



SPOKANE POLICE DIVISION

CRAIG N. MEIDL
CHIEF OF POLICE

Closed Case Summary

Complaint Number: C16-078 OPO Number: N/A

Date of Complaint: 11/28/2016

Allegation: Violation of Ethical Standard 4.11

Chain of Command Finding: Sustained

Final Discipline: Document of Counseling

INCIDENT SYNOPSIS

The complaint originated as a third party complaint. The complainant reported that a supervisor made joking comments about another officer during roll call. Further, the supervisor asked the officer about a family member's health in front of other employees.

COMPLAINT

The allegation was violation of Ethical Standard 4.11- "Members of the Spokane Police Department shall be courteous and respectful in their official dealings with the public, fellow members, superiors, and subordinates."

INVESTIGATION

The investigator interviewed the involved supervisor, witnesses to the comments, and the officer that the supervisor referred to in his comments. The supervisor stated he was trying to banter with the team and had not intended to be offensive. He said he had asked about the family member's health out of genuine concern. The witnesses to the comments felt that the supervisor was trying to joke, but that it was not appropriate. Witnesses also felt it was inappropriate to ask about the family member's health in that setting. The officer who was the subject of the joking comments did not hear them at the time, but was offended when notified. The officer was unhappy about the public inquiry into her family member's health. The Chain of Command determined that the supervisor had not intended to be offensive in his joking banter or his asking about the family member's health, but his lack of judgment was a concern. While supervisors may want to show a sense of humor in dealing with their subordinates, it appeared that his statements offended others and damaged his credibility with his subordinates.

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION

The allegation was determined to be sustained. The involved employee was issued a documentation of counseling and was directed to apologize to the officer.