Seattle Office of Police Accountability

Closed Case Summary

Case Number: 2026OPA-0025

Issued Date: June 29, 2026

From: Director Bonnie Glenn
Office of Police Accountability

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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: Sustained
2. **Allegation #2:** 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 - Lawful and Proper
3. **Allegation #3:** 5.140 – Bias-Free Policing, 5.140-POL-2. Officers Will Not Engage in Bias-Based Policing
   Finding: Not Sustained – Unfounded

- **Proposed Discipline: Oral Reprimand to 18 hours suspension (2 days)**
  - **Imposed Discipline: Written Reprimand**

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 May 24, 2025, Named Employee #1 (NE#1), a lieutenant, responded to a crowd control incident at Cal Anderson Park, where a religious group organized a rally that was countered by protesters supporting the LGBTQ+ community. Two complainants alleged that NE#1 made unprofessional comments by stating, "We are here to fuck people up now." OPA also investigated whether NE#1 failed to de-escalate before arresting Community Member #1 (CM#1) and whether

NE#1 arrested CM#1 based on bias against CM#1's perceived political ideology or LGBTQ+ status.

Administrative Note:

On June 9, 2026, the Office of Inspector General certified OPA's investigation as thorough, timely, and objective.

Summary of the Investigation:

A. OPA Complaints

On January 15 and 23, 2026, two complainants submitted OPA complaints regarding a news article about NE#1 expressing statements that one complainant perceived as "absolutely unacceptable." OPA investigated the complaints by reviewing the news article, supplement reports, and body-worn video (BWV). OPA also interviewed NE#1.

B. The Incident

According to NE#1's supplement report, on May 24, 2025, NE#1 served as the commander for SPD's Community Response Group (CRG), which was responsible for monitoring and managing two events at Cal Anderson Park—one a religious event with a permit to use the park and the other a protest of the religious event. NE#1 wrote that SPD officers aimed to support everyone's First Amendment rights, utilize Police Outreach Engagement Team (POET) officers, establish a counter-protest zone to separate the two groups, and address criminal conduct. NE#1 identified several counter protesters as "Black Bloc" individuals, characterized by their black attire, helmets, and masks. NE#1 wrote that the counter protesters encroached upon the religious group's permitted space despite being instructed to remain in their designated counter-protest zone.

BWV captured NE#1 conducting crowd control at the scene and using a long-range acoustic device (LRAD) to communicate that while the counter protesters were encouraged to exercise their First Amendment rights within the counter-protest zone, they were not allowed within the permitted event zone and faced arrest for criminal conduct. NE#1 repeatedly instructed the counter protesters to leave the permitted event area. Witness Supervisor #1 (WS#1), a lieutenant, informed NE#1 that the counter protesters remained within the permitted event area. NE#1 replied he was monitoring the situation, but officers would only reenter with "guns blazing" once arrangements were made.

NE#1 joined a group of officers, including WS#1. NE#1 appeared to express his frustration, stating, "Too many cooks in the fucking kitchen right now," and that an individual was "driving [him] nuts today." WS#1 commented that a "roger that" would have sufficed as a response. NE#1 continued, "We are past talking to people. We're here to fuck people up now." WS#1 replied, "I'm not even going to go there. I'm going to say that we may have to use necessary and objectively reasonable force." NE#1 interjected, "Okay. I'm saying the same thing. I'm just using the terms [inaudible]. We're

– we're here to work. We're here to separate these crowds. We're here to keep them separated because we're done with these guys doing the shit that they're doing. They've – they've pushed the envelope and now they're gonna get the whole fucking [inaudible]."

Later, BWV captured NE#1 and other officers moving through the permitted event area and instructing the counter protesters to return to the counter-protest zone. NE#1 warned the counter protesters who remained that they would be arrested if they failed to comply. These orders were also communicated via the LRAD. The officers formed a police line and gradually guided the counter protesters toward the counter-protest zone. Eventually, NE#1 approached CM#1, with Witness Officer #1 (WO#1) approaching from CM#1's left side.



This image, taken from NE#1's BWV, shows WO#1 (in blue) approaching CM#1 (indicated by the red arrow).

WO#1 reached CM#1 first, began pushing CM#1 toward the counter-protest zone, and instructed CM#1 to move. CM#1 began walking in that direction. However, NE#1 intervened, informing CM#1, "You're under arrest." NE#1 then grabbed CM#1 and lowered CM#1 to the ground. NE#1 shouted, "You were told not to come back here! You were told that it would lead to your arrest! This is why this is happening!" CM#1 denied hearing the LRAD, but NE#1 countered, "But you saw everyone else moving back, did you not?" CM#1 replied, "Yeah, but I'm a protester, you know? Sorry, officer." NE#1 reiterated that CM#1 was under arrest.

About two-and-a-half minutes later, NE#1 approached Community Member #2 (CM#2), who appeared to be wearing a black shirt, black mask, and head scarf and stood in the permitted event zone. NE#1 asked CM#2 if they were part of the protest group, which CM#2 affirmed. NE#1 told CM#2 that the protest group had been warned to leave, which CM#2 denied hearing. CM#2 stated they had been present in the area and officers "walked right by" them. NE#1 warned CM#2 about an impending arrest if CM#2 did not leave, prompting CM#2 to leave.

C. OPA Interview

On May 5, 2026, OPA interviewed NE#1. NE#1 said he had experience with crowd management events as a CRG commander. NE#1 said effective crowd control requires balancing resources, meaning that when resources are limited and minor offenses occur, officers may be required to use more force than reasonable to intervene in large group settings. NE#1 clarified that when multiple groups engage each other, they need to be aware of what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable behavior. NE#1 said officers should not be overly aggressive while still addressing criminal conduct.

In describing SPD's response to this incident, NE#1 said SPD was given short notice, had limited resources and personnel, and had limited training and experience among the available personnel. NE#1 also noted that a rock concert performed, which generated extra noise that hindered SPD's ability to communicate effectively. NE#1 expressed frustration that the religious event was allowed to occur at Cal Anderson Park, as he believed it would incite a counter protest due to conflicting ideologies.

NE#1 denied having any recollection of making the statements at issue until he viewed his BWV. When OPA asked whether NE#1 had any concerns about how his statements might have been perceived by nearby officers, NE#1 replied no, although he could "recognize and understand how that is embarrassing for the department." NE#1 referenced a protest event from 2020 that informed his tactical considerations. NE#1 explained that, during this protest, officers had to stand in line, observe crimes, and take no action. NE#1 continued, "The messaging that I was meaning to give there was I wanted the officers to know that we are going to work. I'm not going to ask them to stand on line. I'm expecting them to do their job and address criminal behavior." NE#1 acknowledged that he "probably" could have used different language, but he was uncertain about the potential impact that might have had on the officers. NE#1 emphasized that he did not intend for the officers to "go out there and fight people." NE#1 noted that, by this time, the officers had already executed multiple arrests—many of which were based on assaulting officers. NE#1 said his statements were not directed at either the religious or counter-protest group but, rather, focused on criminal conduct.

In explaining CM#1's arrest, NE#1 said he observed CM#1, who was initially within the counter-protest zone, cross the police line despite being warned to remain within the counter-protest zone. NE#1 said this discretionary arrest was intended to maintain SPD's legitimacy. When OPA asked about other counter protesters who were nearby and speaking with a POET officer, as well as CM#1's compliance with WO#1's order, NE#1 replied that his objective was to maintain de-escalation between the two groups, even if that meant overriding WO#1's decision to relocate CM#1. NE#1 felt that CM#1's arrest contributed to de-escalation. NE#1 also mentioned, from his perspective, that CM#1 was "clearly beyond the line" where the other counter protesters were located and believed that CM#1 was aware of the violation. NE#1 denied targeting CM#1 based on CM#1's clothing, perceived political ideology, LGBTQ+ status, or Black Bloc identity. When OPA asked about NE#1's decision to allow CM#2 an opportunity to leave while not affording the same opportunity to CM#1, NE#1 replied that CM#1 knew about not being allowed within the permitted

zone, whereas NE#1 was uncertain about CM#2's awareness. NE#1 said he lacked personal knowledge of CM#2 and was unsure about whether he had ever interacted with CM#2.

Analysis and Conclusions:

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

The complainants alleged that NE#1 made unprofessional statements.

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.*

NE#1's statements (including "we're here to fuck people up now") were unprofessional, escalatory, and disrespectful. Even WS#1 appeared to disagree with NE#1's statements, as WS#1 immediately replied, "I'm not even going to go there." NE#1's statement appeared to reflect an intent to use impermissible force against the counter protesters. Such a viewpoint undermines public trust in NE#1 and SPD because it erodes the legitimacy of SPD's objective to uphold every individual's constitutional rights and created an impression that NE#1 viewed the purpose of officers being "here" was to "fuck people up." According to interview statements, NE#1 was influenced by a protest in 2020, in which he claimed that the officers were instructed not to take any police action against criminal conduct. In this 2025 protest, NE#1 wanted his officers to take police action. OPA recognizes that NE#1 had the lawful authority to arrest those who disobeyed police commands or committed crimes, as well as to use objectively reasonable, necessary, and proportional force when needed. Nevertheless NE#1 could have continued executing targeted arrests without articulating his intent to "fuck people up now." This phrasing was unnecessarily escalatory, contrary to NE#1's stated goal of de-escalating both groups and maintaining SPD's legitimacy. NE#1 claimed during his OPA interview that he did not intend for the officers to "go out there and fight people." Instead, NE#1 explained, he was expressing that officers would not be asked to "let crimes happen" but instead would "address criminal behavior." However, the usual interpretation of the phrase "we're here to fuck people up now" would be to "fight people." During his OPA interview, NE#1 acknowledged that his statement could be "embarrassing for the department" and conceded that he "probably" could have chosen different wording. NE#1's admission was notable and demonstrated an awareness of the unprofessional nature of his statements. OPA agrees that NE#1's statement was "embarrassing" for SPD. NE#1—a lieutenant with significant crowd management experience and a CRG commander on the date of the incident was expected to express himself in a more appropriate and professional manner. OPA finds that NE#1's comments eroded public trust in SPD and himself.

Accordingly, OPA recommends that this allegation be Sustained.

Recommended Finding: **Sustained**

Named Employee #1 – Allegation #2
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 arresting CM#1.

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.*

SPD's overall response to the protest reflected communication, time, and distance. SPD established zones for the opposing groups and eventually erected a fence to create distance between them. The officers also maintained a reasonable distance from the counter protesters while guarding the fence. Throughout the event, POET officers attempted to communicate with the counter protesters, despite the counter protesters' refusal to interact. NE#1 utilized the LRAD to communicate instructions, set expectations, and warn the counter protesters that they faced arrest if they committed crimes or refused to relocate to the counter-protest zone. Officers also reiterated these warnings and used *de minimis* force to guide the counter protesters to their designated zone. Despite being given ample time and opportunity to comply, some counter protesters disregarded commands by refusing to relocate. NE#1 reported identifying a counter protester (CM#1) who had initially been within the counter-protest zone but deliberately relocated to the permitted zone in defiance of police commands. Although this event was chaotic and involved large groups of individuals, on the preponderance of the evidence standard, NE#1's recollection was based on NE#1's immediate communication to CM#1 ("You were told not to come back here! You were told that it would lead to your arrest! This is why this is happening!") and CM#1's acknowledgment that he was aware that the counter-protest group was being moved but chose to disregard this ("Yeah, but I'm a protester, you know? Sorry, officer."). Since NE#1 was the CRG commander and had the discretion to arrest CM#1 for obstruction, as well as the authority to override WO#1, OPA finds that NE#1 de-escalated to the extent feasible without compromising law enforcement priorities.

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

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

Named Employee #1 – Allegation #3
5.140 – Bias-Free Policing, 5.140-POL-2. Officers Will Not Engage in Bias-Based Policing

NE#1 allegedly arrested CM#1 based on bias against CM#1's perceived political ideology or LGBTQ+ status.

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 perceived political ideology, sexual orientation, or gender identity. *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. SPD officers, including NE#1, were on site to support everyone's rights to free speech and peaceably assemble, enforce the law, preserve order, protect people, and preserve property. NE#1 repeatedly communicated these objectives to the counter protesters via the LRAD. However, numerous counter protesters disregarded orders to relocate or committed crimes like assault or property damage. More likely than not, NE#1 directed his focus toward the counter protesters due to their behavior, not their discernible personal characteristics. BWV showed NE#1 expressing his frustration due to the counter protesters refusing to relocate to the counter-protest zone. OPA did not find evidence that NE#1 disparaged the counter protesters' perceived political ideology, LGBTQ+ status, or Black Bloc identity. To the extent that NE#1 arrested several counter protesters, those arrests were targeted against those who refused to relocate or committed crimes for which NE#1 had probable cause. Overall, OPA found no evidence of bias impacting NE#1's decisions.

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

Recommended Finding: **Not Sustained – Unfounded**