



Police Department – Brian O’Hara, Chief of Police

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**TO:** Jamiel Mohammad, Badge #5150  
**CC:** Office of Police Conduct Review  
**DATE:** December 8, 2020  
**RE:** Administrative Investigation Case #21-09837

**CHIEF’S DECISION:**      **Written Reprimand**

This memo summarizes my approach and reasoning for my decision as Chief of Police that the listed policy violations by Sgt. Mohammad are sustained. The memo accompanies the enclosed Notice of Discipline.

**Summary of the Basis for Decision:**

Allegation #1:

It is alleged that Sgt. Mohammad violated MPD P/P 5-105(B)(10) during his conversation with a civilian where he openly criticized government employees and city policy.

- On 10/22/21 Sgt. Mohammad was dispatched to a 911 call regarding suspected drug activity. Sgt. Mohammad and his partner approached the suspect and told him to leave the premises. The caller (complainant) took issue with this decision and asked the officers why they did not arrest the suspect. Sgt. Mohammad exited his squad and engaged the complainant in conversation that was recorded on his BWC and privately by the complainant. An excerpt of the conversation was then posted on YouTube, with the title “Minneapolis Police Dept: If they can’t police like Derek Chauvin they won’t police at all.”
- Through the conversation, Sgt. Mohammad made several statements including:
  - “I’m gonna be honest with you, uh, you know this sucks and you guys don’t want to hear this but our hands are tied, because of politicians, city council mainly...and the mayor a little bit and the governor a little bit.”
  - “We’re very hands-off. This is why we’re hands off—now somebody like that, if we get out on him, pull him out, it’s gonna turn into a confrontation, and somebody’s gonna get hurt. And the media’s gonna swing it and say ‘hey the racist Minneapolis police department beat up another innocent Black man for just sitting in his car.’ That’s how it’s gonna get spinned. Whereas, if we just let him go OK he’s just gonna go pick another place.”
  - “. . . because they don’t want Lake Street to burn down again—they don’t want these riots to happen . . .”
  - “You know, laws like this, I mean, we should be able to do something about that. But you know, we can’t.”
- The civilian asked, “Who’s going to do the pulling out and the stopping of the drugs?” Sgt. Mohammad replied,
  - “Nobody. They just get away with it. That’s the bottom line. I will tell you right now, though, these criminals have way more freedoms. They are getting away with so much more. On stuff like this, it’s...there’s nothing we can do. Our hands are tied. I wish there was, and you know, like I said at the end of the day, it’s you guys that are the victims of this.”
- The civilian indicated that Sgt. Mohammad’s comments led him to feel like there was no point in calling the police department, which he made clear to Sgt. Mohammad during the conversation. The civilian indicated he felt compelled to start enforcing laws himself if the police would not.

- Sgt. Mohammad provided a statement to investigators and believed that he didn't do anything wrong because what he was trying to increase transparency with the community, and he was sharing "just the way that (he) feel(s)."
- MPD P/P 5-105(B)(10) states, "Employees shall not publicly criticize or ridicule the Department, its policies or other employees as to the performance of their duties in a manner which is defamatory, obscene, unlawful, or in any other manner which impairs the effective operation of the Department or in a manner which displays a reckless or knowing disregard for the truth. This regulation shall not be construed so as to impair the exercise of free speech by employees on matters of public concern."
- The Police Conduct Review Panel issued a unanimous recommendation of Merit to this allegation.
- I concur with the recommendation from the Police Conduct Review Panel. There is a preponderance of the evidence to support the allegation that Sgt. Mohammad violated MPD P/P 5-105(B)(10) when he made statements that impair the effective operation of the department. The Complainant stated that as a result of the comments from Sgt. Mohammad, there was no point in calling the police department.

The facts noted in the case investigation support the conclusion that Sgt. Mohammad violated Minneapolis Police Department Policy 5-105(B)(10). I concur with the recommendation from the Police Conduct Review Panel that this allegation is Sustained.

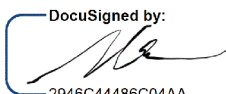
As Chief of Police, I am responsible for providing clear expectations about behavior and conduct in all situations, not just when it is convenient. These expectations extend from myself to the command staff and all levels of the Minneapolis Police Department. My predecessors have also borne responsibility for setting expectations, and it is incumbent on every Chief to hold officers accountable for breaches of those expectations. Legitimacy and reputation are of critical importance to police officers. Officers carry a badge and gun and are called upon to make some of the hardest decisions possible. It takes countless actions to build a reservoir of trust, and only one action to completely drain. We cannot afford to lose legitimacy with the people we serve.

I hold officers of the Minneapolis Police Department to a high standard, and I hold supervisors to an even higher standard. Supervisors are responsible for leading the officers of this department and representing management. Sgt. Mohammad was in uniform carrying out his work duties when he engaged the civilian in conversation. It would have been appropriate to share with the civilian proper police procedure, and parts of the conversation were appropriate. However, this conversation expanded and turned inappropriate when Sgt. Mohammad claimed that an unsupportive city council directly or indirectly caused MPD to adopt policy and procedures directing officers not to carry out law enforcement duties, which in this case was specific to how Sgt. Mohammad dealt with a suspicious vehicle possibly engaged in narcotics activity. A supervisor should know better than to publicly criticize elected officials and the Department in a manner that impairs the effective operation of the department and attempt to use their negative perception as an excuse to justify their actions.

I expect our officers to live up to our oath of office, our professional code of ethics and our departments core values of trust, accountability and professional service. Furthermore, I expect them to demonstrate procedural justice in their work. With this conduct, Sgt. Mohammad failed to meet our standards when he criticized city leadership during this incident, which was then posted to YouTube causing embarrassment to the city and the Minneapolis Police Department, and leading community members to question whether they need to take matters into their own hands because they cannot rely on the MPD. The violation in this matter undermines public trust, accountability and professional service.

As Chief of Police with authority to discipline for violations of policy under Minn. Stat 626.89 Subd. 17, I am issuing the following discipline:

Allegation #1 – MPD P/P 5-105(B)(10) Sustained. **Discipline: Letter of Reprimand**

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Brian O'Hara  
Chief of Police

Enclosure: Notice of Discipline

CC: OPCR Case File

Inspector Blackwell