



Seattle Office of Inspector General

April 29, 2019

To: Carmen Best, Chief of Police
From: Lisa Judge, Inspector General
Re: Crime Stoppers Update

At your request, OIG conducted a preliminary review of the relationship between the Seattle Police Department (SPD) and Crime Stoppers of Puget Sound (CSPS). As we discussed, OIG identified the following potential issues:

- The information-sharing relationship between SPD and CSPS appears to be unusual compared to other large police departments, such as the New York Police Department and the Los Angeles Police Department. These departments do not share their information with the local Crime Stoppers branch but may review information that Crime Stoppers sends to the department.
- The contract between SPD and CSPS has the potential to be problematic, as the contract has no end date and SPD was not able to locate the terms of the contract.
- OIG received an allegation that an SPD employee released a full case file to CSPS, including the unredacted name of a child victim. If true, this would appear to be both a violation of SPD policy and state law.

To recap the remedial steps shared by SPD with OIG, it is my understanding that SPD is reviewing its information-sharing process with Crime Stoppers. Proposed changes include appointing a designated contact to provide redacted material to Crime Stoppers on an as-needed basis.

The Office of Police Accountability (OPA) reported to OIG that they were unable to locate records of any complaint regarding the unauthorized release of unredacted cases to CSPS. OPA has indicated it may initiate its own investigation.

OIG has no additional recommendations at this time but may follow up with SPD on its proposed changes later this year. Thank you for initiating this inquiry and working collaboratively with OIG in this review process.