



Seattle Office of Police Accountability

October 6, 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

- 2025OPA-0136 / 2025COMP-0015

Topic

Firearms Safety

Summary

- The named employee practiced drawing his firearm at a precinct gas pump and accidentally discharged his firearm.

Analysis

- SPD Policy does not contain an explicit, general requirement that employees safely handle firearms. OPA has observed other recent instances of unsafe firearm handling by SPD employees.¹
- [SPD Policy 8.300-POL-14\(1\)](#), Use of Force Tools, governs firearms in use of force scenarios. In that context, the discharge of firearms is limited to circumstances where human life is in immediate peril, and no reasonable alternative exists.
- [SPD Policy 7.030](#) requires sworn employees to “safely handle firearms” that are recovered as evidence.
- [SPD Policy 9.060](#) addresses firearms that are issued to employees but does not include an explicit, general requirement to safely handle firearms.
- SPD trains officers to obey the “four cardinal rules” of gun safety² and provides specific instructions for dry practice firing.
- The International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) noted that unintentional or negligent discharges are among a group of recurring incident types that collectively comprise “the bulk of firearms injuries and cause of the majority of firearms-related lawsuits.”³ IACP suggests “each

¹ See 2024OPA-0280 and 2023OPA-0510.

² SPD training’s Cardinal Rules of firearm safety are, “(1) All guns are loaded, (2) Point your muzzle in a safe direction, (3) Keep your finger outside the trigger guard until you are on target and have decided to fire, and (4) Be aware of your target and what is behind it.”

³ International Association of Chiefs of Police. Law Enforcement Policy Center. [Firearms: Officer Carry, Training, and Safety](#). September 2019. IACP specifically recommended regular training on NLEFIA’s four firearm safety rules. See National Law Enforcement Firearms Instructors Association. [Firearms Safety Rules](#). Retrieved 2025.



agency must draft, promulgate, and rigorously enforce policies and procedures designed to eliminate the improper handling and discharge of firearms.”

Recommendations

- SPD should amend [SPD Policy 9.060](#) to include a general requirement for employees to safely handle firearms. This revision should incorporate the “Four Cardinal Rules” of firearm safety, adherence to firearms training, and obedience to range masters and firearms instructors.

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