

Issued Date: November 20, 2025

From: Director Bonnie Glenn
Office of Police Accountability



Case Number: 2025OPA-0198

Allegations of Misconduct & Director’s Findings

Named Employee #1

1. **Allegation #1:** 5.140 - Bias-Free Policing, 5.140-POL-2 Officers Will Not Engage in Bias-Based ...

Finding: Not Sustained - Unfounded

2. **Allegation #2:** 6.060 - Collection of Information for Law Enforcement Purposes, 6.060-POL-3 Information Collection During ...

Finding: Not Sustained - Unfounded

This Closed Case Summary (CCS) represents the opinion of the OPA Director regarding the misconduct alleged and therefore sections may be written in the first person.

Executive Summary:

An anonymous Complainant alleged Named Employee #1 (NE#1), a detective assigned to SPD’s Media Unit, engaged in unpermitted “enforcement actions and intelligence gathering activities” during the “Mayday USA” event due to bias against counter-protesters based on their perceived LGBTQ+ status.

Summary of the Investigation:

On May 24, 2025, SPD officers, including NE#1, responded to a crowd control incident at Cal Anderson Park, where a religious group organized a rally that was countered by protesters supporting the lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and queer (LGBTQ) community. NE#1 was assigned to SPD’s Media Unit on that date.

The next day, an anonymous Complainant alleged NE#1, “committed enforcement actions and intelligence gathering activities at Cal Anderson Park rooted in unlawful animus including taking photographs and videos of non-violent protesters who were not engaged in any criminal activities based on their perceived LGBTQ+ status.”

OPA investigated the complaint, reviewing the anonymous web-based complaint, computer-aided dispatch (CAD) call report, SPD press release (SPD Blotter) for the event, and photographs taken by NE#1. OPA also interviewed NE#1.

The CAD call report did not show NE#1 assigned to the Cal Anderson/Mayday USA event but did show “Media-1,” the Media Unit supervisor, assigned to the event. Relatedly, the Media Unit Supervisor also authored a public press release for the SPD Blotter that documented SPD’s response to the event.

OPA interviewed NE#1 regarding the incident. NE#1 described his assignment with the Media Unit for the prior year, noting he was working in this capacity for the Mayday USA event. NE#1 stated he was assigned to the event by his supervisor. He described his role as a “media representative for the department” who was assigned to “speak to journalists” and “take photographs of the event.” He said he was ordered to take photographs “from essentially a media and journalist standpoint and that, that for public affairs and public records, I wasn’t there for any investigative purposes, that’s not my role, that was not my role that I was assigned.” NE#1 stated policy explicitly permits photographing demonstrations to document the event. See SPD Policy 6.060-POL-3(3) (“Department Personnel May Take Photographs During A demonstration to Document the Event.”). NE#1 noted his obligation under that policy to “take care” that individual demonstrators are not “readily identifiable,” and “if possible” take long range shots. He stated his intention was to document “the event itself as a whole” and to highlight the work of SPD officers, especially the Police Outreach Engagement Team (POET). NE#1 denied engaging in “intelligence gathering” and denied giving any photographs to SPD’s Intelligence Unit. NE#1 stated that, after the fact, he provided photographs to both SPD Legal for the purpose of fulfilling a public disclosure request and to a detective, who requested photographs relevant to his investigation. NE#1 denied that his intent in taking the photographs was for either of those purposes. NE#1 stated he hoped photographs could be released to the public but that, after the protest devolved and arrests were made, he no longer could do so because SPD does not provide photographs of suspects. NE#1 denied acting with any bias towards the LGBTQ+ community.

NE#1 took about 138 photographs. He provided OPA with sample photographs that appeared consistent with SPD policy and documented SPD officers, the event, and the counter protesters. OPA also reviewed all related photographs NE#1 took at the event, which he retained on his cell phone.

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 took unpermitted photographs of counter protesters based on anti-LGBTQ+ bias.

SPD policy prohibits biased policing, which it defines as “the different treatment of any person by officers motivated by any characteristic of protected classes under state, federal, and local laws as well other discernible personal characteristics of an individual.” SPD Policy 5.140-POL. This includes different treatment based on the gender, gender identity, or sexual orientation of the subject. See *id.* Officers are forbidden from both, (i) making decisions or taking actions influenced by bias, and (ii) expressing any prejudice or derogatory comments concerning personal characteristics. See SPD Policy 5.140-POL-2.

This allegation is unfounded. NE#1 was present at and taking photographs of the Mayday USA event and SPD response in line with his role as a member of the Media Unit. OPA reviewed the photographs NE#1 took and did not observe anything that appeared out of policy. On the contrary, the quality, subjects, framing, and angles appeared in line with capturing the event as a whole and not the identification of suspects, activities, movements, and associates that would be expected in criminal intelligence gathering. Also, NE#1 appeared to take a mix of photographs of SPD officers performing their assigned roles, the Mayday USA event, and the counter protesters.

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

Recommended Finding: **Not Sustained – Unfounded**

Named Employee #1 – Allegation #2

6.060 – Collection of Information for Law Enforcement Purposes, 6.060-POL-3 Information Collection During ...

The Complainant alleged that NE#1 took photographs of individuals lawfully demonstrating.

SPD policy allows department personnel to “take video and photographic documentation of individuals participating in a demonstration under certain circumstances.” SPD Policy 6.060-POL-3(1). This includes taking photographs of “demonstrators when there is reasonable suspicion of criminal activity or when actual criminal activity is occurring.” *Id.*

This allegation is unfounded. NE#1’s purpose in taking photographs was in his role in the Media Unit. This was permitted under SPD Policy 6.060-POL-3(2) to “document the event.” That some of these photographs were later determined to be potentially relevant to a criminal investigation does not mean they were taken with the intent of documenting individual activity.

During OIG’s certification review of this case, OIG noted that it was “unclear” whether NE#1 submitted his photographs to the SPD Intelligence Unit in line with a different subsection of policy, SPD Policy 6.060-POL-3(4) (“The Criminal Intelligence Unit Received and Vets Original Copies of all Videos and Photographs Taken at a Demonstration Covered by SMC 14.12”). However, OIG noted that, given the extent of this issue, they are, “working on recommendations for the department to address these issues, including updated education and processes.” Because OIG is best able to determine the nature and extent of any potential systemic issue, OPA defers making a Management Action Recommendation in this case to allow OIG to address this issue with SPD as appropriate.

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

Recommended Finding: **Not Sustained – Unfounded**