

DEPARTMENT OF LAW ENFORCEMENT

Criminal Investigations Division

October 17, 2024

Bureau of Criminal Investigations

TO: Detective Melissa Turnage

FROM: Captain Dina Russell 

SUBJECT: Letter of Retraining

On July 30, 2016, you were assigned a Sexual Battery investigation involving a twelve year old victim and her adoptive father. During your investigation, you interviewed the victim and based on that interview, you determined there were several details that were concerning to you as an investigator. Some details provided by the victim were inconsistent, and some, through additional follow up, were unable to be verified. Based on the information you had at the time, you found there was insufficient evidence to prove the sexual battery, as alleged, occurred and it appeared the victim provided you false information during your investigation.

While reviewing the case file, I listened to an audio recorded interview you conducted with the victim. During review it is clear you were trying to determine if the victim was being truthful regarding her allegations. Several of your questions and comments were inappropriate. While your intent may have been to elicit the truth and gather essential information, referencing personal circumstances such as foster care or financial hardships can create an environment of discomfort, fear, mistrust and is simply unacceptable.

As a result of your actions, I have determined you violated General Order 26.1.E.11.a (Competency, Job Knowledge, and Proficiency) which states in part:

"Members are required to diligently maintain competence in the performance of their assigned duties, shall maintain proficiency in the care and use of their assigned equipment and/or vehicles, and shall adhere to all General Orders, Department/Office Directives, and Division Procedures promulgated by this agency."

In addition to this letter of re-training, by October 28, 2024, you must successfully complete the following course:

- Interview and Interrogation Techniques (Police One Academy Online)

You will be provided with an ample amount of time on duty to complete the course. If at any time you require assistance in accessing the online course, please let your supervision know immediately so that any computer related issues can be addressed.

Please use this as a learning tool for awareness regarding the proper interview techniques when questioning victims. I am confident you will take the appropriate steps to prevent any similar events in the future.

Received by: *M. Turnage #10044* Date: *10/21/24*
Detective Melissa Turnage

/dr

C: Major Richard Davis
Administrative Investigations
Human Resources
File