s bias allegation. OPA sent WS#1’s potential violation of SPD Policy 5.140-POL-6 (Supervisors Conduct Preliminary Inquiry into Bias-Based Policing) to her chain of command for Supervisor Action.¹

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

On June 12, 2024, OIG certified OPA’s investigation as thorough, timely, and objective.

SUMMARY OF INVESTIGATION:

On May 5, 2024, the Complainant left OPA a voicemail, saying she lives in Tennessee and has been receiving harassing calls from Community Member #1 (CM#1), a Seattle resident. The Complainant said NE#1 called her and accused her of harassing CM#1. The Complainant alleged that NE#1 was racially biased against her, a Black woman, and biased for CM#1, a white woman.

OPA investigated the complaint by reviewing the computer-aided dispatch (CAD) call report, body-worn video (BWW), and incident report. OPA also interviewed the Complainant.

¹ Supervisor Actions generally involve a minor policy violation or performance issue the employee’s supervisor addresses through training, communication, or coaching. See OPA Internal Operations and Training Manual section 5.4(B)(ii).



On May 5, 2024, at 3:12 PM, CAD call remarks noted, "REC[EI]VING HARASSING TEXT MESSAGES, THRE[A]T HARM TO [REPORTING PARTY] AND FAMILY, SUSP[ECT] NOT THERE NOW, NOT EXPECTED, UNK[NOWN] [WEAPONS]."

NE#1 responded to CM#1's apartment and activated his BWV, capturing the following:

NE#1 interviewed CM#1, the reporting party. CM#1 said Community Member #2 (CM#2) was a friend providing emotional support, an ex-colleague, and the Complainant's husband. CM#1 said the Complainant discovered CM#2's communication with CM#1, causing the Complainant's jealousy and anger. CM#1 showed NE#1 threatening text messages she believed the Complainant sent. CM#1 believed the Complainant, who was previously employed with SPD, improperly accessed SPD's database to obtain CM#1's personal information. CM#1 expressed fear that the Complainant would hire someone to harm her or her family.

CM#2 called CM#1, who set her phone on speaker for NE#1 to hear. CM#2 told CM#1 to stop contacting him. The Complainant went on the line, demanded CM#1 to stop contacting CM#2, and threatened to kill CM#1 if she contacted CM#2 again. The call ended.

While in his patrol vehicle, NE#1 called CM#2, but the Complainant answered and provided her account. The Complainant said she intended to file a police report about unwanted and excessive contact from CM#1. The Complainant acknowledged working for SPD as a dispatcher but denied threatening CM#1 or accessing SPD's database to obtain CM#1's personal information. NE#1 said he heard the Complainant threaten to kill CM#1, but the Complainant denied making such threat. The Complainant accused NE#1 of bias. NE#1 said he was communicating CM#1's account and asked why she thought he was biased. The Complainant accused NE#1 of establishing guilt based on race and favoring CM#1, a white woman. Also, the Complainant stated she did not feel like they have her best interest at heart by how they approached her. NE#1 provided his and his sergeant's contact information, invited the Complainant to submit evidence, and terminated the call.

NE#1's incident report was consistent with BWV observations.

On May 14, 2024, OPA interviewed the Complainant, who alleged that NE#1 was biased against her, a Black woman, and biased for CM#1, a white woman. The Complainant said she discerned NE#1's bias based on his tone and inflection.

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSIONS:

Named Employee #1 – Allegation #1

5.140 – Bias-Free Policing, 5.140-POL-2. Officers Will Not Engage in Bias-Based Policing

The Complainant alleged that NE#1 was racially biased against her.

Biased policing means "the different treatment of any person by officers motivated by any characteristic of protected classes under state, federal, and local laws as well as other discernible personal characteristics of an individual." SPD Policy 5.140-POL. It includes different treatment based on race. *See id.* Officers are forbidden from making decisions or taking actions influenced by bias and expressing prejudice or derogatory comments concerning personal characteristics. *See* SPD Policy 5.140-POL-2.



OPA found no evidence indicating a racially biased interaction. NE#1 asked follow-up questions based on information CM#1 reported to him, such as CM#1's concern about potential unauthorized access to her personal information. NE#1's questioning on this matter was neither accusatory nor biased. NE#1 also said he heard the Complainant threaten CM#1 over the phone, which the Complainant denied. NE#1 did not contest the Complainant's denial and said he would document it in his incident report. NE#1 neither established guilt nor showed favoritism to either party. Overall, OPA found no evidence supporting the Complainant's interpretation of race-based mistreatment.

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

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