

Issued Date: January 8, 2026

From: Director Bonnie J. Glenn
Office of Police Accountability



Case Number: 2025OPA-0302

Allegations of Misconduct & Director's Findings

Named Employee #1

- 1. Allegation #1:** 8.100 – De-Escalation, 8.100-POL-1. When Safe, Feasible, and Without Compromising Law Enforcement Priorities, Sworn Employees Will Use De-Escalation Tactics to Reduce the Need for Force
Finding: Not Sustained - Unfounded
 - 2. Allegation #2:** 8.200 – Using Force, 8.200-POL-1. Using Force: When Authorized
Finding: Not Sustained - Lawful and Proper
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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:

Named Employee #1 (NE#1) and Witness Officer #1 (WO#1) responded to a gun threat call at Denny Blaine Park. During NE#1's attempt to detain Community Member #2 (CM#2)—the suspect accused of threatening Community Member #1 (CM#1) with a gun—CM#2 fell from a three-foot ledge, causing unconsciousness. OPA investigated whether NE#1 failed to de-escalate and used unauthorized force against CM#2.

Administrative Note:

On November 24, 2025, the Office of Inspector General certified OPA's investigation as thorough, timely, and objective.

NE#1 separated from SPD while OPA's investigation was pending. Consequently, the contractual 180-day timeline does not apply to NE#1.

Summary of the Investigation:

OPA investigated this incident by reviewing the unsubstantiated misconduct screening form, computer-aided dispatch (CAD) call report, body-worn video (BWV), privately recorded video, incident and use-of-force reports, and interview statements from WO#1. NE#1 declined an interview with OPA.

A. Computer-Aided Dispatch Call Report

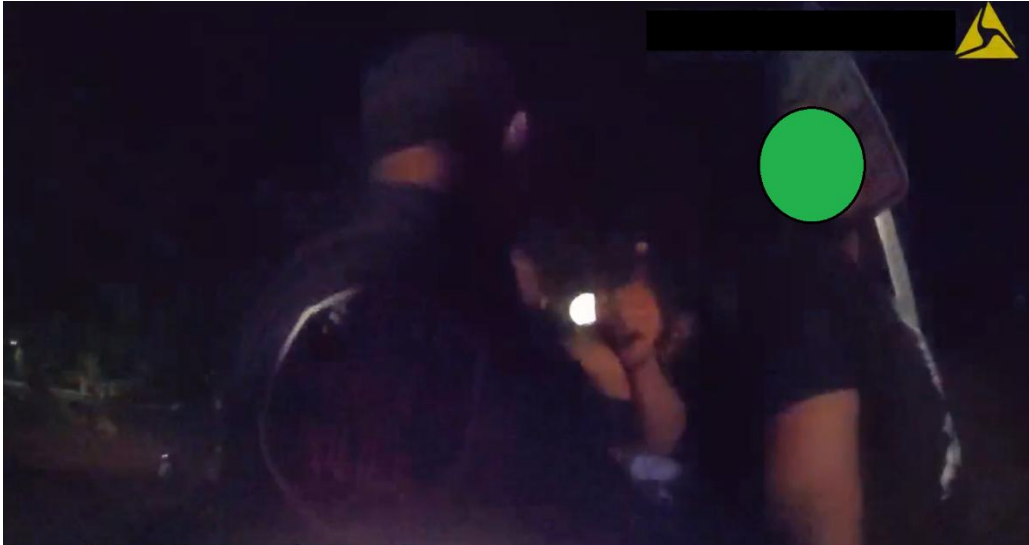
On July 16, 2025, at 11:41 PM, CAD call remarks noted, "GUN[.] SUSP[ECT] POINTED GUN AT [REPORTING PARTY]."

B. Body-Worn Video and Privately Recorded Video

BWV captured the following:

NE#1 and WO#1 arrived at Denny Blaine Park and interviewed CM#1. CM#1 reported that he was heading to his car when he encountered a group of intoxicated individuals, including CM#2. CM#1 said he drew his gun when CM#2 charged at him and instigated a confrontation. CM#1 said he reacted to CM#2's threats with self-defense. As NE#1, WO#1, and CM#1 approached CM#1's car, the sound of air escaping from a tire was audible, followed by the sound of a blaring car alarm. CM#1 exclaimed, "Is that my car? Oh shit!"

NE#1 and WO#1 arrived at a parking lot, where CM#2 and several community members were gathered. NE#1 and WO#1 drew their firearms and ordered CM#2 to show them his hands. NE#1 then instructed CM#2 to get on the ground, but CM#2 did not comply. Instead, CM#2 placed a backpack on the trunk of a car and then raised his hands. A community member claimed that CM#1 drew a gun on CM#2. NE#1 and WO#1 grabbed CM#2's arms and moved them behind his back. WO#1 explained that they were merely detaining CM#2. NE#1 pushed two community members away from CM#2 and shouted, "Move back!" The community members voiced frustration over CM#2's detainment. During NE#1's attempt to handcuff CM#2, CM#2 turned to face NE#1, prompting NE#1 to turn CM#2 back around. NE#1 again attempted to handcuff CM#2, but CM#2 turned to face NE#1 again, prompting NE#1 to push CM#2 and shout, "Stop moving, dude!" NE#1 pressed CM#2 against a signpost, where NE#1 attempted to handcuff CM#2. However, the community members attempted to interfere with the detainment, prompting NE#1 to push them back and shout, "Move!"



The image above was taken from WO#1's BWV. NE#1 was facing a community member when he inserted his arm between NE#1 and CM#2. CM#2, indicated in green, was pressed against the signpost as NE#1 attempted to handcuff CM#2.

CM#2 turned to face WO#1 and asked about the reason for the detainment. CM#2 placed his left hand on the signpost and began moving away from NE#1 and WO#1—both of whom held onto CM#2's right arm. CM#2 then freed his right arm from the officers' grasp by pulling it away.



The image above was taken from WO#1's BWV. CM#2 freed his arm from the officers' grasp by pulling it away.

After freeing his right arm, CM#2 moved backward and then sat on the ledge. During this maneuver, NE#1 advanced toward CM#2 and seemingly attempted to regain his grasp on CM#2.¹ During NE#1's attempt to grab CM#2 while CM#2 was seated on the ledge, CM#2 appeared to have lost his balance and fell from the ledge.



The image above was taken from a community member's recorded video. As CM#2 was falling, NE#1 tried grabbing CM#2's arms.

CM#2 fell about three feet and landed on grass but remained unresponsive. Community members physically interfered with NE#1's attempt to handcuff CM#2. NE#1 eventually handcuffed CM#2, who was evaluated on scene by the Seattle Fire Department.

C. Use-of-Force Report

NE#1 prepared a type I use-of-force report following this incident. NE#1 documented the following:

As we continued to struggle with both the crowd and [CM#2][,] we found ourselves by the cement ledge and ultimately resulted in [CM#2] falling around 3 feet to the grass ground due to the crowd pushing us, him pulling away, and us attempting to gain control and [e]ffect the physical arrest.

NE#1 clarified, "A[s] [CM#2] pulled away aggressively, the momentum turned his body and fell backwards over the short wall."

D. OPA Interview

On November 14, 2025, OPA interviewed WO#1. WO#1 said the community members were shouting at him and NE#1 while they attempted to handcuff CM#2, who continually pulled away. WO#1 said CM#2 pulled away again and fell from the ledge. WO#1 denied seeing NE#1 push CM#2 over the ledge.

Analysis and Conclusions:

Named Employee #1 – Allegation #1

8.100 – De-Escalation, 8.100-POL-1. When Safe, Feasible, and Without Compromising Law Enforcement Priorities, Sworn Employees Will Use De-Escalation Tactics to Reduce the Need for Force

NE#1 allegedly failed to de-escalate before using force.

When safe, feasible, and without compromising law enforcement priorities, sworn employees will use de-escalation tactics to reduce the need for force. SPD Policy 8.100-POL-1. Team approaches to de-escalation are encouraged and will consider sworn employee training and skill level, the number of sworn employees, and whether any sworn employee has successfully established rapport with the subject. *Id.* The totality of the circumstances should guide de-escalation options purposed for voluntary compliance through communication, time, distance, and shielding. *Id.*

NE#1 de-escalated to the extent feasible. After CM#1 reported that CM#2 had threatened him, NE#1 approached CM#2 while maintaining a safe distance and ordered CM#2 to show his hands. Once CM#2 finally complied, NE#1 advanced toward CM#2 to handcuff him, which was a reasonable decision based on CM#2 reportedly being armed. At this point, NE#1 de-escalated by utilizing communication, time, and distance. However, NE#1's attempt to handcuff CM#2 was thwarted by circumstances beyond his control. CM#2 continually resisted during handcuffing, and the community members repeatedly interfered with the detainment. Consequently, de-escalation was no longer feasible at this moment. NE#1 was authorized to use force to secure CM#2 in handcuffs and keep the community members away from CM#2. Overall, NE#1 de-escalated to the extent feasible until faced with resistance and obstruction.

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

Recommended Finding: **Not Sustained – Unfounded**

Named Employee #1 – Allegation #2

8.200 – Using Force, 8.200-POL-1. Using Force: When Authorized

NE#1 allegedly used unauthorized force against CM#2.

Sworn employees will only use objectively reasonable, necessary, and proportional force to the threat or urgency of the situation to achieve a law enforcement objective while protecting the life and safety of all people. SPD Policy 8.200-POL-1. Reasonableness must consider that sworn employees are often forced to make split-second decisions about the amount of force necessary in a particular situation in tense, uncertain, dynamic, and rapidly evolving circumstances. *Id.* The

question is whether the sworn employee's actions were objectively reasonable considering the facts and circumstances confronting them, without regard to their underlying intent or motivation. *Id.* Several factors should be weighed when evaluating reasonableness. See *id.* Force is necessary under the totality of the circumstances when there is no reasonably effective alternative to using physical or deadly force, and the type and amount of physical or deadly force used is a reasonable and proportional response to effect the legal purpose intended or to protect against the threat posed to the sworn employee or others. SPD Policy 8.050 (effective September 1, 2024). Proportional force must reflect the totality of circumstances of the situation, including the nature and immediacy of any threats posed to sworn employees and others. *Id.* Sworn employees must rely on training, experience, and their assessment of the situation to decide an appropriate level of force. *Id.*

NE#1 did not use unauthorized force as alleged. In fact, NE#1 did not use any reportable force throughout his encounter with CM#2. To the extent that NE#1 used *de minimis* force² during handcuffing, such force was objectively reasonable, necessary, and proportional under the circumstances. As noted above, CM#2 continually resisted detainment by turning around or pulling away to a degree that prevented NE#1 and WO#1 from securing CM#2 in handcuffs. NE#1 was authorized to use force to detain CM#2 in handcuffs, given CM#2's noncompliance and reported status as being armed. Overall, NE#1 used lawful and proper force against CM#2.

Finally, OPA finds that, more likely than not, NE#1 did not push CM#2 off the ledge. Once CM#2 freed his right arm from the officers' grasp, BWV and privately recorded video showed NE#1 reaching toward CM#2 in a manner indicating an attempt to regain control of CM#2. NE#1's motion did not indicate a push. Moreover, it would be counterproductive for NE#1 to push CM#2 away, given NE#1's repeated attempts to detain CM#2 in handcuffs. In fact, BWV and privately recorded video showed NE#1 pushing away the community members, not CM#2, to prevent interference with the detainment. More likely than not, CM#2 sat on the ledge, resisted NE#1's attempt to grab him, and, during this process, ultimately lost his balance, causing his fall.

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

Recommended Finding: **Not Sustained – Lawful and Proper**

Footnote 1. Based on OPA's review of BWV and privately recorded video, NE#1 did not motion his arms in a manner indicating a push.

Footnote 2. *De minimis* force is an action meant to separate, guide, and/or control without using control techniques that are intended to, or are reasonably likely to, cause pain or injury. Examples include, but are not limited to, using hands or equipment to stop, push back, separate, or escort, and using compliance holds without using sufficient force to cause pain. SPD Policy 8.050 (effective September 1, 2024).