

**PINELLAS COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS BUREAU
INTER-OFFICE MEMORANDUM**

DATE: MARCH 7, 2025
TO: DISTRIBUTION
FROM: CAPTAIN ROBERT OSTERLAND *RO*
Professional Standards Bureau
SUBJECT: SHERIFF'S FINDING

Per Sheriff Gualtieri, Lieutenant Kenneth Euler Jr., #55939, will receive the following as a result of AI 25-001:

1. Demotion to deputy.

DISTRIBUTION:

Sheriff Bob Gualtieri
Chief Deputy Dave Danzig
Assistant Chief Deputy Paul Carey
Assistant Chief Deputy Dennis Komar
Colonel Dennis Garvey
Major Deanna Carey
Major Joe Gerretz
Major Alyson Henry
Major Nick Lazaris
Major Jennifer Love
Major Jon Tobeck
Director Jennifer Crockett
Director Susan Krause
Director Tom Lancto
Director Jason Malpass
Shannon Lockheart, General Counsel
Payroll
Purchasing-Uniform Supply
Deputy Kenneth Euler Jr.

RO/blb

**PINELLAS COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
INTER-OFFICE MEMORANDUM**

DATE: MARCH 6, 2025

TO: LIEUTENANT KENNETH EULER, #55939

FROM: SHERIFF BOB GUALTIERI

SUBJECT: CHARGES RE: AI 25-001

An investigation has been conducted by the Administrative Investigation Division, Professional Standards Bureau, of the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office. As a result of this investigation, the Administrative Review Board has determined you committed the following violations:

On, but not limited to, December 30, 2024, while on duty in Pinellas County, Florida, you violated the Pinellas County Sheriff's Civil Service Act Laws of Florida, 89-404 as amended by Laws of Florida 08-285, Section 6, Subsection 4, by violating the provisions of law or the rules, regulations, and operating procedures of the Office of the Sheriff.

1. You violated Pinellas County Sheriff's Office General Order 3-1.1, Rule and Regulation 5.4, Duties and Responsibilities.
2. You violated Pinellas County Sheriff's Office General Order 3-1.3, Rule and Regulation 3.3, Knowledge of, and Obedience to, Laws and Rules and Regulations.
3. You violated Pinellas County Sheriff's Office General Order 3-1.3, Rule and Regulation 3.36, Omission of Information.

Synopsis: Starting in the summer of 2024, you were assigned as the A-Nights Patrol Central District Shift Commander. In this capacity, you were the highest-ranking member of the sheriff's office on duty in the southern part of Pinellas County. As such, you were responsible for supervising and coordinating the activities of patrol deputies, ensuring that all laws, agency policies, and procedures are being followed, and making sure that the central district is providing the highest level of service to the community.

On or about August 15, 2024, you and other agency members attended a meeting with Troopers from the Florida Highway Patrol (FHP). The outcome of this meeting was that troopers in the area of Squad 1 would provide assistance to deputies, either backing them up on calls, helping establish perimeter positions, or pursuing vehicles that fled from traffic stops. On occasion, because the trooper's radios were not compatible with the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office (PCSO) radios, you would provide these troopers with loaner handheld radios.

Between mid-August 2024 and December 30, 2024, troopers and deputies were routinely conducting Proactive Patrol Initiatives in and around Squad 1. During these initiatives, on multiple occasions, after deputies initiated a traffic stop for a minor traffic violation, the suspect vehicles would flee. Deputies were prohibited by policy from pursuing these vehicles. However, FHP's pursuit policy permitted troopers to engage in the pursuit of a fleeing vehicle to assist an outside law enforcement agency.

On December 30, 2024, you, along with deputies and troopers, participated in an initiative in unincorporated St. Petersburg. As you and a corporal were clearing from a traffic stop in downtown St. Petersburg, you overheard radio transmissions indicating a vehicle had fled from a traffic stop along 34th Street North in Squad 1. Deputies quickly lost sight of the vehicle after it fled, but the vehicle's tag number and description were broadcast over the radio.

Several minutes later, during your travels back towards Squad 1, you observed a reckless vehicle. After determining that the reckless vehicle matched the description of the vehicle that fled, you and others began to follow it. Additionally, you contacted one of the troopers on the radio and asked to have another trooper head in your direction because this vehicle had already fled from a deputy.

Deputies were able to intermittently observe the vehicle as it traveled, at times with all of its lights turned off, through neighborhood streets and alleyways near downtown St. Petersburg. Subsequently, you and a trooper located the vehicle as it recklessly crossed MLK Street North at 7th Avenue heading west. The trooper immediately turned behind the vehicle and activated its emergency equipment, but the vehicle failed to stop. As the trooper pursued the fleeing vehicle, you turned and closely followed the trooper as they traveled west on 7th Avenue, eventually turning south on 16th Street. Although your speed exceeded 70 miles per hour on the neighborhood streets, and you drove through a red traffic light at 16th Street, none of your emergency equipment was activated.

As the trooper pursued the vehicle south on 16th Street, you continued to follow at speeds near 80 miles per hour, with your emergency equipment still turned off. As you approached 1st Ave North, you learned that the vehicle had crashed, and you then activated your emergency equipment. Approximately 35 seconds later, you arrived at the single-vehicle crash site. You later learned that the driver and sole occupant of the vehicle was killed in the crash. You also learned that the initial traffic stop in Squad 1 by deputies was for a window tint violation.

Later, you sent text messages about the incident to your chain of command, indicating that you were nowhere near the vehicle when it crashed. However, based on your in-car Fleet 3 video, from the time the vehicle crashed until your arrival at the scene, only 35 seconds elapsed.

You subsequently authored and emailed the CDS-A Nights report, which contained a brief synopsis of this incident. In this report, you noted that after the vehicle had fled from deputies, FHP noticed and subsequently pursued the vehicle until it crashed. FHP assumed responsibility for the pursuit and crash investigation. However, in this report, you failed to document material facts about the incident. Specifically, that FHP was working alongside deputies prior to and during this incident and that you had called for a trooper to come and assist you with this vehicle.

You authored an ACISS Supplemental Report describing your actions during this incident. You failed to document several key things in your report. Specifically, you omitted that you had called for a trooper to assist deputies with locating this vehicle. You also omitted that when the vehicle traveled west along 7th Avenue, it passed between you and the trooper who was driving immediately behind you.

Based on the facts and circumstances surrounding this incident, you were placed on notice as the Subject of an Administrative Investigation. During this investigation, it was determined that, over the course of several months, you had willingly and knowingly used FHP Troopers to pursue vehicles that fled from deputies, intentionally circumventing agency policies that expressly prohibit deputies from pursuing vehicles for minor traffic infractions.

In your written and oral correspondence with your chain of command and in your ACISS documentation, you intentionally misrepresented and omitted material facts about multiple instances when FHP Troopers had been actively working with deputies and subsequently pursued vehicles that fled from them. Your omission of information was designed to conceal the true nature of the collaboration you established with the troopers.

Although you provided PCSO radios for troopers to utilize during these instances, not every trooper received one. The absence of effective communication between deputies and troopers created huge safety and coordination concerns. Specifically, during the pursuit on December 30, 2024, as the trooper made their southbound turn onto 16th Street, they immediately encountered a deputy who had deployed stop sticks. The trooper was unaware that the deputy was there and that one of their tires had begun to deflate, increasing the dangers associated with pursuit driving.

Although a subordinate supervisory member raised questions about the appropriateness of using troopers to assist deputies and pursue vehicles that fled, you discounted their concerns and told the member that it was okay.

During your Administrative Interview, you stated, "It was incredibly stupid, and I set a horrible example for my shift and every deputy who may have heard what we were doing..." You also acknowledged you used FHP as a "tool" because their less restrictive pursuit policy allowed them to take actions that PCSO deputies could not.


During the Administrative Review Board, you acknowledged that your actions were intentional and designed to circumvent agency policy. When asked by the Board if at any point during the December 30, 2024 incident, you were engaged in the pursuit of the fleeing vehicle, citing your speeds along the neighborhood and secondary streets, your proximity to the trooper, and the short time between the crash and your arrival on the scene, you repeatedly replied no, you were not in pursuit.

The Board determined that you committed these violations.

Disciplinary Points and Recommended Discipline Range:

You were found to be in violation of one (1) Level Five Rules and Regulations violation and two (2) Level Three Rules and Regulations violations, totaling seventy-five (75) points. These points, which were affected by no modified points from previous discipline, resulted in seventy-five (75) progressive discipline points. At this point level, the recommended discipline range is an eighty-hour (80) Suspension to Termination.

Disciplinary action shall be consistent with progressive discipline for cause in accordance with the provisions of the Pinellas County Civil Service Act.


MAJOR NICK LAZARIS #5916
PATROL OPERATIONS BUREAU
FOR BOB GUALTIERI, SHERIFF

I have received a copy:

Date 3/7/2025

Time 0950


SIGNATURE

BG:RLC:blb