



TARPON SPRINGS POLICE DEPARTMENT MEDIA RELEASE

Robert P. Kochen
CHIEF OF POLICE

"Building a Better Future Through Excellence in Policing"

Date : 9/20/2019

Time : 1:50 p.m.

Today, 9/20/2019, the Tarpon Springs Police Department closed an Internal Affairs investigation which began on 8/6/2019.

On 8/6/2019 Department Administration was made aware of a comment made on 8/5/2019 by Detective Steve Bergren that there would be an Active Shooter situation at the PD if he did not get an assignment to the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office County-Wide Narcotics Task Force. The Detective he made the statement to advised he made this statement in a stoic manner and not giving any indication that this was a joke. Det. Bergren was placed on paid administrative leave on 8/6/2019 (all department firearms/Badge/ID were taken from him) and the investigation into this comment was initiated. Due to the nature of the incident both the Pinellas County (overseeing Task Force) and Pasco County (due to residency) Sheriff's Offices were made aware of the statements.

During the course of this investigation it was determined that a 2nd similar comment, also in a stoic manner was made by Det. Bergren on or about 5/10/2019 when the internal selection process for the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office County-Wide Narcotics Task Force position began.

On 9/19/2019 Detective Steve Bergren resigned his position with Tarpon Springs PD prior to a scheduled interview with IA investigators. Det. Bergren did submit a letter taking responsibility for making the comment, advising that it was a statement made in "Jest" but in reflection he realizes his attempt at humor was ill-advised.

The IA was closed with Chief Kochen Sustaining a violation of General Order 101.40 Conduct Unbecoming a Police Officer, with this being considered a threat in the workplace under City of Tarpon Springs Rules and Regulations the comments made would have been a termination for a first offense of this nature. The IA will be shared with FDLE Standards Commission for evaluation regarding Det. Bergren's certification with the State as a Law Enforcement Officer.

Maj. Jeffrey P. Young
Major Jeffrey P. Young



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