



Website Refresh

The OPA website has undergone a major facelift. The new [For SPD Employees](#) section provides information specific to SPD employees.

- The [Employee Complaint Process](#) page describes the complaint process from an employee's perspective. It explains classification and alternative dispute resolution types, lays out steps of an investigation, and provides information on the disciplinary process.
- The [Employee FAQs](#) page answers questions OPA frequently gets from SPD employees, such as: What is an Expedited Investigation? What is an unsubstantiated misconduct screening? Why am I getting a Supervisor Action if I didn't do anything wrong?
- The [Case & Policy Updates](#) page is a repository for the PDFs of all previously distributed volumes of OPA's Case & Policy Update emails.

OPA's [Policy Recommendations](#) page is the clearinghouse for all Management Action Recommendations (MARs) issued by OPA. It focuses on the MARs issued during Director Myerberg's tenure. OPA has been working closely with the Professional Standards Bureau to revise the MAR process and improve the recording and tracking of MARs.

Some additional website changes include:

- Increased functionality on the [Closed Case Summaries](#) page allows for easier searching for summary reports by case number
- An updated [Complaint Tracker](#) provides more accurate case status updates
- The revamped [About Us](#) page provides more transparency into our staff and office structure, core functions, and independence.

OPA welcomes your feedback as we continue to improve our website. If you have any suggestions, please send an email to Kristina.adams@seattle.gov.

Dishonesty Case

The NE was alleged to have engaged in a DV incident with his then wife. It was reported that the NE punched a refrigerator and a coffee table, denting both. At his OPA interview, the NE denied any recollection of punching the furniture. [The investigation](#) was closed as inconclusive.

Two years later, the NE began the process of transferring to the Tacoma Police Department (TPD). One of the questions on the required background questionnaire asked: "Have you ever caused any damage before, during, or after a domestic violence dispute?" The NE responded:

“After an argument with my ex-spouse...I struck a coffee table and a refrigerator with my fist.” The NE further told TPD detectives that he still owned the dented coffee table.

The TPD detectives later reviewed the NE’s investigation files at OPA’s office. An OPA staffer was present and, while the detectives were reading about the DV investigation, heard them remark that the NE lied to OPA. This was reported to an OPA supervisor, and an investigation was initiated into the NE’s dishonesty. At his OPA interview, the NE said he recently resumed communication with his ex-wife, which led him to recall details of the DV incident that he previously did not remember.

OPA’s investigation revealed the NE engaged in intentional and material dishonesty. The following information was significant to this finding:

1. TPD detectives believed the NE lied and minimized aspects of the DV incident.
2. It was unlikely the NE would have a better memory of the incident two years later.
3. The NE’s explanation did not overcome the substantial evidence of his dishonesty.

The chain of command and the Chief of Police concurred with [OPA’s recommended finding](#). The Chief ultimately terminated the NE’s employment.

Closed Container Search

The NE arrested a driver for DUI and proceeded to search the car. The complainant, a passenger, protested the search while noting he was the owner of the car. The NE found and opened a closed blue container that contained narcotics. The NE placed the complainant under arrest for Violation of the Uniform Controlled Substances Act. The complainant later alleged that the NE was unprofessional and the search of his vehicle and the closed container was illegal.

OPA found the professionalism allegation inconclusive since the conversation in question occurred in a holding cell without audio. While OPA found the vehicle inventory search appropriate, we found opening a closed container without a reasonable belief that the items inside posed a safety risk to officers or the police facility was contrary to [policy](#).

At his OPA interview, the NE acknowledged he should not have opened the container. He said he was unfamiliar at the time with the policy and caselaw governing such searches and had since developed a better understanding of the topic. Given this, and because OPA believed this to be a mistake rather than intentional misconduct, [OPA recommended](#) a Training Referral.

If you have questions, feedback, content requests, or to add/remove your name from this distribution list, please contact Anne Bettesworth, OPA Deputy Director of Public Affairs, at anne.bettesworth@seattle.gov.