

Open Letter to Chief Kirkpatrick, Mayor Schaaf, and City Administrator Landreth,

The Oakland Black Officer's Association (OBOA) is very concerned that a culture remains in place at Oakland Police Department (OPD) and in senior leadership that could be perceived as unfair, racist, inequitable and not in line with the Oakland Police Department's core values. We believe the citizens of Oakland deserve a police department with strong senior leadership that acts quickly and decisively when faced with tough decisions and challenges around race and equity. We are even more concerned that our current leadership does not effectively meet these challenges.

The Oakland Black Officer's Association is the Oakland Police Department's first minority advocacy association and has been in existence for nearly fifty years. OBOA exists to advocate for the fair and equitable treatment of our members and the minority community. Over years, the OBOA has been made aware of instances of disparate treatment of our members, at all ranks, as well as from our professional/civilian staff members. Some of the disparate treatment includes:

- Unfair/biased treatment in personnel decisions
- Unfair and/or biased Internal Affairs Investigations and discipline
- Overlooking qualified Black officers/members for assignments and positions
- Biased/Unfair treatment of Black applicants during, hiring, the Academy, and Field Training Program

The most recent example of a lack of action by OPD leadership occurred in the mishandling of a Recruiting and Backgrounds Commander's conduct. The Recruiting and Backgrounds Unit works to attract candidates who are qualified, motivated and reflective of the diversity of the City of Oakland. The Unit's former Commander threatened these efforts by engaging in the following conduct;

- Rejecting qualified minority candidates for very minor issues;
- Setting an internal, undocumented standard that favored applicants with a formal education over candidates without one. He also looked less favorably at online universities or trade schools like DeVry, Carrington College or the University of Phoenix -- and would refer to these institutions as "fake schools;"
- Candidates who previously used Adderall, Cocaine, Mushrooms, Acid, LSD or drugs typically used by more affluent users were considered for employment while candidates who previously used Cocaine Base/Crack or Heroin were immediately rejected;
- Failing to grant extensions to two Black officers to remain in their positions but granting an extension to a similarly situated White Sergeant.

Despite OBOA's bringing these serious issues to the attention of Chief Kirkpatrick on October 15, 2018, and Chief Kirkpatrick assurances that these issues would be addressed and the then Recruiting & Backgrounds Commander would immediately be removed from his position; nearly 90 days lapsed before any action was taken. It was only after the OBOA met with the City Administrator and the Mayor that the former Unit Commander was removed from his position.

The Chief's inaction and unwillingness to address disparate treatment in the hiring and retention of officers is egregious and hurts our members and the public at large. It undermines the Department's ability to address one of the Community's top issues -- secure candidates reflective of our community. And, fosters inequity throughout the Department and our subsequent treatment of the community.

We cannot continue with this lack of leadership and ask that our concerns be addressed in a timely and transparent fashion.

Respectfully

***The Executive Board
Oakland Black Officers Association***



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Community”***