



SPOKANE POLICE DEPARTMENT
CHIEF OF POLICE
CRAIG N. MEIDL

Closed Case Summary

Complaint Number: C21-054 OPO Number: 21-25
Date of Complaint: 8/4/2021
Allegation: Demeanor and Prohibited Speech
Chain of Command Finding: Administratively Suspended
Final Discipline: Not Applicable

INCIDENT SYNOPSIS:

A former Spokane Police Department employee sent a complaint to the Chief as well as the Office of the Ombudsman regarding disparaging and untrue statements made by a police officer that were relayed to them by third parties. The statements were posted to a social media website.

COMPLAINT:

The complainant stated the police officer made statements maliciously in an obvious attempt to slander their name and reputation, and that this was not protected speech since it involved a workplace matter. The complainant also alleged police administrators were aware and did not address the matter appropriately.

INVESTIGATION:

Spokane Police Department Internal Affairs investigated this complaint. Numerous emails, social media posts, and other documents were reviewed. Numerous interviews were conducted of Spokane Police Employees and Volunteers.

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION:

It was determined that the statements alleged to have been made by the police officer were a minor transgression to be resolved through informal follow-up. The alleged misleading or false statement was posted online outside of work hours and was not a work-related matter. The online post was, on its face, protected free speech not of the purview of the Spokane Police Department as it did not concern department interests, nor did it affect SPD operational efficiency.

