

Case Number: 2000C0205
Date of Violation: 08/07/2000
Date Received: 08/08/2000
Date To Station: 08/10/2000

How Received: Not Specified
Type of Complaint: Station
Date Back from D/C: 01/22/2001

Complainant(s): Mr [REDACTED] [REDACTED] DOB: [REDACTED]

	<u>BADGE</u>	<u>VIOLATION</u>	<u>RR</u>	<u>OMS</u>	<u>DISPOSITION</u>	<u>ASSIGNMENT</u>
1	82011	Discourtesy	140		Sustained	Crimes Against Persons Bureau
		Written Reprimand				



WELLINGTON E. WEBB
Mayor

CITY AND COUNTY OF DENVER

DEPARTMENT OF SAFETY

DENVER POLICE DEPARTMENT
ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
1331 CHEROKEE STREET
DENVER, COLORADO 80204-2787
PHONE: (720) 913-6050

December 29, 2000

Mr. [REDACTED]

Dear Mr. [REDACTED]

The complaint you initiated on August 8, 2000, Case #2000C0205, was received by the Internal Affairs Bureau of the Denver Police Department. The case was then investigated and reviewed by the involved officer's commanders.

Included in this case were statements from you, other witnesses and the involved officer. Review of this information provided sufficient evidence to show a violation of Departmental Rules and Regulations. Appropriate discipline has been taken in this matter.

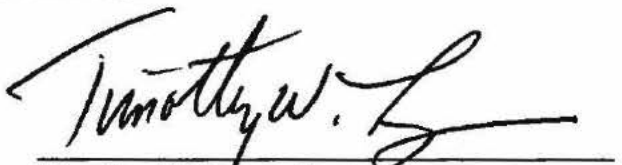
A copy of this complaint will be placed in the officer's permanent file in the event there are future complaints of a similar nature. Thank you for bringing this incident to the attention of the Denver Police Department. We hope that any future contact with a Denver Police officer will be of a more positive nature.

Should you have any additional questions please feel free to contact Lieutenant Jon Priest at (720) 913-6050.

Sincerely,

Gerald R. Whitman
Chief of Police

By:


Timothy W. Leary, Captain
Commander, Crimes Against Persons Bureau

MAR 2 5 59 PM '01
INTERNAL AFFAIRS
DENVER POLICE
DEPARTMENT

**DENVER POLICE DEPARTMENT
INTER-DEPARTMENT
CORRESPONDENCE**

TO: Detective Donald Vecchi, 82011, Crimes Against Persons Bureau

THRU: Captain Timothy Leary, Commander, Crimes Against Persons Bureau

FROM: W. David Abrams, Deputy Chief of Operations

DATE: January 22, 2001

SUBJECT: WRITTEN REPRIMAND

CASE NUMBER: 2000C0205

By authority of the Chief of Police, I am issuing the following Written Reprimand:


This letter is to serve as a WRITTEN REPRIMAND to you for violation of Rules and Regulations Section RR-140, which reads as follows:

RR-140 Discourtesy

Officers shall at all times be courteous and civil to the public and to one another. They shall be orderly, attentive, respectful, and shall exercise patience and discretion in the performance of their duties.

This written reprimand is the result of your actions on August 7, 2000.

Let this reprimand serve as encouragement to insure your future adherence to the Rules and Regulations of the Denver Police Department.


W. David Abrams, Deputy Chief of Operations 7163

cc: Captain Timothy Leary
Division Chief Armedia Gordon
Human Resource Management Bureau
Internal Affairs Bureau

**DENVER POLICE DEPARTMENT
INTER-DEPARTMENT
CORRESPONDENCE**

TO: Captain Timothy Leary Commander, Crimes Against Persons Bureau

FROM: Lieutenant J.W. Priest 80018

DATE: September 20, 2000

SUBJECT: Case Number: 2000C0205
Complainant: [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
Complaint: Discourtesy

INCIDENT:

On August 8, 2000, the complainant, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] came into the Internal Affairs Bureau and made a complaint against Detective Donald Vecchi regarding a case that he was investigating.

COMPLAINT:

The complainant states that he was visiting in Denver and wanted to check on the status of his daughter's death investigation. The complainant alleges that he attempted to make calls in the past to Detective Vecchi with no success. He further alleges that a county Sheriff made several calls and they too were not returned. Upon contact with Detective Vecchi, he describes the meeting as one where the detective was rude and used improper language.

INVESTIGATION:

On August 15, 2000 this case was assigned to Sergeant Mike Fetrow for follow-up investigation. All related documentation has been reviewed and included within this case. Various documents have been synopsised herein and should be reviewed for total content. Lieutenant J.W. Priest completed the case report.

INTERVIEW OF COMPLAINANT

On August 8, 2000, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] completed a written statement regarding his complaint against Detective Donald Vecchi. This statement was given to Sergeant Saunier of the Internal Affairs Bureau.

Statement [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

Mr. [REDACTED] states that he was in Denver to get a copy of the offense report related to his daughter's death and to check on some personal property including his daughter's vehicle. When he arrived at 1331

Cherokee St. he asked to speak with Detective DeMott and was advised Detective Vecchi was handling the case. Mr. [REDACTED] stated to Detective DeMott that Detective Vecchi does not return phone calls. Detective DeMott arranged for Mr. [REDACTED] to meet with Detective Vecchi.

Mr. [REDACTED] then states that while walking with Detective Vecchi to the interview room, Detective Vecchi stated "...I understand that you are giving me shit about phone calls...". He then said "...I want to tell you, I'm the king of shit..." Mr. [REDACTED] describes this meeting as less than productive and that he asked to speak with Detective Vecchi's supervisor at which time Sergeant Dunham entered into the room. Once this occurred, Detective Vecchi changed his demeanor. Several issues were then discussed about his daughter's case. At the completion of this, Mr. [REDACTED] asked Sergeant Dunham how long he had to file a complaint against Detective Vecchi and was advised 90-days. Detective Vecchi then offered to take Mr. [REDACTED] to the Internal Affairs Bureau, which he declined. It was at this point that Detective Vecchi began to apologize for his behavior.

Sergeant Saunier asked several questions of Mr. [REDACTED] at this point.

Q. Was there any witnesses to Det. Vecchi's statement to you?

A. No.

Q. How many times did you call Det. Vecchi and on what dates?

A. Once I had on Feb 8 @ 10:09 AM EST. Hadn't gotten a response. Talked to Sheriff Ed Haik (Maristce County). He told me he attempted to contact Vecchi no less than 5 times.

Q. What was the message you left for Det. Vecchi?

A. Told him that I was [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Father and wanted to talk to him about the death.

Q. You made the comment that the phone bill set him over the edge when you showed him that. Describe what you meant by that.

A. Some time during the time of getting the phone bill found and getting his phone number together I had said shit or something like that. He stood up looking me right in the face (very close to me) and said he would not stand for profanity. I told him he had and he denied it. At that time I asked to speak to his supervisor.

Q. Did you explain to Sgt. Dunham what Det. Vecchi had said and his actions?

A. Yes, and I was told that I could file a complaint against Det. Vecchi if I wanted to.

Q. Is there anything you would like to add to this statement?

A. Yes, I do not want Det. Vecchi's head. I simply want to make a point of the initial problem that was compounded by no one contacting me regarding any thing that was relevant to the case and the nasty demeanor of Det. Vecchi.

Phone bill [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

Mr. [REDACTED] provided a phone bill that showed the phone call made to Detective Vecchi's phone number of (720) 913-6212. The phone call was made on February 8, 2000 at 10:09 AM Central Standard Time.

SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT #20-0004985

Detective Vecchi completed a supplementary report related to the case assigned under number 20-0004985. The case was assigned to him on February 7, 2000. This is a standard Known Dead supplemental report listing the victim as [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and the location of the event as [REDACTED] # [REDACTED]. An autopsy was completed in connection with this report and listed the cause of death as acute cocaine intoxication.

INTERVIEW WITNESS SHERIFF ED HAIK

On August 23, 2000 Sergeant Fetrow called Manistee County Sheriff's Office and left a message for Sheriff Ed Haik.

On August 24, 2000 at 10:33 am Sheriff Haik returned the call to Sergeant Fetrow. Sheriff Haik was advised of the complaint investigation and was asked if he would submit to a audio taped interview. He related that he would.

Sheriff Haik stated that Mr. [REDACTED] contacted him in regards to the death of his daughter. Mr. [REDACTED] told Sheriff Haik that he was having difficulty contacting the assigned investigator and as he, Sheriff Haik was law enforcement, would he try to make contact. Sheriff Haik agreed to try.

Sheriff Haik stated that he attempted to call Detective Vecchi on several occasions and never recalls speaking with him about the investigation.

Sheriff Haik also related that he had copies of his phone records showing the dates and times of his calls to Detective Vecchi's phone number.

Sheriff Haik's phone records:

Records from QWEST communications show four (4) phone calls made to Detective Vecchi's phone number. The dates and times the calls were made are:

- 2/14/00 7:35 am CST
- 2/15/00 6:26 am CST
- 2/15/00 7:07 am CST
- 2/15/00 11:04 am CST

The duration of each call is less than 45 seconds. All of them are long enough to leave a message on voice mail.

A copy of the audio tape is included in this case file.

INTERVIEW WITNESS OFFICER(S)**Sergeant Kirk Dunham, #79058**

On August 7, 2000, Sergeant Kirk Dunham addressed a letter to Lieutenant J.W. Priest regarding a situation involving Detective Don Vecchi and a Mr. [REDACTED]. Sergeant Dunham related that he was in his office when he overheard a loud discussion, which appeared to be occurring in video room A. Sergeant Dunham investigated and stood near video room A and overheard a male voice state "...I want to speak with your supervisor...". At this point Sergeant Dunham entered the room and was introduced to Mr. [REDACTED]. Mr. [REDACTED] related that he was upset over the way his daughter's case was being handled, the fact that he was having trouble getting information on her property and that Detective Vecchi would not return calls.

Sergeant Dunham advised Mr. [REDACTED] that Detective Joe Delmonico and not Detective Vecchi were handling the case investigation of his daughter's death. He further advised that property issues will most probably need to be addressed civilly as she was living with a male at the time of her death and the police department did not take control of these items. Regarding the phone call issue, Mr. [REDACTED] stated that he made calls and that a friend by the name of Sheriff Ed Haik called Detective Vecchi as well and neither received return calls. Mr. [REDACTED] was further able to produce proof on the single call that he made to Detective Vecchi.

This conversation ended with Mr. [REDACTED] inquiring about making a complaint and the process involved. Sergeant Dunham explained the process and Mr. [REDACTED] left the office.

INTERVIEW OF SUBJECT OFFICER

On August 16, 2000, Sergeant Fetrow advised Detective Vecchi pursuant to internal investigation and obtained a written statement from him. This statement should be reviewed for full details.

STATEMENT DETECTIVE DON VECCHI #82011

Detective Vecchi states that on August 7, 2000 he met with Detective Joseph DeMott who advised him that a person by the name of [REDACTED] wanted information related to the death of his daughter [REDACTED]. Detective DeMott further advised that Mr. [REDACTED] was upset with Detective Vecchi regarding the fact that he never returns his calls. The two were introduced and Detective Vecchi relates that "...Mr. [REDACTED] developed an attitude with me..." They began to walk toward the interview room and Mr. [REDACTED] began complaining about the "run around" he was getting and talking loud. Detective Vecchi then stopped and stated "...don't come around here thinking your king shit, because I can be a bigger king shit then (sic) you..."

Once in the interview room, Mr. [REDACTED] stated that Detective Vecchi never returns his calls. Detective Vecchi attempted to tell Mr. [REDACTED] that he did not recall getting a message from him and that his daughter's case actually belonged to Detective Delmonico. Mr. [REDACTED] then told Detective Vecchi that a Sheriff in Michigan also has tried to call him with no success. Detective Vecchi advised Mr. [REDACTED] that had he received these calls or voice mail, he would have returned the calls. At this point Mr. [REDACTED] began cussing and getting loud. Detective Vecchi stood up and told Mr. [REDACTED] that he did not need to use profanity. This statement was repeated three times by Detective Vecchi. Mr. [REDACTED] then requested that he be allowed to speak with a supervisor. Sergeant Kirk Dunham then came into the room and tried to

explain the situation. Mr. [REDACTED] stated that he wanted to file a complaint against Detective Vecchi and was advised on the procedure to do this.

The conversation calmed at this point and Mr. [REDACTED] related that he did not have a problem with the death investigation. He stated that his issue was with what occurred to his daughter's property. Sergeant Dunham explained this information. Mr. [REDACTED] appeared to be satisfied with this. Detective Vecchi then apologized to Mr. [REDACTED] and told him that he would assist him in any way he could. He further advised that should he have any other questions to contact Detective Delmonico about his daughter's case.

Sergeant Fetrow asked a series of questions during this interview.

Q. In your written statement you state that Mr. [REDACTED] developed an attitude with you- what do you mean?

A. He was loud and accusatory about me not returning calls and that he was getting the run around.

Q. In your written statement you state that Mr. [REDACTED] got loud and started cussing. What did he say exactly?

A. He kept saying things like, I'm full of shit and shit this and that. I can't remember the full context of his statements but he kept using the word shit.

Q. When you stood up and put your hands on the table- did you threaten or try to intimidate Mr. [REDACTED] in anyway?

A. No. I just told him to stop using profanity.

Q. How far away from Mr. [REDACTED] were you when: a) you were questioning him b) when you stood up.

A. When I was questioning him I was back in the chair, which was pulled away from the table so at this point I was the width of the table plus another two feet. When I stood up I placed both hands on the table and leaned forward. I was probably over 3/4 of the table.

Q. How large/wide is the table?

A. Maybe 2 1/2 feet wide.

Q. When Sgt. Dunham entered the conversation- did Mr. [REDACTED] use profanity at or around him?

A. I don't think so,

Q. How long had you been talking w/ Mr. [REDACTED] prior to Sgt. Dunham's intervention?

A. Maybe 5 minutes.

Q. Do you think Sgt. Dunham heard your conversation with Mr. [REDACTED]

A. I believe he only heard me telling Mr. [REDACTED] not to use profanity.

Q. How did Sgt. Dunham become involved in this meeting/conversation?

A. Mr. [REDACTED] requested to talk to a supervisor, so I went and got Sgt. Dunham.

Q. Did you use profanity during the meeting- including at or about Mr. [REDACTED] or any other time?

A. No, I only stated about him being king shit and that I was a bigger king shit then him.

Q. In reference to the phone calls Mr. [REDACTED] made. a) How many did he tell you he made? b) How many did you receive? c) Did you return any of his phone calls?

A. He said he called me once. I don't remember getting any. I did not return any phone calls.

Q. Did you ever receive phone calls regarding this case, other than D.P.D. related calls? If so, by whom and when?

A. Received a call from a male party who claimed to be an ex-boyfriend. I talked to him at least three times, then explained to him; Delmonico was in charge of the case. He is the only call I received. But once he started talking to Delmonico he stopped calling me. I think his name was Mr. Barjucci.

Q. Did you ever receive phone calls or messages from a Sheriff Ed Haik (Michigan) concerning this case?

A. No.

Q. Did you keep a phone record of calls made or received for this case?

A. No.

Q. Do you have anything to add?

A. No. Phone records kept because it was not a murder and it was not my case.

CONCLUSION

One of the many duties of a homicide investigator is effective dealing with emotional family members. These individuals are distraught, confused and frustrated by the many issues that are faced by a person handling the death of a loved one. This process is often exacerbated by the fact that not all the answers are known and/or that the answers are not the ones desired.

The actions of Detective Donald Vecchi with respect to a first contact with a family member in a death investigation were much less than desirable. Detective Vecchi became agitated over the fact that he was being accused of missed phone calls from the start and began using inappropriate language with Mr. [REDACTED]. The investigation indicates that Mr. [REDACTED] was upset over the lack of basic investigative courtesy in returning a phone call to a family member who had questions about a case. Detective Vecchi has a history of failing to return phone calls and voice mail messages. Both Sergeant Fetrow and Lieutenant Priest have admonished Detective Vecchi for this activity in the past. This counseling was not documented in Detective Vecchi's SSR however.

With regards to the investigation itself, nothing out of the ordinary occurred. The case was originally assigned to Detective Vecchi and his name was listed on the Offense Report. The case was later re-assigned to Detective Delmonico. All possible investigative steps were covered and the case cleared as overdose related to cocaine intoxication.

My findings are as follows:

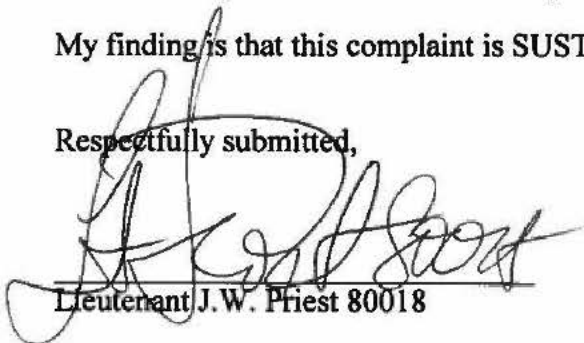
With regards to Operations Manual Rules and Regulations:

RR-140 Discourtesy

Officers shall at all times be courteous and civil to the public and to one another. They shall be orderly, attentive, respectful and shall exercise patients and discretion in the performance of their duties.

My finding is that this complaint is SUSTAINED.

Respectfully submitted,



Lieutenant J.W. Priest 80018

1/3/01
Date