




## CLOSED CASE SUMMARY

ISSUED DATE: JUNE 8, 2025

FROM: INTERIM DIRECTOR BONNIE GLENN  
OFFICE OF POLICE ACCOUNTABILITY 

CASE NUMBER: 2025OPA-0042

### Allegations of Misconduct & Director's Findings

#### Named Employee #1

Allegation(s):		Director's Findings
# 1	6.180 – Searches-General, 1. Officers May Only Make Searches Pursuant to a Search Warrant, Unless a Specific Exception Applies	Not Sustained - Training Referral

#### Named Employee #2

Allegation(s):		Director's Findings
# 1	6.180 – Searches-General, 1. Officers May Only Make Searches Pursuant to a Search Warrant, Unless a Specific Exception Applies	Not Sustained - Training Referral

#### Named Employee #3

Allegation(s):		Director's Findings
# 1	6.180 – Searches-General, 1. Officers May Only Make Searches Pursuant to a Search Warrant, Unless a Specific Exception Applies	Not Sustained - Training Referral

#### Named Employee #4

Allegation(s):		Director's Findings
# 1	6.180 – Searches-General, 1. Officers May Only Make Searches Pursuant to a Search Warrant, Unless a Specific Exception Applies	Not Sustained - Training Referral

#### Named Employee #5

Allegation(s):		Director's Findings
# 1	6.180 – Searches-General, 1. Officers May Only Make Searches Pursuant to a Search Warrant, Unless a Specific Exception Applies	Not Sustained - Training Referral

#### Named Employee #6

Allegation(s):		Director's Findings
# 1	6.180 – Searches-General, 1. Officers May Only Make Searches Pursuant to a Search Warrant, Unless a Specific Exception Applies	Not Sustained - Training Referral

#### Named Employee #7



Allegation(s):		Director's Findings
# 1	6.180 – Searches-General, 1. Officers May Only Make Searches Pursuant to a Search Warrant, Unless a Specific Exception Applies	Not Sustained - Training Referral

***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:**

The named employees (NE#1 through NE#7) responded to a domestic violence altercation involving a couple (Boyfriend #1 and Girlfriend #1) stabbing each other at their apartment. After Girlfriend #1 went to the lobby, the named employees attempted to perform a welfare check on Boyfriend #1 at the apartment. The named employees entered the apartment and arrested Boyfriend #1. The Complainant—SPD's Force Review Board—alleged that the named employees may have unlawfully entered the apartment.

**ADMINISTRATIVE NOTE:**

On June 6, 2025, the Office of Inspector General certified OPA's investigation as thorough, timely, and objective.

**SUMMARY OF INVESTIGATION:**

**A. OPA Complaint**

On February 4, 2025, the Complainant submitted an OPA complaint via Blue Team, alleging that the named employees may have unlawfully entered an apartment to perform a welfare check. Specifically, the Complainant determined that the named employees' entry was no longer justified based on community caretaking grounds after they opened the door and found Boyfriend #1 neither in distress nor in need of immediate aid. The Complainant noted that Boyfriend #1 denied them entry, and there was no indication that anyone else requiring immediate aid was inside.

OPA investigated the complaint by reviewing the computer-aided dispatch (CAD) call report, body-worn video (BWV), incident and supplement reports, and photographs. OPA also interviewed the named employees.

**B. Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD) Call Report**

On September 23, 2024, at 12:58 AM, CAD call remarks noted, "[REPORTING PARTY] REQ[UESTED] MEDICS, STATED MALE ATTEMPTED TO STAB [REPORTING PARTY] AND HIMSELF SEVERAL TIMES W[ITH] SCISSORS, SCREENING FIRE."

At 12:59 AM, CAD noted, "[REPORTING PARTY] INSIDE THE LOBBY."

At 1:00 AM, CAD noted, "[REPORTING PARTY] STATED THE MALE SUSP[ECT] STABBED HER FIRST, THEN SHE STABBED HIM BACK."

At 1:01 AM, CAD noted, "MALE SUSP[ECT] WAS [ALERT AND CONSCIOUS] WHEN [REPORTING PARTY] LEFT THE UNIT."



At 1:02 AM, CAD noted, “[REPORTING PARTY] HAS THE SCISSORS, BUT THERE ARE ALSO SEVERAL OTHER KNIVES IN THE [APARTMENT].” An additional update noted, “SUSP[ECT] IS STILL INSIDE UNIT [NUMBER]. NO ONE ELSE IS INSIDE THE UNIT.”

### **C. Body-Worn Video (BWV)**

BWV captured the following:

NE#7 and Witness Officer #1 (WO#1) were the first to arrive at the apartment lobby, where WO#1 retrieved a pair of scissors from Girlfriend #1’s pocket. Girlfriend #1 told a building employee that she was trying to save her “baby father’s” life. Girlfriend #1 then told NE#7 and WO#1 that she had been stabbed in her leg and shoulder but claimed that Boyfriend #1 was “stabbed even worse” during her self-defense. Also, Girlfriend #1 stated, “I got him pretty good.” Blood was on her shirt, and the neck area of her shirt was torn. The named employees took the elevator to the apartment while WO#1 remained with Girlfriend #1 in the lobby. She disclosed the apartment number where her “baby father” was located. She mentioned that she shared the apartment with Boyfriend #1 but had been homeless during her pregnancy. She stated, “They took my baby girl because I was homeless.”<sup>1</sup> WO#1 helped Girlfriend #1 refocus on the incident. She reported that a dispute arose during sex, leading Boyfriend #1 to stab her with a pair of scissors. She said Boyfriend #1 intended to continue stabbing her, forcing her to stab him in self-defense—a situation she attributed to Boyfriend #1’s declining mental health. She said they struggled over the scissors, resulting in Girlfriend #1 obtaining them and stabbing Boyfriend #1. She said she managed to escape from the apartment and called the police.

As Girlfriend #1 reported her account to WO#1, the named employees approached the apartment. NE#1 knocked on the door and announced his presence. With his firearm drawn, NE#7 shouted, “Come to the door with your hands empty. We want to make sure you’re okay.” There was no audible reply. NE#1 attempted to open the door, but it was locked. NE#1 told NE#7 that he heard a male voice from inside. NE#7 also confirmed hearing someone inside. NE#7 shouted, “Are you able to come to the door and let us in?” NE#1 suggested they acquire the key to the unit. NE#7 said they might need to force entry based on Girlfriend #1’s account of having stabbed Boyfriend #1 severely. NE#1 knocked again, listened, and stated, “I heard a voice.” NE#1 then shouted, “Open the door. We’re trying to check on you.” No responses were audible on BWV during their attempts to reach Boyfriend #1. NE#3 suggested they retreat until they could acquire the key. The named employees retreated several feet but returned to the apartment upon hearing a crying baby and a woman. NE#1 and NE#7 pointed toward a neighbor’s door, suspecting that the sounds were coming from there. The named employees retreated again.

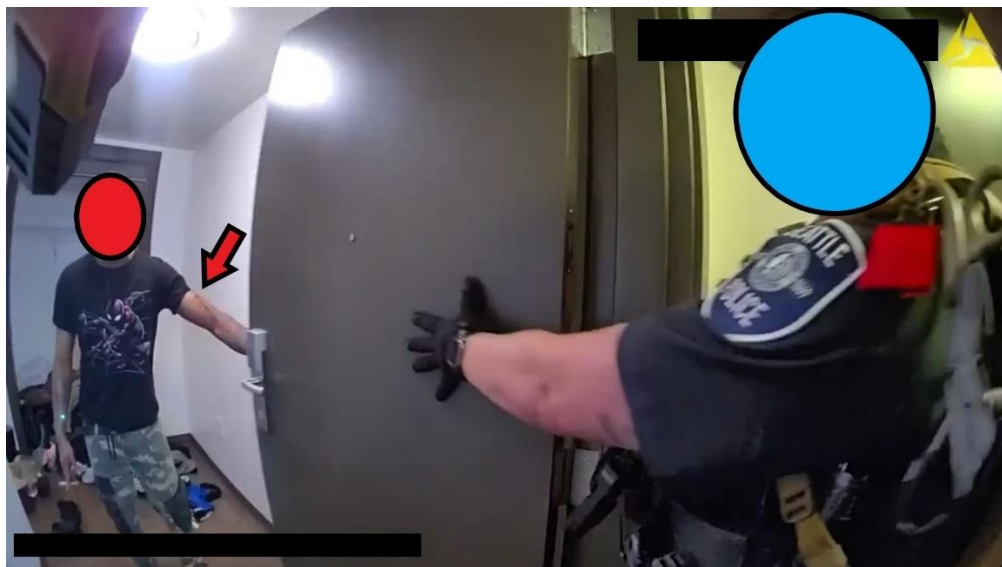
A building employee handed a key to NE#4. The named employees returned to the apartment. NE#4 knocked and shouted, “Seattle Police. Welfare check.” After receiving no audible response, NE#4 unlocked the door with the key, while NE#7 held it open with his hand. NE#4 and NE#7 stood at the doorway. Boyfriend #1 poked his head around the corner and asked about the situation. NE#4 and NE#7 instructed Boyfriend #1 to approach with his hands raised, but Boyfriend #1 declined. NE#7 stated, “We need to make sure you’re okay.” Boyfriend #1 told the officers to “stay away.” NE#7 explained, “We got info that someone in here is stabbed.” Boyfriend #1 interjected, “There’s nobody in here.” NE#7 continued, “You’re in here. And we have someone downstairs saying that she stabbed someone. We need to clear the apartment and make sure no one else is in here.” Boyfriend #1 replied, “No. I’m good. I’m okay. Don’t come in my house.” Boyfriend #1 asked not to be bothered, to which NE#4 replied, “It’s too late for that.” NE#1 stated,

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<sup>1</sup> Girlfriend #1 did not clarify the meaning of “they,” but the context suggested that a government entity took custody of her child.



“We’re checking the apartment. Let me see both your hands,” after which NE#4 stated, “We’re coming in.” Boyfriend #1 reiterated, “Don’t come in my house” and approached the door. Boyfriend #1 attempted to shut the door with his left arm, which bore a bloody laceration, but NE#7 extended his arm, preventing the door from closing.



*The image above was taken from NE#4’s BWV. Boyfriend #1 is on the left, and NE#7 is on the right.*

Boyfriend #1 exclaimed, “Leave my house!” The named employees entered the apartment, prompting Boyfriend #1 to retreat to the living room. Boyfriend #1 assumed a fighting stance, urged the officers to leave, and refused to go to the ground. NE#3 deployed one round from his 40mm less-lethal launcher. NE#1 then deployed his Taser, after which the named employees brought Boyfriend #1 to the ground and handcuffed him. NE#1 instructed NE#5 to verify whether there were any other individuals in the apartment, which he did. NE#1 informed Boyfriend #1 of his arrest, after which NE#6 Mirandized him. Seattle Fire Department personnel arrived and treated Boyfriend #1.

#### **D. OPA Interviews**

OPA interviewed the named employees. Each account was generally consistent with the other accounts. They cited community caretaking as their justification for their warrantless entry, as they were aware that Boyfriend #1 had been stabbed and potentially faced life-threatening injuries. They claimed that their intent was not to arrest Boyfriend #1 but to provide aid, given their uncertainty regarding the severity of his injuries.<sup>2</sup> They noted that although Boyfriend #1 did not present a considerable amount of blood, he might have sustained a life-threatening injury that was not visible. NE#1 mentioned that Boyfriend #1 might have been incapable of making rational decisions due to his injuries or being in a state of crisis. Additionally, they expressed concern about the possibility of others inside who might also require aid. NE#7 specifically mentioned Girlfriend #1’s “baby father” comment, which raised his concern because he believed their child could be inside and in danger since their child was not with Girlfriend #1. However, NE#7 said he did not communicate this concern to the other named employees and did not reference it in his use-of-force statement.

<sup>2</sup> NE#4 stated that his entry was motivated by both a welfare check and the execution of a mandatory domestic violence arrest.



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**ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSIONS:**

**Named Employee #1 – Allegation #1**

***6.180 – Searches-General, 1. Officers May Only Make Searches Pursuant to a Search Warrant, Unless a Specific Exception Applies***

The Complainant alleged that the named employees may have unlawfully entered the apartment.

Officers are prohibited from searching without a valid search warrant unless a specific exception applies. SPD Policy 6.180(1). The need to protect or preserve life, avoid serious injury, or protect property in danger of damage may justify an entry that would otherwise be illegal absent an emergency. SPD Policy 6.180-POL-1. A community caretaking search does not require probable cause but must be motivated solely by the perceived need to render aid or assistance. *Id.* Officers will act under a community caretaking role in emergency action, not in their evidence-gathering role. *Id.* An officer may conduct a warrantless community caretaking search when: (1) the officer has a subjective belief that someone likely needs assistance for health or safety concerns; (2) a reasonable person in the same situation would similarly believe there is a need for assistance; (3) there is a reasonable basis to associate the need for assistance with the place searched; (4) there is an imminent threat of substantial bodily injury to persons or substantial damage to property; and (5) a specific person or property needs immediate help for health or safety reasons. SPD Policy 6.180-POL-1(1).

The evidence overwhelmingly supported the named employees' action in opening the apartment door based on community caretaking grounds. At that moment, the named employees reasonably believed Boyfriend #1 might have sustained serious injuries. Girlfriend #1 reported a struggle resulting in both parties stabbing each other, but she specifically communicated that Boyfriend #1 had been "stabbed even worse." Girlfriend #1 exhibited visible stab wounds and had blood on her clothing. The named employees were unable to contact Boyfriend #1 through the door despite multiple attempts, heightening their concerns that he might have lost consciousness due to blood loss. Based on the evidence provided, OPA finds the community caretaking elements under SPD Policy 6.180-POL-1(1) were met, justifying their decision to open the apartment door.

However, the named employees' decision to enter the apartment following their dialogue with Boyfriend #1 was questionable. As the Complainant noted, the community caretaking justification seemingly dissipated once Boyfriend #1 denied entry, claimed he was fine, and exhibited what appeared to be a minor laceration on his left arm. The named employees acknowledged that Boyfriend #1 did not show a considerable amount of blood upon his approach. Still, they maintained that Boyfriend #1 could have sustained a life-threatening injury that was not immediately apparent. NE#1 also specifically mentioned Boyfriend #1's potential inability to make rational decisions due to his injuries and/or being in a state of crisis, given her concerns regarding Boyfriend #1's declining mental health. While these concerns might have been legitimate, they appeared somewhat speculative, as there were no indicators of physical or mental impairment based on Boyfriend #1's appearance and demeanor. Despite his noncompliance, Boyfriend #1 communicated with the named employees without difficulty and walked toward the door and attempted to close it without difficulty. Apart from the blood on Boyfriend #1's left arm, there was no visible blood on his clothing that could suggest other injuries. Thus, Boyfriend #1 did not appear in distress nor in need of immediate aid, undermining the named employees' justification to enter based on community caretaking grounds.

The named employees countered by citing their concern about the possibility of others being inside who might require aid. While this concern appeared genuine, it was somewhat speculative based on what was reported. At 1:02 AM,



CAD noted, “NO ONE ELSE IS INSIDE THE UNIT.” Moreover, Girlfriend #1 reported a physical altercation involving herself and Boyfriend #1 but did not mention anyone else. NE#7 specifically pointed out the possibility that their child might have been inside and in danger after hearing Girlfriend #1 refer to Boyfriend #1 as her “baby father.” However, if that were true, Girlfriend #1 would have likely communicated such a critical detail to the police. Instead, the only reference to her child was regarding the child being taken due to Girlfriend #1’s homelessness status—a detail that may not have been known to the named employees, as it was reported to WO#1 at that time.

Ultimately, OPA finds the totality of the named employees’ actions did not constitute willful misconduct. The named employees repeatedly voiced their concerns to Boyfriend #1 and attempted to provide aid throughout their encounter, despite his refusal. The named employees were genuinely concerned about the possibility of others being inside the apartment, even though they lacked sufficient information to substantiate this concern. Specifically, NE#7 told Boyfriend #1, “We need to clear the apartment and make sure no one else is in here.” After securing Boyfriend #1, NE#1 directed NE#5 to verify whether there were any other individuals in the apartment, which he did. Thus, the evidence indicated that the named employees entered to preserve Boyfriend #1’s life and protect others who might have been inside, even though their justification to enter under the community caretaking exception at that moment was somewhat diminished.

OPA also recommends a training referral that should include a discussion on investigatory steps, which, if taken, could have impacted the named employees’ evaluation of the incident. Specifically, OPA believes the named employees could have sought additional information before their entry. For instance, the named employees could have asked Girlfriend #1 and Boyfriend #1 whether anyone else was inside the apartment or could have called out to others who might be inside to identify themselves. Since at least eight officers were on scene, they could have gained a clearer understanding of the incident through investigation before deciding to enter the apartment. They could have also explored alternatives to entering. For instance, the named employees could have remained at the doorway and asked Boyfriend #1 to lift his shirt so they could assess other injuries. These and other investigation options should be addressed through additional training and counseling. Finally, OPA underscores the community caretaking requirement that a search must “be motivated solely by the perceived need to render aid or assistance.” SPD Policy 6.180-POL-1. Moreover, officers must “act under a community caretaking role in emergency action, not in their evidence gathering role.” *Id.* Here, NE#4’s stated justification for entering—to perform a welfare check and execute a mandatory domestic violence arrest—would be inconsistent with this policy.

Accordingly, OPA recommends that this allegation be Not Sustained – Training Referral.

- **Required Training:** The named employees’ chain of command should discuss OPA’s findings with them, review SPD Policy 6.180-POL-1 with them, and provide any other retraining and counseling it deems necessary. This retraining and counseling should include a discussion on investigatory tactics and alternatives when faced with a community caretaking incident. Any retraining and counseling should be documented and maintained in Blue Team.

Recommended Finding: **Not Sustained – Training Referral**



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**Named Employee #2 – Allegation #1**

***6.180 – Searches-General, 1. Officers May Only Make Searches Pursuant to a Search Warrant, Unless a Specific Exception Applies***

For the reasons articulated in Named Employee #1 – Allegation #1, OPA recommends that this allegation be Not Sustained – Training Referral.

Recommended Finding: **Not Sustained – Training Referral (Expedited)**

**Named Employee #3 – Allegation #1**

***6.180 – Searches-General, 1. Officers May Only Make Searches Pursuant to a Search Warrant, Unless a Specific Exception Applies***

For the reasons articulated in Named Employee #1 – Allegation #1, OPA recommends that this allegation be Not Sustained – Training Referral.

Recommended Finding: **Not Sustained – Training Referral**

**Named Employee #4 – Allegation #1**

***6.180 – Searches-General, 1. Officers May Only Make Searches Pursuant to a Search Warrant, Unless a Specific Exception Applies***

For the reasons articulated in Named Employee #1 – Allegation #1, OPA recommends that this allegation be Not Sustained – Training Referral.

Recommended Finding: **Not Sustained – Training Referral**

**Named Employee #5 – Allegation #1**

***6.180 – Searches-General, 1. Officers May Only Make Searches Pursuant to a Search Warrant, Unless a Specific Exception Applies***

For the reasons articulated in Named Employee #1 – Allegation #1, OPA recommends that this allegation be Not Sustained – Training Referral.

Recommended Finding: **Not Sustained – Training Referral**

**Named Employee #6 – Allegation #1**

***6.180 – Searches-General, 1. Officers May Only Make Searches Pursuant to a Search Warrant, Unless a Specific Exception Applies***

For the reasons articulated in Named Employee #1 – Allegation #1, OPA recommends that this allegation be Not Sustained – Training Referral.

Recommended Finding: **Not Sustained – Training Referral**





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**Named Employee #7 – Allegation #1**

***6.180 – Searches-General, 1. Officers May Only Make Searches Pursuant to a Search Warrant, Unless a Specific Exception Applies***

For the reasons articulated in Named Employee #1 – Allegation #1, OPA recommends that this allegation be Not Sustained – Training Referral.

Recommended Finding: **Not Sustained – Training Referral**