



BREMERTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 27, 2020

BREMERTON OFFICER INVESTIGATED FOR THEFT, RESIGNS IN LIEU OF TERMINATION

(Bremerton) – At the request of Bremerton Police, the Tacoma Police Department has conducted and completed an independent criminal investigation into an allegation of on-duty theft by former Bremerton Police Detective Jeffrey Inklebarger. The report was submitted to the Kitsap County Prosecuting Attorney on January 24, 2020 for a charging review.

A home security video system captured the theft on February 26, 2019 inside a residence where Mr. Inklebarger was assisting with a narcotics search warrant. The homeowner, through her attorney, brought the video to the attention of the Kitsap County Prosecutor's Office and Bremerton Police Department in December 2019.

After viewing the video, the Bremerton Police Department took immediate action and Detective Inklebarger was placed on administrative leave. The Bremerton Police Department had no direct involvement in the criminal investigation. Detective Inklebarger was interviewed by Tacoma Police detectives on Friday, January 17, 2020. Tacoma Police investigators provided a preliminary briefing to Chief Burchett immediately following that interview. Detective Inklebarger was served with a notice of intended termination and Mr. Inklebarger resigned in lieu of termination on January 25, 2020.

"We value the trust that the community has in the Bremerton Police Department and we will continue to work every day to earn and maintain that trust," said Chief James Burchett. "Once we were made aware of the possible theft, we acted immediately. This was a betrayal of the oath of office and the law enforcement profession. Mr. Inklebarger's actions do not reflect the values of the Bremerton Police Department nor are they representative of the ethical, hard working men and women of the Department."

"The incident that occurred on the video does not represent the principles and practices of the City of Bremerton or our police department," said Mayor Greg Wheeler. "The Bremerton Police have a reputation of being respectful, courteous and professional and are focused on maintaining the trust and confidence of the public. I am thoroughly behind our chief and police department and the values they uphold to serve our community at the highest level."

Jeffrey Inklebarger joined the Bremerton Police Department on November 15, 2004 with prior service as a King County Sheriff's deputy. He was assigned to the Special Operations Group as a narcotics detective on January 1, 2019.

The Bremerton Police Department is currently conducting an investigation, with the assistance of the Kitsap County Prosecutor's Office and the Bremerton Municipal Prosecutor's Office, to identify current and past cases which may be impacted by Mr. Inklebarger's actions. This is an in depth and lengthy process and we cannot comment further until the review is complete.

We thank the Tacoma Police Department for their willingness to conduct this independent investigation.

Documents and video clips related to this case can be viewed at the following link on the Bremerton Police Department's website: www.BremertonWA.gov/TheftInvestigation

Chief Burchett will be available to answer media questions regarding this incident between 9 AM and 11 AM on Tuesday, January 28 at the Bremerton Police Department, 1025 Burwell St., Bremerton. Media questions regarding criminal charges or court proceedings related to Detective Inklebarger should be directed to the Kitsap County Prosecutor's office.

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