



SPOKANE POLICE DIVISION

CRAIG N. MEIDL
CHIEF OF POLICE

Closed Case Summary

Complaint Number: C19-074 OPO Number: N/A
Date of Complaint: 8/22/2019
Allegation: Policy Violation
Chain of Command Finding: Exonerated
Final Discipline: Not Applicable

INCIDENT SYNOPSIS

It was alleged that a Police Records employee released redacted body worn camera footage outside the normal protocol. She released an installment of video from an officer-involved shooting to a requestor without receiving prior authorization, as is standard protocol. An internal investigation was opened with Internal Affairs.

COMPLAINT

The allegation was for Policy 340.3.5.c- Unauthorized access and/or intentional release of confidential information.

INVESTIGATION

Internal Affairs reviewed all available documentation and interviewed the employee and several other employees in the unit. The investigation revealed that the employee had followed Washington State law and had checked the department's records management system to make sure that the case was "closed" and forwarded to the Prosecutor's Office before she released video. Once the case was no longer open or active, the case was privy to public records requests. It would have been prudent for the employee to check with a supervisor in this situation, but she did not violate a rule or policy. It would have been a violation of the Public Records Act to not release the records.

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION

The chain of command determined that the employee had not violated any policy or state law regarding records release. The finding was Exonerated. After the incident, the Records Unit established Standard Operating Procedures on officer-involved shooting public records requests to provide clear direction to employees. Additionally, structural changes were made to the Records Unit to have a supervisor specifically over public records requests.