



SPOKANE POLICE DEPARTMENT

CRAIG N. MEIDL
CHIEF OF POLICE

Closed Case Summary

Complaint Number: C20-088 OPO Number: 20-57
Date of Complaint: 12/22/2020
Allegation: Excessive Force and Demeanor
Chain of Command Finding: Closed
Final Discipline: Not Applicable

INCIDENT SYNOPSIS

Officers were dispatched to assist Child Protective Services in enforcing a court order to pick up and shelter two juveniles. They contacted the father, who was very upset at the situation. In the process of executing the order, the officers detained the complainant in handcuffs and placed the children in protective custody. The father lodged a complaint with the Office of Police Ombudsman, alleging the officers acted aggressively and used excessive force by handcuffing him when there was no reason to do so.

COMPLAINT

Allegations of Excessive Force and Demeanor were investigated.

INVESTIGATION

The Internal Affairs Investigator reviewed the police reports and bodyworn camera video. BWC video showed no misconduct and disproved the Excessive Force and Demeanor allegations. Officers first contacted the complainant at the door and asked several times to come in before he invited them in. Officers explained they were there to assist CPS with a court order and allowed CPS to speak to him. The officers and CPS had a very level tone of voice and never used any derogatory or rude comments. There were never even verbal threats of arrest or force on the male. The complainant's demeanor was very confrontational and escalated from the outset. At one point he stated, "I will make you kill me before I give up my children." He appeared to be blocking the hallway to the bedroom where the children were. When the complainant demanded CPS talk with his aunt on the telephone, he momentarily stepped out of the hallway which allowed an opportunity for one of the officers to cut off his ability to get back to the children's bedroom. The complainant turned back and appeared to push the officer in the chest area and retreated further back in the hallway. BWC was knocked off but there was still audio and a video angle where you could see the officer's move into an arm-bar to gooseneck control technique to get the complainant's hands behind his back. The complainant claimed he was slammed into a wall; however, the video shows he was momentarily pushed up against a door, but he overpowered the officers and pulled his hands away to point he made it back into the kitchen area. The officers managed to get him into handcuffs without escalating their force.

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION

The case was Closed, as there was no evidence of misconduct. The Office of the Police Ombudsman concurred, after reviewing the BWC footage, that there was no indication of a policy violation that needed to be pursued by Internal Affairs.