

**VOLUSIA SHERIFF'S OFFICE
INTERNAL AFFAIRS**

REPORT OF INVESTIGATION

REPORT NUMBER: IA 21-008

PERIOD COVERED: June 2, 2021
DATE REPORTED: June 4, 2021
SUBJECT(S) NAME: Deputy Ricky Wright #2337
INVESTIGATING OFFICER: Sergeant Andrew Calkins #7929

BASIS FOR INVESTIGATION:

On June 2, 2021, Deputy Ricky Wright was working at T. Dewitt Taylor-Middle High School as the School Resource Deputy. Deputy Wright responded to the main office and made contact with Nicolette Gabriel, an investigator with the Department of Children and Families (DCF). Investigator Gabriel was present at the school to conduct an interview with a juvenile who was reported to be a victim in a sexual abuse case.

Investigator Gabriel interviewed the victim in the presence of Deputy Wright, who had activated his body worn camera for the interview. The victim disclosed sexual abuse in her home the year prior. During the interview, the victim became emotional and Investigator Gabriel decided to stop her interview. Deputy Wright failed to ask any questions to the victim and conduct a basic investigation. Additionally, Deputy Wright failed to notify his supervisor, Sergeant Anderson of the occurrence. Deputy Wright completed a twelve-line assist agency report, which he closed without further investigation. The report lacked crucial information to include the location of incident, crime that occurred, suspects name or the names of any witnesses. The report was never forwarded to the Child Exploitation Unit for further investigation. Additionally, Deputy Wright failed to take the proper steps to protect the child from returning home where the alleged perpetrator and she reside together.

On June 4, 2021, a supervisor inquiry was completed, which identified Volusia Sheriff's Office General Orders violations.

On August 11, 2021, Chief Deputy J. Gallagher initiated an internal affairs investigation due to the nature of the allegations.

OFFENSES:

Volusia Sheriff's Office General Orders:

GO-026-02.IV.B.3 – Any conduct or action, on-duty or off-duty, of such seriousness that disciplinary action is considered warranted.

GO-026-02.IV.C.1 – Neglect of Duty – Neglect of duty offenses include any act, failure to act or instance wherein an employee ignored, paid no attention to, disregarded, failed to care for, give proper attention to or carry out the duties and responsibilities of their position whether through carelessness, oversight or neglect.

GO-026-02.IV.C.5.g – Failure to Follow General Order, Standard Operation Procedure, or Order – Employees shall adhere to all official general orders, standard operational procedures, and orders, and shall faithfully execute all the duties and responsibilities of their assigned position.

GO-026-02.IV.C.5.n – Negligence Associated with Safety of Persons or Property – Employees shall be attentive to job duties and shall not violate official general orders, orders, supervisory instructions, or knowingly refrain and cause another to refrain from the performance of lawful duties required for the safety of persons or property.

GO-026-02.IV.G.1.a – General Proficiency – VSO Personnel are required to maintain the job knowledge, skills, and abilities required for the performance of the duties and responsibilities attendant to their positions.

GO-026-02.IV.G.1.d – General Proficiency – Incompetent or unsatisfactory performance of duties, as deemed by the Sheriff or designee, shall result in disciplinary actions.

GO-026-02.IV.G.2.a – General Proficiency – VSO Personnel are required to possess a sound working knowledge of the policies and procedures established by general orders and standard operating procedures.

GO-026-02.IV.G.2.b – General Proficiency – Frequent, or repeated violation of policies and procedures established by general orders and standard operating procedures shall be deemed as indicative of careless disregard by the employee.

INVESTIGATION:

On August 13, 2021, Lieutenant Shivers served Deputy Wright with a Notice of Internal Investigation. Deputy Wright was also provided a copy of his Law Enforcement Officer's Bill of Rights. Deputy Wright signed both documents acknowledging his receipt of the documents.

On August 16, 2021, Sergeant Calkins reviewed the supervisor inquiry authored by Sergeant Anderson and obtained a copy of all the relevant documents. Sergeant Anderson documented the following:

On June 2, 2021, at 1354 hours, Deputy Wright, who is the School Resource Deputy assigned to T. Dewitt Taylor Middle-High School in Pierson, was called to the front office to meet with DCF investigator, Nicolette Gabriel. According to Deputy Wright's report, Investigator Gabriel was investigating an alleged incident that occurred "sometime last summer" at an unknown location. Also in the room upon Deputy Wright's arrival was a 16-year-old student. According to Deputy Wright's report, during the interview the student began to provide Investigator Gabriel some information in regards to the allegation, and Investigator Gabriel ended the interview stating she needed to contact her supervisor to ensure that proper follow up interviews could be conducted.

On June 4, 2021, both Sergeant Patterson and Sergeant Anderson reviewed the incident report. At the time, Sergeant Patterson was in field training with Sergeant Anderson. Both began conducting further investigation into the case due to the report being vague and lacking details outlined in General Orders. Sergeant Patterson attempted to contact Investigator Gabriel in order to determine what caused the abrupt stop to the interview. Sergeant Patterson was unable to make contact with Investigator Gabriel at the time.

Sergeant Patterson then called Deputy Wright to clarify what the juvenile disclosed during the interview. Deputy Wright stated he thought it was odd the interview ended abruptly and did not hear what the juvenile said to the investigator. Sergeant Patterson then asked Deputy Wright if he spoke with Investigator Gabriel after the interview to obtain the juvenile's disclosure statements or attempt to determine what caused the juvenile to become emotionally upset. Deputy Wright's response was, "No, she just left in a hurry."

Shortly after concluding the phone call with Deputy Wright, Investigator Gabriel returned Sergeant Patterson's phone call and provided the following information: Investigator Gabriel advised while interviewing the juvenile, she disclosed that her father got into bed with her and asked for a hug. During this encounter, her father put his hand up the back of her shirt and he stated, "Are you going to tell on me?" According to Investigator Gabriel, she then became emotionally upset and began to cry. It was at that time Investigator Gabriel stopped her interview and felt a CPT (Child Protection Team) interview was more appropriate for the investigation.

Sergeant's Anderson and Patterson then reviewed Deputy Wright's BWC video associated with this case and noted the following:

2:05 - Deputy Wright enters room 1-107 to meet with Investigator Gabriel and the juvenile victim

2:25 - Investigator Gabriel advised Deputy Wright she is investigating an allegation and wanted him present. Investigator Gabriel advised the incident may have happened at the child's home and was going to clarify it with the victim.

5:15 - Investigator Gabriel asks the juvenile victim who resides with her at the residence. The victim provides the name of eight individuals who reside with her at the residence, to include the suspect.

10:00 – Investigator Gabriel advised she was there to investigate an allegation that happened to the victim the previous summer. Investigator Gabriel asked the victim if she knew what it was in reference to, which the victim indicated she did.

10:05 – Investigator Gabriel asked the victim if she could tell her what happened during the incident, at which time the victim describes an incident in June where she was at Wal-Mart and wanted a book. The suspect in the case told her he would buy the book but said she would “owe him” for it. Later that evening the victim was reading the book and described the suspect entered the room and turned off the light. The suspect then stuck his hands down the back of her pants and rolled on top of her. The suspect placed himself between the victim's legs and lifted up her shirt. The suspect then asked the victim if she was going to tell anyone. The victim stated the suspect then rubbed himself up against her body.

13:56 - Investigator Gabriel stops the interview and advised a CPT would need to be conducted

15:17 – The victim advises that there is more than one occasion of sexual abuse

17:12 - Victim leaves the room

17:25 - Investigator Gabriel says to Deputy Wright “Obviously something happened for her to be that emotional.” Deputy Wright responds "Yea, when did this happen?" The DCF investigator advised last summer.

17:54 - BWC ends

Sergeant Patterson notified the Child Exploitation Unit for follow-up and submitted a supplemental report in the case.

Sergeant Calkins reviewed the Body Worn Camera footage and confirmed the information provided by Sergeant Anderson.

Volusia Sheriff's Office Report 210010250

Sergeant Calkins reviewed the report authored by Deputy Wright on Wednesday, June 2, 2021. The report was documented under Volusia Sheriff's Office case number 210010250. The report's header was labeled "Assist Agency." There was no crime listed under the offense category of the report. The location of incident was listed as 100 East Washington Avenue, Pierson, which is the location of T. Dewitt Taylor Middle-High School – not the location of the offense/incident. Deputy Wright listed two individuals in the report - Investigator Gabriel and the victim. It should be noted, the suspect and other witnesses previously mentioned residing at the residence were absent from the report. The report was fourteen lines in length while the narrative portion was limited to eight lines. The last line of the report Deputy Wright documented the case status was "closed." Sergeant Calkins observed the narrative of the report contained no information previously disclosed by the victim during the interview.

Sergeant Calkins reviewed General Order GO-042-02 "Criminal Investigation Operations." Under "First Responding Deputy Responsibilities," it lists in subsection 4(a) the following:

- (4) If the juvenile victim must be directly questioned by the first responding deputy to determine if a sex offense occurred, the deputy shall first contact their immediate supervisor for approval. The deputy will:
 - (a) Obtain only the basic facts to determine if a sex offense occurred. The questioning will be limited to:
 - What occurred;
 - When the incident occurred;
 - Where the incident occurred, and
 - Who is the offender.

Sergeant Calkins observed the report authored by Deputy Wright contained no information on what occurred, when or where the incident occurred, or suspect information.

Sergeant Calkins reviewed the attached Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) report and observed an Assist Agency call was created on 06/02/2021, at 1354 hours, by 1K21 (Deputy Wright). The

location of the call was listed at Taylor Middle-High School, Pierson. A note in the CAD, at 1355 hours, states "OCC LAST SUMMER." The CAD was closed at 1355 hours with a report.

Sergeant Calkins researched Report Management System (RMS) and observed the case was forwarded to the Child Exploitation Unit (CEU) for further investigation. Detective Burke conducted further investigation and obtained sufficient probable cause to file criminal charges against the suspect with the State Attorney's Office for review.

Interview with Sergeant Michael Anderson

On August 17, 2021, at approximately 1423 hours, Sergeant Calkins conducted a sworn recorded interview with Sergeant Michael Anderson. The interview was conducted at 123 West Indiana Avenue, DeLand, at the Sheriff's Office Administration Building. Present for the interview was Sergeant Anderson, Sergeant Calkins and Lieutenant Shivers. Below is a synopsis of the audio recorded interview:

Sergeant Anderson advised he supervises Deputy Wright and was working in that same capacity on June 2, 2021. During that time, Sergeant Anderson was also acting as a Field Training Officer (FTO) and had Sergeant Patterson training with him. Sergeant Anderson advised he authored the supervisor's inquiry into the June 2 incident. Sergeant Anderson was asked about the investigation done by Deputy Wright. Sergeant Anderson advised:

"I received an email from Deputy Wright at the end of that day when DCF was on school. Normally I tell, I've told the deputies in the past whenever DCF arrives in your part of the investigation will notify me. I wasn't notified. The only reason I found out is his consolidated email at the end of the day saying that they showed up for an investigation. Deputy, or I'm sorry Sergeant Patterson came to me later on and once we reviewed the report and it appeared to be extremely vague so we started looking into it, notified the lieutenant, started watching BWC and weren't happy with what we were seeing and what we were reading...It was just a lack of communication to me and a lack of investigation to where, to the point where we needed to contact Sergeant Turner [CEU Supervisor] to let him know what was going on at the school because based on solely the report there was nothing there until you watched the BWC to actually figure out what happened and talked to DCF."

Sergeant Anderson advised Sergeant Patterson contacted Investigator Gabriel to gather additional information, at which time Investigator Gabriel provided critical details that were completely absent from the police report. He stated Sergeant Patterson then contacted Deputy Wright to ask follow-up questions, and inquire if Deputy Wright asked Investigator Gabriel any further questions. Deputy Wright advised he did not and that she "...left in a hurry." Sergeant Anderson

advised Sergeant Patterson contacted Sergeant Turner with the Child Exploitation Unit to advise him of the case.

Sergeant Calkins asked Sergeant Anderson what concerns he had with the report. Sergeant Anderson stated:

“It was just very open ended and then closed, it was very vague to where you questioned what transpired which is why we reviewed the BWC second by second to actually figure out what happened and once we realized that it was a sex offense or potential sex offense that raised a huge concern because priority is to protect the children especially working in the schools.”

Sergeant Calkins asked Sergeant Anderson if Deputy Wright’s report was accurate and thorough to which he stated “no.” Sergeant Anderson was asked what Deputy Wright what could have done better to which he responded:

“Notified me first off because I probably would have responded to the school or followed up with him to find out details of the case and documented the incident because just by watching the BWC video there’s allegations made in there that weren’t documented in the report so there was a huge lack of reporting and notifying me so I could let our proper chain of command know and let CEU know”

Sergeant Anderson said he would have expected Deputy Wright to notify him with the specifics of the incident regarding a DCF investigation. Sergeant Anderson advised had Deputy Wright notified him, he would have been able to make proper notifications and provide additional resources to conduct the investigation.

At the conclusion of the interview, Sergeant Anderson provided Sergeant Calkins the consolidated email authored by Deputy Wright on June 2, 2021.

Sergeant Calkins reviewed the consolidated email contained very limited information similar to the report Deputy Wright submitted.

Interview with Sergeant Jeremy Patterson

On August 18, 2021, at approximately 1428 hours, Sergeant Calkins conducted a sworn recorded interview with Sergeant Jeremy Patterson. The interview was conducted at 123 West Indiana Avenue, DeLand, at the Sheriff’s Office Administration Building. Present for the interview was Sergeant Patterson, Sergeant Calkins and Lieutenant Shivers. Below is a synopsis of the audio recorded interview:

Sergeant Patterson was asked how he became involved with the investigation conducted by Deputy Wright. Sergeant Patterson stated he was in training with Sergeant Anderson reviewing and approving reports as part of his FTO phase. Sergeant Patterson stated while reviewing Deputy Wright's report "*...it was abundantly clear that there were some facts that were left out. There were some questions that I had that should have been answered in the report...*"

Sergeant Patterson stated he tried to call Investigator Gabriel to ask further questions but was unable to make contact with her initially, so he called Deputy Wright to ascertain additional information that was lacking in Deputy Wright's report. Sergeant Patterson advised when he asked Deputy Wright additional questions about the interview Deputy Wright told him that he could not hear the conversation. Sergeant Patterson stated:

"...He [Deputy Wright] told me that there was masks that both of the people were wearing masks and that he couldn't tell me what the questions were and what her responses were and for some reason or another and what caught my attention was that he said that during the CPT interview the DCF investigator halted the interview and stopped and she, all she told Deputy Wright was that she had to stop the interview to contact her supervisors on the next step to take but didn't, but the report didn't explain why it was stopped. And so when I asked him those questions he said that he didn't know that he couldn't hear..."

Sergeant Patterson stated after speaking with Deputy Wright he received a phone call back from Investigator Gabriel. Sergeant Patterson advised Investigator Gabriel told him the "*...exact opposite, that you know that it was a very small room if not smaller than this room and that it was audible to her...*" Investigator Gabriel told Sergeant Patterson advised the victim disclosed sexual battery allegations and she stopped the interview due to her emotional state.

Sergeant Patterson stated he "*...looked at his [Deputy Wright's] BWC and it was very audible, I could hear it in the recording. They were wearing masks but like I said it was a small room like this and even if he didn't hear which I can't understand or fathom it, her body language was very, very, very apparent that she was emotionally upset. She began to cry. They had a good dialogue and then the dialogue you know had stopped but her voice was very audible and I could hear it through the recording. And then he took no further steps. He didn't explain at least at the end of the interview I asked him well did you inquire as to why it was stopped if you didn't hear why, you know why was it stopped and why didn't you ask those questions with the investigator after the interview you might want to ask those questions and he just said that she left abruptly and he didn't, he didn't find that stuff out.*"

Sergeant Patterson was asked what questions Deputy Wright should have asked to make sure a complete and accurate report was documented. Sergeant Patterson replied,

“I wouldn’t have expected him to delve into the interview but at least after the interview had he had any questions of what was said and what was you know exactly disclosed bearing you know her emotional state and crying to find out and clarify you know how she was touched and who touched her.”

Before promoting, Sergeant Patterson previously held the position of School Resource Deputy. Sergeant Patterson advised during his tenure as a SRD, he was required to be present with DCF Investigators during interviews, *“...Because it might start as one thing and as we know could change into another and we need to be present for that and you know clarify things, investigate and notify the proper people.”*

Sergeant Patterson was asked what the Sheriff’s Office’s responsibility is during the interviews. Sergeant Patterson replied, *“To investigate the allegations. To clarify and gather information and for the, you know, pursue the case if there is one.”* Sergeant Patterson advised a DCF’s investigation *“...is independent to you know, make sure the home and the child is safe and ours is criminal, to pursue any criminal charges and there was an obvious charge here...”*

Sergeant Patterson was asked if Deputy Wright handed the investigation correctly and in accordance with Sheriff’s Office General Orders. Sergeant Patterson replied, *“Not at all, it was very poor.”* Sergeant Patterson was also asked if the report was accurate and thorough to which he replied, *“Not at all.”*

Interview with DCF Investigator Nicolette Gabriel

On August 19, 2021, at approximately 1017 hours, Sergeant Calkins conducted a sworn recorded interview with Investigator Nicolette Gabriel. The interview was conducted at 230 North Woodland Boulevard, DeLand, at the Bank of America Building. Present for the interview was Investigator Gabriel, Sergeant Calkins and Lieutenant Shivers. Below is a synopsis of the audio recorded interview:

Investigator Gabriel advised she has been employed by the Department of Children and Families for approximately two years as an investigator. On June 2, 2021, Investigator Gabriel responded to T. Dewitt Taylor Middle-High School to conduct an investigation into a sexual molestation case. Investigator Gabriel made contact with a juvenile victim and requested a deputy to complete a report. Investigator Gabriel stated its standard procedure to request law enforcement for incidents, which are criminal in nature. Investigator Gabriel interviewed the victim in the presence of Deputy Wright in a small room. During the interview, the victim became emotional to the point where she stopped the interview so a CPT could be conducted. Investigator Gabriel advised Deputy Wright did not ask any questions during the interview.

Investigator Gabriel was asked to describe the room where the interview was conducted. Investigator Gabriel stated, *“It was a small office. There was one desk in the room. I was on one side of the table and she was on the other and Deputy Wright was sitting against the wall in a chair.”* Investigator Gabriel advised she could hear the victim articulate details of the incident and that Deputy Wright was close enough to hear the conversation.

Investigator Gabriel stated after the conclusion of the interview, she spoke with Deputy Wright and he asked for the victim’s name and the DCF report number. Investigator Gabriel advised she had other information in the case to include suspect, witnesses, and the location of the incident but that Deputy Wright never asked for it. Investigator Gabriel stated the incident happened in DeLeon Springs, which is Volusia Sheriff’s Office jurisdiction.

Investigator Gabriel was asked if after the interview she left the school abruptly. Investigator Gabriel stated, *“No I did talk to him. I asked him if he needed anything else from me we had the conversation about me requesting law enforcement and then that was pretty much it...”* Investigator Gabriel added, *“At the end of the interview, he [Deputy Wright] mentioned that he would be making a report and that when I was able to get to the home to call for another deputy to make a joint response with me and make contact with the family.”*

Investigator Gabriel stated she was contacted by Sergeant Patterson a few days later and spoke with him about the case. Investigator Gabriel stated after speaking with Sergeant Patterson the case moved quickly and was turned over to the Child Exploitation Unit.

Investigator Gabriel was asked if Deputy Wright handed the case properly to which she stated,

“I normally, whenever I have a law enforcement officer present if they feel that I’ve missed information or that there was something that they needed in order to complete their law enforcement report they’ve always interjected and asked the questions that they need in order to cover themselves and fill in whatever blanks I haven’t obtained for them.”

In her experience with law enforcement Investigator Gabriel felt Deputy Wright did not do his duties.

Interview with Deputy Ricky Wright

On August 25, 2021, at approximately 1354 hours, Sergeant Calkins conducted a sworn recorded interview with Deputy Ricky Wright. The interview was conducted at 123 West Indiana Avenue, DeLand, at the Sheriff’s Office Administration Building. Present for the interview was Deputy Wright, Sergeant Calkins and Lieutenant Shivers. Below is a synopsis of the sworn recorded interview:

Prior to conducting the interview, Deputy Wright signed a copy of his Garrity Warning, acknowledging his understanding of the document. Deputy Wright was also read a Volusia Sheriff's Office Administration of Oath / Perjury Warning, which he acknowledged and understood.

Deputy Wright advised he is the School Resource Deputy at T. Dewitt Taylor Middle-High School with approximately 10 years of experience in that position. He stated on June 2, 2021, he responded to the main office to assist DCF with an interview of a juvenile. Deputy Wright activated his BWC and was present for the interview with the juvenile and DCF Investigator Gabriel. Deputy Wright advised he was sitting to the side of the conversation while Investigator Gabriel and the juvenile faced each other. Deputy Wright advised the juvenile began to disclose an incident involving her father buying her a book and later putting his hands down her pants. It should be noted, Deputy Wright later recanted this statement, and stated the only thing he heard was the juvenile was hugged and fell onto a bed. Deputy Wright stated he was unable to hear the entire conversation due to him having tinnitus (a medical condition that effects his hearing). Deputy Wright explained that he should have positioned himself better in the interview so that he could capture the information, but did not think to at the time.

Deputy Wright was asked if he asked any questions during the interview to which he replied,

"I did not. I, when DCF does investigations like that, generally speaking, I let them do their, conduct their investigation because I don't always know where it's going and so I'll sit back and relax you know basically sit back and relax, sit there and watch them and see what's going on. What caught me and these usually most of the DCF investigations that I, I've been a part of they go on for a little while you know they go back and forth and this and all that kind of thing. This one here she was talking to the girl and I guess after that when she became emotional, as soon as she became emotional the DCF investigator stopped the interview. And I thought she was getting on, in the process of divulging something dramatic which I guess she did because I missed it but she you know she stopped the interview and you know sent the girl back to class."

Deputy Wright was asked if he asked any questions to Investigator Gabriel after the interview to which he replied,

"I did ask her. I said did she divulge anything and she basically said no. She says I just need to talk to my supervisor."

Deputy Wright was asked if he took any notes from Investigator Gabriel to which he replied,

“Not much, she didn’t really provide me with anything as far as that goes. I should have gotten her case load and like you know her case report or something and made a copy of it but I didn’t you know. I just you know I don’t, I don’t know why. I really don’t.”

Deputy Wright was asked why he didn’t ask any more questions to further the investigation to which he replied,

“Well like I said normally when I, when I’ve done past investigations with her ok they were, they were a lot longer than that. She didn’t, I’ve never seen her do something like that before. And just stop it and you know go you know I’ve gotta call my supervisor to go you know so. And I, and I pretty much knew I had missed something but I didn’t have a clue what it was that’s why I asked her what happened? Did she say something happened? And she told me no.”

Deputy Wright stated during the interview, *“...I’m saying is she you know I don’t have an excuse, I...you know I screwed up. I really can’t say anything about it because ...you know, yes I probably should have asked...the girl more questions and things like that but you know with DCF and I don’t know the procedures with DCF...”*

Deputy Wright was asked if he contacted a supervisor to update him about the case to which he replied,

“I did not. You know when I got there they didn’t tell me what it was about or anything like that so I walked, when I walked up there and then once I got there the DCF person was there and introduced herself and all that kind of stuff and then went right into the girl came there and came right into the ...interview and it basically I hate to say it went like many things nowadays it slipped my mind. I didn’t even think about it until it was over with.”

Deputy Wright was asked if he reviewed his BWC prior to writing his report to which he replied,

“I did not. I wasn’t able to at that point. The only thing I had was a, you know the old tablets.”
(Deputy Wright was referring to the multimedia tablets issued to deputies for syncing their body worn camera system, and for review of body worn camera recordings by the deputy).

Deputy Wright was asked if he had an issue with the tablet to which he responded,

“And I didn’t even know, I didn’t because honestly I didn’t think we were supposed to. I thought that we were supposed to you know we write our reports and things like that but I didn’t know I could review my report...”

Deputy Wright advised he had a CAD call created and a note added stating "OCC LAST SUMMER." Deputy Wright was asked if he knew what incident occurred last summer to which he replied, *"No I didn't at that point. Something had, I knew something had occurred. You know generally speaking if it's, if it's a juvenile being called I mean that means and I don't know if it's juvenile on juvenile or if it's anything else like that so. You know I'm trying to figure out what occurred last summer so. Most likely it would be sexual though."*

Deputy Wright pulled a case number in CAD, which was VSO #210012050. Sergeant Calkins asked if he completed a report, which Deputy Wright stated *"A poor one."* Deputy Wright was unable to advise why he listed the report as an assist agency rather than a sex offense. Deputy Wright advised he did not list a crime under the offense box because he didn't know if a crime had been committed due to him not asking questions. Deputy Wright was asked why he put the schools address instead of the actual incident location, and Deputy Wright admitted he didn't attempt to acquire the physical address from Investigator Gabriel or any suspect information. Deputy Wright was asked why he closed the report, which he replied, *"I don't know. I would like to say I, you know I can't, I can't tell you why."* Deputy Wright admitted it should have been continued and active for further investigation.

Sergeant Calkins asked Deputy Wright if he believed the report contained enough information for follow-up which he replied *"No not really."* Sergeant Calkins asked what could have been done better in the report to which Deputy Wright stated, *"A lot of things could have been done better with that report. I could have done a lot more and I admit that so and there's nothing I can, like I said it just it just didn't occur to me. I don't you know that's, that's where my issues are."*

During the interview, Deputy Wright stated his main concern is trying to remember to activate his BWC. Deputy Wright admitted he has trouble with activating his BWC in accordance with General Orders, and has discipline recently for a late activation.

While detailing instances where he did not activate his body worn camera, Deputy Wright freely and voluntarily stated that a few days prior he was with school administrators following a juvenile who appeared to be intoxicated around campus. He stated at some point the juvenile got into an altercation with a receptionist, which caused the administrator to engage physically with him to protect the receptionist. The juvenile was taken to a back office where he got into a physical altercation with the administrator, which caused Deputy Wright to utilize physical restraining force with the juvenile. Deputy Wright stated after he deescalated the situation he activated his BWC and admitted it was a late activation.

Throughout the interview, Deputy Wright took responsibility for mishandling of the initial stages of the aforementioned juvenile sexual battery case. Deputy Wright advised he suffers from several medical ailments, which have been causing him concerns as to his fitness for duty as a law

enforcement officer. Prior to the conclusion of the interview, Deputy Wright relayed his desire to retire fully from his position as a Deputy Sheriff within the coming months.

Based on the statements made during the interview with Deputy Wright, VSO Human Resources was contacted, and Deputy Wright was placed on medical leave pending a fitness for duty evaluation by his medical doctor.

Prior the conclusion of the interview, Deputy Wright was asked if he felt he violated the following General Orders:

GO-026-02.IV.B.3 – Any conduct or action, on-duty or off-duty, of such seriousness that disciplinary action is considered warranted.	Yes
GO-026-02.IV.C.1 – Neglect of Duty	Yes
GO-026-02.IV.C.5.g – Failure to Follow General Order, Standard Operation Procedure, or Order	Yes
GO-026-02.IV.C.5.n – Negligence Associated with Safety of Persons or Property	Yes
GO-026-02.IV.G.1.a – General Proficiency	Yes
GO-026-02.IV.G.1.d – General Proficiency	Yes
GO-026-02.IV.G.2.a – General Proficiency	Yes
GO-026-02.IV.G.2.b – General Proficiency	Yes

On August 26, 2021, Sergeant Calkins reviewed Deputy Wright’s BWC in reference to the incident involving the intoxicated juvenile. Sergeant Calkins observed the BWC was recorded on August 23, 2021 and was tagged with a VSO case number. Sergeant Calkins observed during the 1:30 buffer, the juvenile is standing against a wall facing Deputy Wright, who has his hand on the juvenile’s shoulder. The juvenile is then escorted by Deputy Wright to the administrator’s office and is placed in a chair. Deputy Wright stands back from the juvenile and activates his BWC approximately 37 seconds after placing him into the chair. Deputy Wright’s body worn camera does not capture any of the incident between the juvenile and the administrator, nor Deputy Wright’s actions in breaking up the physical altercation.

The video does show Deputy Wright administering minimal restraining force against the juvenile, who attempts to stand up and become physically aggressive with staff and Deputy Wright. Deputy Wright subsequently placed the juvenile into handcuffs to successfully deescalate the incident.

Based on the totality of the circumstances, coupled with the statements made by Deputy Wright and a review of the body worn camera footage, Deputy Wright failed to activate his body worn camera in accordance with General Orders.

It should be noted; Deputy Wright has two (2) prior late activations, and has received progressive discipline (letter of reprimand and suspension) within the past year in regards to his failure to activate his body worn camera.

On September 1, 2021, Deputy Wright was served with an amended Notice of Internal Investigation adding the following General Order violation.

GO-026-02.IV.D.9.p – Use of Equipment: BWC – Employees shall ensure proper maintenance and utilization of the VSO BWC (body-worn cameras) for its intended purpose and in accordance with general order GO-041-20 Body-Worn Cameras.

On September 2, 2021, Deputy Wright submitted a Letter of Resignation to Sheriff Chitwood.

On September 17, 2021, the Internal Affairs investigation was presented to the Sheriff and his staff. Upon completion of the presentation, the Sheriff sustained the aforementioned General Order violations against Deputy Wright:

GO-026-02.IV.B.3 – Any conduct or action, on-duty or off-duty, of such seriousness that disciplinary action is considered warranted.	Sustained
GO-026-02.IV.C.1 – Neglect of Duty	Sustained
GO-026-02.IV.C.5.g – Failure to Follow General Order, Standard Operation Procedure, or Order	Sustained
GO-026-02.IV.C.5.n – Negligence Associated with Safety of Persons or Property	Sustained
GO-026-02.IV.G.1.a – General Proficiency	Sustained
GO-026-02.IV.G.1.d – General Proficiency	Sustained

GO-026-02.IV.G.2.a – General Proficiency

Sustained

GO-026-02.IV.G.2.b – General Proficiency

Sustained

GO-026-02.IV.D.9.p – Use of Equipment: BWC

Sustained

EXHIBITS:

- A. Report of Investigation
- B. Official Correspondence
- C. Supervisor Inquiry
- D. Official Reports, CAD History, & Email
- E. General Order
- F. Transcript of Interview with Sergeant Michael Anderson
- G. Transcript of Interview with Sergeant Jeremy Patterson
- H. Transcript of Interview with Investigator Nicolette Gabriel
- I. Transcript of Interview with Deputy Ricky Wright
- J. Digital Evidence

WITNESSES:
Volusia Sheriff's Office

123 West Indiana Avenue
DeLand, FL 32724
(386) 736-5961

Sergeant Michael Anderson and Sergeant Jeremy Patterson

Civilian Witness
Investigator Nicolette Gabriel
230 North Woodland Boulevard
DeLand, FL 32720

Under penalties of perjury, I declare that I have read the foregoing document and that the facts stated in it are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

AND

I, the undersigned, do hereby swear, under the penalty of perjury, that, to the best of my personal knowledge, information, and belief, I have not knowingly or willfully deprived, or allowed another to deprive, the suspect of the investigation of any rights contained in ss. 112.532 and 112.533, Florida Statutes.

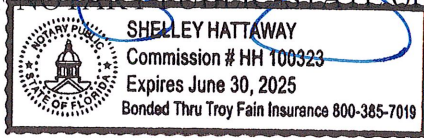
DETECTIVE: Andrew Calkins DATE: 9-17-21
Sergeant Andrew Calkins
Internal Affairs Sergeant

STATE OF FLORIDA
COUNTY OF VOLUSIA

Sworn to (or affirmed) and subscribed before me by means of physical presence or online Notarization this 17th day of September, 2021 by Sergeant Andrew Calkins

[Signature]

SIGNATURE OF NOTARY PUBLIC, STATE OF FLORIDA



PRINT, TYPE, OR STAMP COMMISSIONED NAME OF NOTARY PUBLIC

PERSONALLY KNOWN OR PRODUCED IDENTIFICATION

TYPE OF IDENTIFICATION PRODUCED

APPROVED BY: [Signature] 2267 DATE: 10-12-2021
CHIEF DEPUTY JOSEPH GALLAGHER
VOLUSIA COUNTY FLORIDA