



## OFFICE OF PROFESSIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY

### Closed Case Summary

Complaint Number OPA#2016-1393

Issued Date: 04/11/2017

Named Employee #1	
Allegation #1	<u>Seattle Police Department Manual</u> 5.002 (2) Responsibilities of Employees Concerning Complaints of Possible Misconduct: Employees Will Assist Any Person Who Wishes to File a Complaint (Policy that was issued January 1, 2015)
OPA Finding	<b>Not Sustained</b> (Lawful and Proper)
Allegation #2	<u>Seattle Police Department Manual</u> 5.001 (9) Standards and Duties: Employees Shall Strive to be Professional at all Times (Policy that was issued April 1, 2015)
OPA Finding	<b>Not Sustained</b> (Unfounded)
Final Discipline	N/A

#### **INCIDENT SYNOPSIS**

The Named Employee took the complainant's call on the Non-Emergency line.

#### **COMPLAINT**

The complainant alleged the Named Employee, a dispatcher, behaved unprofessionally when he asked her for the badge numbers for officers that were present at an incident. An additional allegation was added upon OPA review of the incident as it was unclear if the Named Employee properly followed policy in regards to taking the complaint.

## **INVESTIGATION**

The OPA investigation included the following actions:

1. Review of the complaint
2. Review of Non-Emergency recording
3. Search for and review of all relevant records and other evidence
4. Interview of SPD employee

## **ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION**

The audio recording of the telephone conversation between the complainant and the Named Employee clearly demonstrated that the Named Employee took the information she needed to notify a supervisor of the complainant's desire to file a complaint. The Named Employee took extra time on the phone to research and find the incident about which the complainant wanted to file a complaint. The Named Employee gave the complainant the incident/case number he needed and assured him she would refer his complaint to a supervisor who would follow up with the complainant. The Named Employee then routed that information to a supervisor, who attempted to contact the complainant. The complainant did not return the supervisor's calls, but instead filed a complaint with OPA. The Named Employee did not comply with the complainant's request for the serial numbers of the other officers logged to the incident. The Named Employee was under no obligation to provide the complainant with that information, which he could obtain through a Public Disclosure Request. In addition, the training materials of the Communications (911) Section direct call-takers not to screen or gather information about complaints. Rather, they are to take down the information provided and pass it along to a supervisor.

The complainant alleged the Named Employee was angry and unprofessional with him during their telephone conversation. The audio recording of that conversation did not support this allegation. It was possible that part of the reason why the complainant experienced the interaction as negative was a result of miscommunication and the difficulty the Named Employee was having hearing the complainant due to background noise. The Named Employee was polite and explained to the complainant what she was going to do, even using tact when ending the call.

## **FINDINGS**

### **Named Employee #1**

#### **Allegation #1**

A preponderance of the evidence supported the conclusion that the Named Employee did what was expected of her according to policy and training. Therefore a finding of **Not Sustained** (Lawful and Proper) was issued for *Responsibilities of Employees Concerning Complaints of Possible Misconduct: Employees Will Assist Any Person Who Wishes to File a Complaint*.

Allegation #2

A preponderance of the evidence did not support this allegation. Therefore a finding of **Not Sustained** (Unfounded) was issued for *Standards and Duties: Employees Shall Strive to be Professional at all Times*.

*NOTE: The Seattle Police Department Manual policies cited for the allegation(s) made for this OPA Investigation are policies that were in effect during the time of the incident. The issued date of the policy is listed.*