



CLOSED CASE SUMMARY

ISSUED DATE: JUNE 3, 2025

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

CASE NUMBER: 2025OPA-0012

Allegations of Misconduct & Director's Findings

Named Employee #1

Allegation(s):		Director's Findings
# 1	5.001 – Standards and Duties, 5.001-POL-10. Employees Will Strive to be Professional	Not Sustained - Unfounded (Expedited)
# 2	5.140 – Bias-Free Policing, 5.140-POL-2. Officers Will Not Engage in Bias-Based Policing	Not Sustained - Unfounded (Expedited)

Named Employee #2

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)

Named Employee #3

Allegation(s):		Director's Findings
# 1	5.001 – Standards and Duties, 5.001-POL-10. Employees Will Strive to be Professional	Not Sustained - Unfounded (Expedited)
# 2	5.140 – Bias-Free Policing, 5.140-POL-2. Officers Will Not Engage in Bias-Based Policing	Not Sustained - Unfounded (Expedited)

Named Employee #4

Allegation(s):		Director's Findings
# 1	5.001 – Standards and Duties, 5.001-POL-10. Employees Will Strive to be Professional	Not Sustained - Unfounded (Expedited)
# 2	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:

During the named employees' (NE#1 through NE#4) investigation into a community member's death, the Complainant was present and recorded the scene. The Complainant alleged that the named employees acted unprofessionally by threatening him and exhibited racial bias by preventing him from crossing the police tape.



ADMINISTRATIVE NOTE:

During its intake investigation, OPA identified NE#2 potentially responding unprofessionally to the Complainant. OPA sent NE#2's potential violation of SPD Policy 5.001-POL-10 (Employees Will Strive to be Professional) 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 recommended findings based solely on its intake investigation without interviewing the named employees. As such, OPA did not interview the named employees in this case.

On February 19, 2025, OIG certified OPA's investigation as thorough, timely, and objective.

SUMMARY OF INVESTIGATION:

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

On January 2, 2025, CAD call remarks noted a deceased community member in a vehicle beneath a bridge. BWV captured NE#1 and NE#4 arriving at the scene, where the decedent's family members were also present. The Complainant arrived later and began recording on his personal device from the sidewalk. At one point, the Complainant stepped into the roadway, prompting NE#4 to instruct him to return to the sidewalk, which he did. The Complainant threatened to sue the officers and complained about other community members being allowed at the scene, while he felt excluded. The Complainant characterized this as a racially motivated attack. NE#1 explained that they were the decedent's family members and admonished the Complainant for his behavior during this tragedy. The Complainant persistently swore at the officers and antagonized them while recording from the sidewalk. NE#2 arrived and explained why the family members were allowed at the scene. The Complainant disputed this, asserting that the officers were required to cordon off the area with police tape, as he was on public property. As NE#1 and NE#2 set up police tape, NE#2 warned the Complainant that he would be arrested if he interfered with the investigation. The Complainant directed disparaging sexual remarks at NE#2. NE#3 arrived and spoke with the Complainant about the complaints he had against NE#1, NE#2, and NE#4. NE#3 said he would document these complaints.

The statements made by the Complainant during his OPA interview were consistent those he provided to NE#3.

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSIONS:

Named Employee #1 – Allegation #1

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

The Complainant alleged that the named employees acted unprofessionally by threatening him.

SPD employees must "strive to be professional." SPD Policy 5.001-POL-10. Further, "employees may not engage in behavior that undermines public trust in the Department, the officer, or other officers," whether on or off duty. *Id.*

¹ A Supervisor Action generally involves 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).



Employees will avoid unnecessary escalation of events, even if those events do not end in reportable uses of force. *Id.* Any time employees represent the Department or identify themselves as police officers or Department employees, they will not use profanity directed as an insult or any language that is derogatory, contemptuous, or disrespectful toward anyone. *Id.*

This allegation is unfounded. BWV captured the named employees responding professionally to the Complainant while he persistently shouted, swore, and disparaged them during their death investigation. BWV did not show the named employees acting aggressively or threatening the Complainant. Rather, OPA observed the named employees exhibiting remarkable patience in the face of highly offensive verbal abuse from the Complainant.

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

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

Named Employee #1 – Allegation #2

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

The Complainant alleged that the named employees exhibited racial bias.

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. The named employees permitted the other community members to be present at the scene because they were the decedent's family members, as NE#1 and NE#2 explained. This decision was not racially motivated. Moreover, the named employees were permitted to warn the Complainant about a potential arrest if he interfered with the investigation, as his conduct was approaching obstruction. Limiting the Complainant's access to the scene was lawful and reasonable given the circumstances. Overall, OPA found no evidence supporting the Complainant's interpretation of race-based mistreatment.

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

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

Named Employee #2 – Allegation #1

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

For the reasons articulated in Named Employee #1 – Allegation #2, OPA recommends that this allegation be Not Sustained – Unfounded (Expedited).

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



Named Employee #3 – Allegation #1

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

For the reasons articulated in Named Employee #1 – Allegation #1, OPA recommends that this allegation be Not Sustained – Unfounded (Expedited).

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

Named Employee #3 – Allegation #2

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

For the reasons articulated in Named Employee #1 – Allegation #2, OPA recommends that this allegation be Not Sustained – Unfounded (Expedited).

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

Named Employee #4 – Allegation #1

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

For the reasons articulated in Named Employee #1 – Allegation #1, OPA recommends that this allegation be Not Sustained – Unfounded (Expedited).

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

Named Employee #4 – Allegation #2

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

For the reasons articulated in Named Employee #1 – Allegation #2, OPA recommends that this allegation be Not Sustained – Unfounded (Expedited).

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