


Issued Date: February 3, 2026

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

Case Number: 2025OPA-0331

Allegations of Misconduct & Director's Findings

Named Employee #1

- 1. Allegation #1:** 5.001 – Standards and Duties, 5.001-POL-10. Employees Will Strive to be Professional

Finding: Not Sustained - Lawful and Proper

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) conducted traffic control on a street near T-Mobile Park. The Complainant alleged that NE#1 acted unprofessionally while she attempted to cross a street.

Administrative Note:

On December 29, 2025, the Office of Inspector General certified OPA's investigation as thorough, timely, and objective.

Summary of the Investigation:

OPA investigated this incident by reviewing the OPA complaint, email correspondence, and interview statements from NE#1. In lieu of an interview with OPA, the Complainant emailed OPA.

On August 23, 2025, the Complainant submitted an OPA complaint. She alleged that while she began crossing a street near T-Mobile Park, with a crosswalk signal indicating only three seconds remaining, NE#1 repeatedly and aggressively blew his whistle at her and grabbed her. She

acknowledged the “importance of pedestrian safety” but believed that NE#1’s grab was “excessive, unnecessary, and deeply upsetting.” She also alleged that NE#1 flaunted her when she tried to photograph his badge.

On September 11, 2025, the Complainant emailed OPA. She characterized NE#1’s grab as extremely hostile, unnecessary, and aggressive. She also alleged that as she photographed NE#1, he mocked her and shouted, “If you’re just starting to record, it’s too late.”

On December 16, 2025, OPA interviewed NE#1. He said he recalled this incident and confirmed that he was conducting traffic control near T-Mobile Park on August 23, 2025. He said he blows his whistle when the crosswalk signal indicates ten seconds remaining to ensure that everyone is clear of traffic. He said he blew his whistle on that day, prompting a crowd to stop before entering the intersection. However, he said the Complainant continued crossing, but when he blew his whistle again, she still did not stop. He said he approached her, extended his hand, physically contacted her shoulder and upper arm area, stopped her, and instructed her to turn back toward the sidewalk. He said he physically contacted her to ensure her safety and prevent her from unlawfully crossing the street while traffic was about to proceed. He said he pointed to his vest to show his name and badge number while the Complainant was photographing him. He said he did not recall telling her, “If you’re just starting to record, it’s too late.”

Analysis and Conclusions:

Named Employee #1 – Allegation #1

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

The Complainant alleged that NE#1 acted unprofessionally while she attempted to cross a street.

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.*

OPA does not find NE#1’s conduct to be unprofessional under these circumstances. The Complainant admittedly attempted to cross a street when the crosswalk signal indicated only three seconds remaining. NE#1 said he blows his whistle when the crosswalk signal reaches ten seconds to prevent a crowd from advancing. The evidence indicated that NE#1 blew his whistle consistent with his practice. While the crowd complied with NE#1’s instruction, the Complainant did not. She was required to obey NE#1’s lawful orders as he was conducting crowd control. See Seattle Municipal Code 11.59.010 (“No person shall wilfully fail or refuse to comply with any lawful order of any peace officer, duly authorized flagger, or firefighter, who is at the time discharging the duty of

regulating and directing traffic or pedestrians”). Therefore, it was not unreasonable or escalatory for NE#1 to blow his whistle and use, at most, *de minimis* force² to prevent the Complainant from advancing further into the street. Overall, the NE#1 and the Complainant agreed on the basic facts in this case. NE#1’s actions were lawful and proper under the circumstances.

Moreover, the evidence was insufficient to prove or disprove whether NE#1 “mocked” the Complainant. NE#1 maintained that he merely pointed to his vest to show his name and badge number while the Complainant was photographing him. Although the Complainant also alleged that NE#1 remarked, “If you’re just starting to record, it’s too late,” OPA would not regard this statement as serious misconduct, even if OPA could prove NE#1 said it. See SPD Policy 5.002-POL-5(c) (minor rudeness absent bias constitutes minor misconduct).

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

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

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. *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. SPD Policy 8.050 (effective September 1, 2024). 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. *Id.*