



Seattle Office of Police Accountability

August 3, 2020

Chief Carmen Best
Seattle Police Department
PO Box 34986
Seattle, WA 98124-4986

Dear Chief Best:

Please see the below Management Action Recommendation.

Case Number

- 2020OPA-0199 / 2020COMP-0009

Topic

- Involuntary Mental Health Transport

Summary

- The named employee told a subject that she would not be billed for an ambulance transport because she was being involuntarily detained and that the cost would be billed to the city. The subject later received a bill for the ambulance.

Analysis

- The named employee made the decision to involuntarily detain a suicidal subject so that she would receive mental health care. The subject objected because she did not want to be responsible for the cost of the ambulance. The named employee told the subject that the City would cover the cost of the ambulance transport, at which point the subject agreed to be transported to the hospital.
- OPA has seen other cases in which officers inaccurately informed subjects that they would not be billed for an ambulance transport. OPA's analysis of this incident indicates the named employee genuinely believed this to be true. OPA believes this is a systemic misconception, rather than individual misconduct by the named employee.

Recommendation(s)

- Send a reminder to the Patrol Operations Bureau that ambulance transports are billed to the subject's insurance agency and, where the subjects do not have insurance, to the subjects directly.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter. I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

AM

Andrew Myerberg
Director, Office of Police Accountability