
POLICE CONDUCT OVERSIGHT COMMISSION
Case Summary #8
June 2014

OVERVIEW

Complainant was in Hennepin County Court for a traffic violation. Complainant asked for a translator and the judge left the courtroom briefly while one was requested. Complainant alleges that Officer 1 jumped at him and harassed him, stating that as a taxi driver in Minneapolis he should speak English. Complainant also alleges that Officer 1 threatened to call the City Inspector to tell him Complainant should not be working as a taxi driver.

THE COMPLAINT

1. Harassment: that Officer 1 “jumped” at Complainant, told him he needed to speak English as a taxi driver, and threatened to call the City Inspector to report Complainant.

OPCR AND MPD POLICIES

1. OPCR § 172.20(2) Inappropriate Language or Attitude
2. OPCR § 172.20(8) Violation of the Minneapolis Police Department’s Policy and Procedure Manual
3. MPD P&P § 5-105(14) Professional Code of Conduct: Employees shall not use any derogatory language or actions which are intended to embarrass, humiliate, or shame a person, or do anything intended to incite another to violence.

COMPLAINT PROCESSING

Complainant initially made first contact with the Civilian Review Authority, but the complaint was processed by the OPCR. The case was referred to the coaching process and coaching was completed.

EVIDENCE

In the course of investigating the complaint, the following steps were taken:

1. Complainant filed a written complaint.
2. No relevant CAPRS, Visinet logs, or recordings were located.
3. Coaching documents were prepared and sent to the precinct inspector.

SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE

Complaint

The Complainant states in the complaint that he was in court for a traffic violation. During the hearing, Complainant requested a translator, and the judge left the courtroom briefly to request one. The Complainant alleges that during that time, Officer 1 jumped at him and harassed him by stating that a ‘taxi driver in Minneapolis should speak English’ and threatened to report him to the city inspector. The Complaint states that the Complainant reported the incident to the judge and court staff.

COACHING

The Complaint was referred to coaching with the appropriate precinct. In the completed documents, the supervisor first stated that coaching took place in "Fall 2012." Officer 1 reported to the supervisor that he told the Complainant, "In order to drive a taxi in the City of Minneapolis, you need to be able to speak English." Officer 1 denied jumping at the Complainant or threatening him.

Officer 1 was coached on "appropriate behavior in the courtroom and sensitivity to others who may speak foreign/other languages." The supervisor noted that he spoke to Complainant "earlier" but Complainant's phone number changed by the time the document was completed. The Complainant was notified via email of the outcome of the Complaint. No policy violation was noted.