



Seattle Office of Police Accountability

February 12, 2025

Chief Shon F. Barnes
Seattle Police Department
PO Box 34986
Seattle, WA 98124-4986

Dear Chief Barnes:

Please see the below Management Action Recommendation.

Case Number

- 2024OPA-0027 / 2025COMP-0005

Topic

- Responsibilities of Employees Concerning Alleged Policy Violations

Summary

- An SPD student officer was contacted in another jurisdiction by police, who referred the named employee's conduct to a prosecutor's office to consider for criminal charges.
- Four days later, a member of the student officer's chain of command emailed multiple members of SPD command staff and the then-OPA Director. The email subject line was "Administrative Leave." The email contained a copy of the police report, and the body of the email stated the report concerned the student officer and her acting assistant chief would "be handling" when he returned from vacation.
- The student officer was immediately placed on administrative leave, but a "Blue Team" referral was not made to OPA. The human resources director requested an update from OPA over four months later, triggering the OPA investigation.

Analysis

- SPD Policy 5.002-POL-8 requires employees to report to their supervisor, in writing, if they "believe they are the subject of a criminal investigation."
- SPD Policy 5.002-POL-5 requires supervisors to refer allegations of "potential criminal violations of law" to OPA.
- SPD Policy 5.002-TSK-1 provides a specific procedure for employees referring a serious policy violation to OPA, including the submission of a "Complaint Blue Team entry" to be forwarded to OPA.
- In this case, OPA determined multiple supervisors were aware of the incident, each of whom reasonably believed another processed the OPA referral.
- SPD policy does not specify which supervisor is ultimately responsible for making a Blue Team referral.
- In another case (2024OPA-0018), a former OPA Director was copied on an email noting that an officer was placed on administrative leave but omitting the reason for this decision. No Blue Team referral was made and—four years later—OPA was precluded from recommending discipline for the officer's DUI arrest and later reckless driving conviction. *See* SPOG CBA article 3.6(B).



Recommendations

- OPA recommends SPD (1) reemphasize through training to supervisors that OPA referrals from SPD employees reporting serious misconduct should be sent through Blue Team absent, (2) require in policy that an OPA referral be made whenever an officer is placed on administrative leave for alleged misconduct, and (3) specify which supervisors are obligated to submit a Blue Team complaint to OPA.

I appreciate your consideration and look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bonnie J. Glenn". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Bonnie" being more prominent.

Bonnie Glenn
Interim Director, Office of Police Accountability