



CLOSED CASE SUMMARY

ISSUED DATE: APRIL 15, 2025

FROM: INTERIM DEPUTY DIRECTOR NELSON R. LEESE (ON BEHALF OF INTERIM DIRECTOR BONNIE GLENN)
OFFICE OF POLICE ACCOUNTABILITY

CASE NUMBER: 2024OPA-0430

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) issued an infraction to the Complainant for parking within the white lines of a "POLICE DEPT. VEHICLES ONLY" section. The Complainant alleged that NE#1 was racially biased against him.

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 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 December 10, 2024, OIG certified OPA's investigation as thorough, timely, and objective.

SUMMARY OF INVESTIGATION:

OPA investigated the complaint by reviewing the infraction and interviewing the Complainant.

On November 9, 2024, NE#1 issued an infraction to the Complainant for violating Seattle Municipal Code 11.72.450, which prohibits a person from parking in a space designated for police vehicles. It included photographs of the Complainant's vehicle, which was parked adjacent to a sidewalk marked in white. One photograph showed a sign in front of the Complainant's vehicle stating, "POLICE DEPT. VEHICLES ONLY." The infraction noted that the Complainant acknowledged noticing the sign but stated that he was waiting for his girlfriend.

During OPA's interview with the Complainant, he said he activated his emergency lights while waiting for his girlfriend, as finding parking in the area was difficult. He said he asked NE#1 whether he needed to repark his vehicle while NE#1 was photographing it. He believed NE#1 was racially biased by ignoring him, possibly due to his accent.



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 him.

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 discernible personal characteristics. *See* SPD Policy 5.140-POL-2.

This allegation is unfounded. Photographs of the infraction showed the Complainant's vehicle unlawfully parked in a zone designated for police vehicles. The infraction indicated that the vehicle was parked there for at least nine minutes. Although the Complainant claimed to have been ignored, both he and NE#1 acknowledged conversing with each other. In fact, the Complainant acknowledged seeing the sign but defended his decision to park there by stating that his emergency lights were activated and that finding parking in the area was difficult. Overall, the evidence showed that NE#1's police action was motivated by the Complainant's parking violation, not racial bias.

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

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