

Issued Date: January 13, 2026

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

Case Number: 2025OPA-0304

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 Policing

Finding: Not Sustained - Unfounded (Expedited)

2. **Allegation #2:** 5.001 – Standards and Duties, 5.001-POL-10. Employees Will Strive to be Professional

Finding: Not Sustained - Unfounded (Expedited)

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 June 13, 2025, and August 19, 2025, Named Employee #1 (NE#1)—a parking enforcement officer—issued citations to the Complainant for improperly displaying a license plate. The Complainant alleged that NE#1 cited him because he is Black, while refusing to cite other vehicles owned by white individuals. The Complainant also alleged that on July 14, 2025, after confronting NE#1 about the citation, NE#1 replied, “I’m doing what I’m supposed to do” and “I’ve been told to cite your vehicle.”

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 September 16, 2025, OIG certified OPA's investigation as thorough, timely, and objective.

Summary of the Investigation:

OPA investigated this incident by reviewing the OPA complaint, infraction records, daily activity report, citation logs, maps, privately recorded video, and interview statements from the Complainant. Based on these records, a preponderance of the evidence showed the following:

On June 13, 2025, at 9:52 AM, NE#1 cited the Complainant for improperly displaying a license plate. Photographs showed the Complainant's vehicle displaying a tab that expired in November 2023 in violation of Seattle Municipal Code (SMC) 11.72.145.² NE#1's citation log showed NE#1 issuing twenty-four citations on June 13, 2025, with seven citations being issued between 9:00 and 10:00 AM. These citations were issued in proximity to where the Complainant's vehicle was located.

On August 19, 2025, at 1:21 PM, NE#1 cited the Complainant for the same offense. NE#1's citation log showed NE#1 issuing eighteen citations on August 19, 2025, with four citations being issued between 1:01 and 1:38 PM. These citations were issued in proximity to where the Complainant's vehicle was located.

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 cited him based on his Black race, while refusing to cite other vehicles owned by white individuals.

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. NE#1's citation logs for the relevant dates showed NE#1 citing other vehicles both on and off the street where the Complainant's vehicle was parked for the same SMC violation. Moreover, there was no indication that NE#1 knew the races of the owners of any of these vehicles, regardless of whether they were cited. 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 #2

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

The Complainant alleged that after confronting NE#1 regarding the citation, NE#1 replied, “I’m doing what I’m supposed to do” and “I’ve been told to cite your vehicle.”

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.* Employees will avoid unnecessary escalation of events, even if those events do not end in reportable uses of force. *Id.* Employees representing the Department or identifying themselves as police officers or Department employees will not use profanity directed as an insult or any derogatory, contemptuous, or disrespectful language at anyone. *Id.*

This allegation is unfounded. Photographic evidence showed the Complainant’s vehicle displaying an expired tab, justifying NE#1’s issuance of two citations against the Complainant on different days. The Complainant did not contest the validity of the citations. Overall, OPA found insufficient evidence to indicate unprofessional conduct from NE#1.

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).

Footnote 2. No person shall stop, stand, or park any vehicle on any street or alley, or in any garage, parking area or other property operated by the city unless a valid license plate or plates are attached and displayed thereon as required by RCW 46.16A.200 and SMC 11.22.080. SMC 11.72.145.