

July 25, 2025

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

Dear Chief Barnes:

Please see the Management Action Recommendation below.

Case Number

- 2024OPA-0372 / 2025COMP-0012

Topic

- Adverse Credibility Rulings

Summary

- A King County Superior Court Judge found Officer #1 made statements with “a reckless disregard for the truth” in a criminal matter. SPD Legal and the City Attorney’s Office contested the finding in both trial and appellate courts. OPA was not notified of the finding for nearly three years.

Analysis

- In July 2024, the Pierce County Prosecuting Attorney’s Office notified OPA that it was placing Officer #1 on their potential impeach list based on an adverse credibility finding against Officer #1.
- OPA opened an investigation into the factual allegations underlying the adverse credibility ruling.¹ Following a full investigation, OPA recommended the allegation be Not Sustained – Unfounded. The SPD Chain of Command adopted this recommendation.
- SPD Policy 5.002-POL-1 requires the Department to “accept allegations of policy violations from any source and by any means.”² All employees are required to report alleged serious violations to either a supervisor or directly to OPA.³ Supervisors must refer allegations of serious policy violations to OPA.⁴
- Both dishonesty and failure to report serious policy violations are serious policy violations that must be reported to OPA.⁵ SPD has important obligations under state and federal law to ensure allegations of dishonesty against its testifying employees, such as sworn officers, are investigated.⁶
- OPA opened a separate investigation⁷ to ascertain whether any SPD supervisors or command staff violated policy by failing to report the judicial finding to OPA.

¹ [2024OPA-0347](#)

² [SPD Policy 5.002 – Responsibilities of Employees Concerning Alleged Policy Violations, 5.002-POL-1](#)

³ [SPD Policy 5.002 – Responsibilities of Employees Concerning Alleged Policy Violations, 5.002-POL-6](#)

⁴ [SPD Policy 5.002 – Responsibilities of Employees Concerning Alleged Policy Violations, 5.002-POL-5](#)

⁵ *Id.*

⁶ See [RCW 10.93.180 – Protocol for potential impeachment disclosures](#) and *Brady v. Maryland*, 373 U.S. 83 (1963).

⁷ [2024OPA-0372](#)



Seattle Office of Police Accountability

- OPA determined there was a significant institutional gap as SPD has no policy or procedure defined in its Manual to address the proper management, evaluation, or reporting of adverse credibility rulings by courts of competent jurisdiction.
- The investigation was approved for Expedited Investigation. That means OPA, with the Office of Inspector General's (OIG) agreement, believed it could issue recommended findings based solely on its intake investigation. OPA and OIG concurred the case was appropriate to process as an Expedited Investigation to specifically to address this clear policy gap through a Management Action Recommendation.⁸
- OPA reviewed policies from comparable cities:
 - The New York City Police Department (NYPD) has a defined process to monitor courtroom testimony whenever it is notified of an adverse credibility ruling. NYPD "opens a file and reviews the testimony in detail" in each instance. The findings are then "remediated with additional training and administrative sanctions, when warranted."⁹
 - Other cities consulted address witness credibility and officer dishonesty, but do not address adverse credibility rulings of officers, nor cover these rulings in policy.¹⁰

Recommendations

- SPD should create a policy for managing and evaluating all adverse credibility rulings and require specific supervisory personnel to ensure such rulings are timely reported to OPA in every instance.
- In creating this policy, SPD should review the policies and procedures developed by other large-city police departments for managing adverse credibility rulings and consider incorporating formal retraining for any affected officer.

I appreciate your consideration and look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bonnie Glenn".

Bonnie Glenn
Interim Director, Office of Police Accountability

⁸ See OPA Internal Operations and Training Manual 5.4(B)(iv), setting forth the requirements for an Expedited Investigation for the purpose of issuing a MAR:

Where an Expedited Investigation is contemplated for the purpose of issuing a MAR, the following elements must be met: (1) there is a clear gap in policy and/or training or a pattern of officer behavior that suggests a systemic practice; (2) the conduct at issue is a result of a gap in policy and/or training or consistent with the identified systemic practice; (3) there is no evidence indicating willful misconduct; and (4) the matter is best addressed with a MAR.

⁹ "[Police Commissioner O'Neill on his Zero-Tolerance Policy for Perjury.](#)" NYPD New York Daily News. March 4, 2018.

¹⁰ Cities consulted include Spokane, San Francisco, San Jose, Bellevue and Bellingham