


Issued Date: January 4, 2026

From: Deputy Director Nelson R. Leese (on behalf of Director Bonnie J. Glenn)
Office of Police Accountability 

Case Number: 2025OPA-0276

Allegations of Misconduct & Director's Findings

Named Employee #1

1. **Allegation #1:** 6.010 – Arrests, 6.010-POL-1. Sworn Employees Must Have Probable Cause That a Subject has Committed a Crime in Order to Effect an Arrest
Finding: Not Sustained - Lawful and Proper (Expedited)
 2. **Allegation #2:** 5.140 – Bias-Free Policing, 5.140-POL-2. Officers Will Not Engage in Bias-Based Policing
Finding: Not Sustained - Unfounded (Expedited)
 3. **Allegation #3:** 5.001 – Standards and Duties, 5.001-POL-11. Employees Will Be Truthful and Complete in All Communication
Finding: Not Sustained - Unfounded (Expedited)
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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:

On two separate occasions, Named Employee #1 (NE#1) responded to domestic violence incidents involving the Complainant, her adult daughter (Daughter #1), and the daughter's boyfriend (Boyfriend #1). The Complainant alleged that NE#1 unlawfully arrested her, was racially biased against her, and documented false information in his incident report.

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 recommended findings based solely on its intake investigation without interviewing the named employee. As such, OPA did not interview the named employee in this case.

On August 14, 2025, OIG certified OPA's investigation as thorough, timely, and objective.

Summary of the Investigation:

OPA investigated this incident by reviewing the OPA complaint, computer-aided dispatch call report, body-worn video, incident reports, and interview statements from the Complainant. Based on these records, a preponderance of the evidence showed the following:

On September 2, 2023, NE#1 met with Daughter #1 and Boyfriend #1 in response to an assault call. Boyfriend #1 reported that the Complainant slapped his face. A security guard corroborated the assault and reported that he had to escort the Complainant away. Boyfriend #1 also reported that the Complainant disapproved of their relationship and believed Daughter #1 was being trafficked. NE#1 prepared an incident report following this incident, recommending the Complainant be charged with fourth-degree assault.

On September 10, 2023, NE#1 and his backing officer responded to a domestic disturbance call at Daughter #1's apartment building. The Complainant could be heard yelling in the lobby. Upon locating the parties, officers observed the Complainant firmly gripping Daughter #1's wrists, prompting them to order the Complainant to release Daughter #1. When the Complainant failed to comply, NE#1 forcibly removed her hands from Daughter #1's wrists, which showed redness. The officers then interviewed the parties separately. Boyfriend #1 and Daughter #1 reported a consistent account from the September 2 incident, while the Complainant reported that Daughter #1 was being held under duress. With the couple's consent, the officers briefly examined the couple's apartment but found no evidence corroborating the Complainant's allegation. NE#1 and his backing officer then arrested the Complainant for fourth-degree assault.

Analysis and Conclusions:

Named Employee #1 – Allegation #1

6.010 – Arrests, 6.010-POL-1. Sworn Employees Must Have Probable Cause That a Subject has Committed a Crime in Order to Effect an Arrest

The Complainant alleged that NE#1 unlawfully arrested her.

Sworn employees must have probable cause that a subject committed a crime before executing an arrest. SPD Policy 6.010-POL-1. Stated differently, where an arrest is not supported by probable cause, it violates law and Department policy. Probable cause exists when the facts and circumstances within a sworn employee's knowledge sufficiently support a reasonable belief that an offense has been or is being committed. See *State v. Fricks*, 91 Wash.2d 391, 588 P.2d 1328 (1979); *State v. Gluck*, 83 Wash.2d 424, 426–27, 518 P.2d 703 (1974).

NE#1 had probable cause to arrest the Complainant for fourth-degree assault as soon as he encountered her in the apartment lobby. The Complainant was observed firmly gripping Daughter #1's wrists to the extent that, after multiple orders to release her grip were unsuccessful, NE#1 was compelled to forcibly remove the Complainant's hands from Daughter #1's wrists, which showed redness. Daughter #1 wished to proceed with charges against the Complainant for assault. Thus, the Complainant's arrest was lawful and proper because it was supported by probable cause.

Accordingly, OPA recommends that this allegation be Not Sustained – Lawful and Proper (Expedited).

Recommended Finding: **Not Sustained – Lawful and Proper (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 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 discernible personal characteristics. See SPD Policy 5.140-POL-2.

OPA found no evidence of bias. NE#1 conducted an objective investigation by interviewing the parties separately, examining the physical evidence, which included observing the redness on Daughter #1's wrists, and interviewing independent witnesses who corroborated the couple's account. NE#1 even inspected the couple's apartment to determine whether there was any validity to the Complainant's claim that Daughter #1 was being held under duress, but NE#1 found no evidence corroborating that claim. 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 #1 – Allegation #3

5.001 – Standards and Duties, 5.001-POL-11. Employees Will Be Truthful and Complete in All Communication

The Complainant alleged that NE#1 documented false information in his incident report.

Department employees must be truthful and complete in all communications. SPD Policy 5.001-POL-11.

This allegation is unfounded. NE#1's incident report accurately reflected OPA's body-worn video observations, including the parties' and witness accounts. It was complete, thorough, and accurate.

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

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

Footnote 1. The OPA Director may designate a civilian OPA Deputy Director to “perform such duties and have such powers as the OPA Director may prescribe and delegate.” Seattle Ordinance 125315, Council Bill 118969, subchapter I, section 3.29.100(B).