



SPOKANE POLICE DIVISION

CRAIG N. MEIDL CHIEF OF POLICE

Closed Case Summary

Complaint Number: C16-022 OPO Number: N/A
Date of Complaint: 3/14/2016
Allegation: Policy Violation
Chain of Command Finding: Unfounded
Final Discipline: Not Applicable

INCIDENT SYNOPSIS

The complainant was involved in a lawsuit with the officer's spouse. The complaint was that the officer initiated a lawsuit against her due to his Internal Affairs interview.

COMPLAINT

Policy 340.3.2 (b) - The following actions are misconduct: Initiating any civil action for recovery of any damages or injuries incurred in the course and scope of employment without notifying the Chief of Police of such action.

INVESTIGATION

Internal Affairs obtained copies of the lawsuit and interviewed the officer. The officer is listed in section 8.3.1-8.3.3 of the court documents (pg. 11) and also listed as one of the plaintiffs. These documents are dated March 11th. The Internal Affairs' interview of the officer occurred on March 10th, at the end of his graveyard shift. It appears unlikely that the officer reviewed these documents before they were filed by his wife's attorney. However in his interview he spoke of talking to this attorney about the Internal Affairs investigation being unresolved.

The officer did not notify the Chief of Police of the lawsuit. The part of the suit relating to the Internal Affairs interview was minimal. The vast majority of it is unrelated to the officer and he was aware that the Internal Affairs interview was to explore if there was any unethical things done in transfer of information between himself and another officer, or misuse of information systems. Therefore there is a nexus to his employment and the lawsuit.

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION

The officer indicated that he discussed the initial Internal Affairs investigation with his wife's attorney, but did not know it would be included as part the legal paperwork between his wife and the complainant. He further indicated he has tried to avoid becoming directly involved in the civil proceedings. The legal documents presented by the investigator during the Internal Affairs interview was the first time he had seen the legal documents and became aware the Internal Affairs reference was part of the legal documents.