



VOLUSIA SHERIFF'S OFFICE

MICHAEL J. CHITWOOD, SHERIFF

Office of Chief Deputy Brian M. Henderson - Internal Affairs

REPORT OF INVESTIGATION

REPORT NUMBER: IA 24-007

PERIOD COVERED: May 13, 2024 – May 16, 2024

DATE REPORTED: May 16, 2024

SUBJECT(S) NAME: Deputy D'jhon Knight, #8398

INVESTIGATING OFFICER: Sergeant Thomas Hachenberger, #8186

BASIS FOR INVESTIGATION:

On May 16, 2024, Internal Affairs received information via an anonymous tip that a deputy within the Volusia Sheriff's Office distributed a photograph taken of a Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) call for service. The CAD call in question was in reference to a sex offense, and the suspect of the criminal act was a former member of the Volusia Sheriff's Office. The photograph was allegedly distributed by Deputy D'jhon Knight to individuals who currently work for or previously worked for the Volusia Sheriff's Office.

OFFENSES:

GO-026-02.V.D.9.n – Access, Use of Secure/Restricted Databases* - Only authorized employees who have acknowledged in writing the confidentiality, restrictions and legal ramifications associated with access to such data/information are permitted to access and utilize agency designated secure/restricted databases and only for specific law enforcement/criminal justice purposes. Unauthorized use includes, but is not limited to, queries not related to a legitimate law enforcement purpose, personal use, improper dissemination to non-law enforcement personnel and sharing, copying, or distributing information to unauthorized users. Unauthorized access, use

or disclosure of data from secure/restricted databases is a serious matter and may result in civil or criminal penalties.

(1) No employee shall use this authorized access as a privilege or means to gain access to protected information about others for any purpose other than law enforcement business directly associated with their assignment and shall do so during scheduled/required work hours. Due to the sensitive nature of the information being accessed and the potential for legal ramifications associated with a violation.

GO-026-02.V.D.3.d - Dissemination of Information – Employees shall treat the official business of the VSO as confidential. Information regarding official business shall be disseminated only to those for whom it is intended and in accordance with established procedures. Employees may remove or copy official records or reports only in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 082.

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

INVESTIGATION:

On May 16, 2024, Chief Deputy Brian Henderson assigned the incident to the Internal Affairs Unit. This report details the Internal Affairs investigation conducted by Sergeant Thomas Hachenberger.

On the same date, Lieutenant Gordon and Sergeant Hachenberger met with Deputy Knight and served him with his Notice of Investigation and provided him with a copy of his Officer Bill of Rights. During this process, Deputy Knight expressed remorse and began explaining the incident. Although Deputy Knight was willing to discuss the incident in depth, he was cautioned regarding his Officer Bill of Rights under FSS 112.

Deputy Knight offered to and voluntarily waived his Officer Bill of Rights and was immediately apologetic for his actions. Deputy Knight confirmed that he was responsible for taking the picture of the CAD call mentioned earlier. He further clarified that he did send the picture to others but denied sending it to any media sources or publishing it on any social media platforms.

By his own admission, Deputy Knight confirmed he had violated the General Orders listed on the Notice of Investigation he had been served. Due to Deputy Knight voluntarily waiving his Officer Bill of Rights coupled with his admission of the violations, no additional interview or investigation was required pursuant to Florida State Statute.

CONCLUSION:

On May 21, 2024, this Internal Affairs investigation was presented to Chief Deputy Brian Henderson and the executive command staff. Upon completion of the presentation, Chief Deputy Henderson sustained the following General Order violations:

GO-026-02.V.D.9.n – Access, Use of Secure/Restricted Databases

GO-026-02.V.D.3.d - Dissemination of Information

GO-026-02.V.C.5.g – Failure to Follow General Order, Standard Operation Procedure, or Order

EXHIBIT(S):

- A. Report of Investigation
- B. Official Correspondence
- C. Evidence

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: [Signature] DATE: 07/15/24
Sergeant Thomas Hachenberger, #8186
Internal Affairs Detective

STATE OF FLORIDA
COUNTY OF VOLUSIA

Sworn to (or affirmed) and subscribed before me by means of physical presence or online
Notarized this 15th day of July, 2024 by Sergeant Hachenberger

[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] DATE: 7/15/24
CHIEF DEPUTY BRIAN HENDERSON
VOLUSIA COUNTY, FLORIDA

Chief Deputy
BRIAN HENDERSON

OFFICE
(386) 736-5961



VOLUSIA SHERIFF'S OFFICE

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May 21, 2024

Deputy Djhon Knight, #8398
Volusia Sheriff's Office
LEOD / District 3

Final Suspension

Deputy Knight:

Volusia Sheriff's Office General Order GO-026-02 requires that all "Employees shall adhere to all official Directives and/or orders, and shall faithfully execute all the duties and responsibilities of their assigned position." Because of your actions or inactions documented in SI 24-035, I have determined you violated the following Sheriff's Office General Orders:

Volusia Sheriff's Office General Orders:

GO-026-02.V.D.9.n – Access, Use of Secure/Restricted Databases* - Only authorized employees who have acknowledged in writing the confidentiality, restrictions and legal ramifications associated with access to such data/information are permitted to access and utilize agency designated secure/restricted databases and only for specific law enforcement/criminal justice purposes. Unauthorized use includes, but is not limited to, queries not related to a legitimate law enforcement purpose, personal use, improper dissemination to non-law enforcement personnel and sharing, copying, or distributing information to unauthorized users. Unauthorized access, use or disclosure of data from secure/restricted databases is a serious matter and may result in civil or criminal penalties.

(1) No employee shall use this authorized access as a privilege or means to gain access to protected information about others for any purpose other than law enforcement business directly associated with their assignment and shall do so during scheduled/required work hours. Due to the sensitive nature of the information being accessed and the potential for legal ramifications associated with a violation.

GO-026-02.V.D.3.d - Dissemination of Information – Employees shall treat the official business of the VSO as confidential. Information regarding official business shall be disseminated only to those for whom it is intended and in accordance with established procedures. Employees may remove or copy official records or reports only in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 082.

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

To Wit:

On May 16, 2024, the Office of Internal Affairs discovered a photograph circulating on social media depicting a call for service on the VSO's Computer-Aided Dispatch screen. This call pertained to a sex offense, and the suspect of the offense was identified as a former VSO deputy.

During the investigation, it was revealed that you, Deputy Knight, took a photograph containing highly sensitive law enforcement information. You chose to act without obtaining prior approval and operated with a narrow-minded perspective. The release of such information requires a public records request and appropriate redactions in accordance with Florida State Statutes. Because of your actions, the photograph you took was released and seen by unauthorized viewers. This painted both the Volusia Sheriff's Office and others in a negative light. PK

When contacted about this, you expressed remorse and apologized, acknowledging the gravity of your actions. You took full accountability for the mistake and acknowledged your shortcomings.

Public trust and integrity are the cornerstones of effective law enforcement. The community relies on us to protect their privacy and uphold the law with fairness and transparency. Breaching this trust not only harms the victims involved but also erodes the confidence that the public places in our ability to serve and protect. Deputy Knight, as a Deputy Sheriff, you are held to the highest standards. You are expected to conduct yourself with utmost professionalism and competence. Your severe lapse in judgment and disregard for protocol are unacceptable and will not be tolerated.


You have previously been the subject of the following disciplinary action:

| | | | |
|------------|----------|---------------------------------------|-----------|
| 10/30/2016 | 26.2.098 | Careless Handling Equipment & Vehicle | Sustained |
| 12/26/2016 | 26.2.098 | Careless Handling Equipment & Vehicle | Sustained |

| | | | |
|------------|--------------------|-----------------------|-----------|
| 05/30/2018 | 26.2.156 | Use of Equipment: BWC | Sustained |
| 10/13/2021 | GO-026-02.IV.D.9.p | Use of Equipment: BWC | Sustained |
| 02/01/2021 | GO-026-02.IV.D.9.p | Use of Equipment: BWC | Sustained |
| 09/13/2022 | GO-026-02.IV.D.9.p | Use of Equipment: BWC | Sustained |

In determining your discipline, I have considered your prior disciplinary history, performance, length of service with VSO, and seriousness of the circumstances of the most recent violations.

Deputy Knight, you accepted the opportunity to participate in Fast Track Discipline on May 21, 2024 per General Order GO-026-01(D). You acknowledged violating the aforementioned list of General Orders outlined on the Proposed Discipline Form. You had the opportunity to offer any mitigating circumstances to consider prior to my determination of this final discipline.

After earnest consideration, I have found proper cause and my final decision is to suspend you from duty **without pay for twenty-four (24) work hours** in reference to the General Orders you violated. In lieu of serving the suspension without pay for its entirety, you may elect to use your personal leave. Additionally, you will be **ineligible for promotion to the rank of sergeant for one year**. The Sheriff's Office staff agrees with the administered discipline. 

On May 21, 2024, you notified the Office of Internal Affairs, you **elected to utilize personal leave in lieu of the suspension**. Due to a prior suspension, your one-time maximum allotment of sixty (60) hours was previously deducted eight (8) hours. Therefore, your remaining fifty-two (52) hours will be reduced by twenty-four (24) hours. Your remaining balance of the one-time allotment will be twenty-eight (28) hours.

The dates of your suspension will be **Tuesday, June 11, 2024, from 1200-2000 hours, Wednesday, June 12, 2024, from 1200-2000 hours, and Thursday, June 13, 2024, from 1200-2000 hours** as determined by Captain Shivers.

If there are any concerns or questions troubling you that I am not aware of, please advise me so I will have the opportunity to assist you in correcting this problem.


By signing the Volusia Sheriff's Office Fast Track Discipline "Employee's Understanding and Agreement" form, you agreed to wave your rights under Florida State Statute Chapter 112, "Law Enforcement Officers' and Correctional Officer's Rights." You also agreed the discipline imposed because of this agreement may be used for purposes of progressive and cumulative discipline in

any future disciplinary action(s) of similar nature. Furthermore, you marked the box, and signed the agreement stating, "I agree to the recommended discipline and waive all further procedural due process concerning this investigation including any rights to appeal, grieve, or challenge the disciplinary action being imposed."

Pursuant to the Volusia Sheriff's Office General Orders, Volusia Sheriff's Office General Counsel has reviewed and concurred with this action.

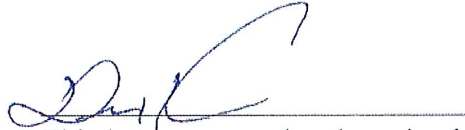
Any subsequent activity of a similar nature will result in more severe administrative action, up to and including dismissal. Take due care and govern yourself accordingly. Be especially aware of **Progressive Discipline GO 26-01**.

Sincerely,



BRIAN HENDERSON
CHIEF DEPUTY

cc: VSO Human Resources
VSO General Counsel
Internal Affairs



This letter was read and received by:

Deputy Djhon Knight, #8398

Date: 05/21/24

Time: 1552

BH/th 0410054.24

Served by:  8186