



Seattle Office of Inspector General

To: Bonnie Glenn, OPA Interim Director
CC: Daniel Okada, OPA Assistant Director of Investigations
From: Payton Schenck, OIG Lead Investigative Specialist
Date: March 17, 2025
Re: Null Certification Memo for 2024OPA-0101

Null Certification Memo

OIG has reviewed the investigation for case 2024OPA-0101. While reviewing the investigation, OIG noticed multiple concerns which were unable to be resolved by OPA.

Regarding the thoroughness of the investigation, during a review of body-worn video OIG noted a Named Employee stated, "Back up or I'll beat the fucking shit out of you." The Named Employee directed this comment at a community member shortly after arriving on the call while trying to get control of the scene. OIG is concerned about the professionalism of this statement; however, the case is missing a professionalism allegation that allows this behavior to be investigated by OPA. The missing professionalism allegation means the case is not thorough.

Additionally, the case came to OIG after the 180-day timeline expired, so the case is not timely.

Finally, while conducting a Complainant interview, the OPA investigator asked questions that aren't objective. For example, after getting an initial recollection of the Complainant's account, the OPA investigator's first clarifying question was "At the time of your contact with the police officers how would you describe your demeanor and your brother's demeanor?" After the Complainant responded he was upset because he'd just been threatened, the investigator then asked: "What tone of voice were you using?" And after: "Would you say that you were yelling?" These questions are narrowly focused on the behavior of the Complainant, rather than the allegation the officers used excessive force when detaining the complainant and his brother.

After identifying issues in all three certification categories, OIG and OPA discussed concerns together and OPA took corrective action where they were able. Notably, OPA provided additional coaching to the OPA investigator, and OIG wishes to point out that this interview occurred early in the investigator's tenure. Several issues with the case also appear to be related to the case being passed between multiple investigators, causing issues with the timeline. While ultimately these discussions did not change the certification outcome, OIG is appreciative of OPA's partnership in discussing these concerns and seeking to improve on future cases.

Accordingly, OIG cannot certify the case as thorough, timely, or objective.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Payton Schenck". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Payton Schenck, OIG Lead Investigative Specialist