

07/06/2014

To Whom It May Concern,

I, Advanced Patrol Officer Frank Andrew Reteguiz, hereby give my two weeks' notice with this letter of resignation.

I have chosen to leave SCMPD for several reasons: retaliation, lack of pay, and the no opportunity for advancement. First, due the incident from last year involving myself, the City Manager's husband and Internal Affairs, I have been informed that I am blackballed. Various members from inside the department and outside department have informed me that I would not move beyond patrol and I would have to leave to save my career. This is discouraging and heart-breaking news. I know now, based off this incident with Mr. Cutter, the one position I have aspired to do for most of my adult life, to work as a Detective, will never happen for me if I stay with this department. The reason for this is the toxic culture/politics that is still heavily embedded within the department and government.

When the City Manager's husband jumped out of his car angry and aggressive, I did what I was trained to do for my safety and my partner's safety. I followed the rules and my training, but I got punished.

When I am on patrol now I have to live with the fear I might be punished for defending myself or my partner. I don't know if I can trust SCMPD will support me when I respond based off of my training and judgment. This concern could cause me to hesitate or fail to respond to a threat with the training that has become second nature. I might get killed, or my partner might get killed, because I don't know if I can trust my training.

I can't keep living the way I have these past months. I have been forced to see a counselor and take medication based off of this incident and the response of the SCMPD. I don't want to stay medicated in order to deal with the stress and anxiety this incident has brought into my life. No officer should have to worry about being punished for doing the right thing.

The second reason for my resignation is the lack of pay. Recently the city boasted on giving city workers a Cost of Living increase (the first in several years) and it was mistaken as a raise. A raise is an incentive used to reward exceptional work, maintain employee satisfaction and to deter attrition. A raise is used to give recognition and a reason for employees with knowledge and experience to stay with an organization. A cost-of-living increase is something an organization does to all its employees to help keep up with inflation and the increase of cost to sustain a living.



Many officers have to work many off-duty jobs and overtime assignments to make ends meet. All the extra hours of work takes away from spending time from family and increases the likelihood of injury, due to exhaustion from working those hours.

The third reason is that there is no opportunity for advancement in the department. The culture embedded with this department is inconsistency and unpredictability. There is no objective criteria used for advancement. Competent and honest officers are still constantly being passed up for positions and rank advancement because they may have irked someone because they did the right thing. There is also still unfair treatment within the department.

Officers are still being sent to Internal Affairs (a stressful and anxiety-invoking event) because a citizen who may have the Chief's phone number, or knew a person in power and was not pleased with the outcome with the officer. These situations occur time and time again, even though the officer was right. This occurs while other officers who violated policies suffer no repercussions.

An example of this is the former Internal Affairs unit. Despite the humiliating reports, the multiple lawsuits and the arrest of former officers because they failed to do their jobs; these officers have only been transferred. They have suffered no other repercussions. It is demoralizing to work for a department retaining these officers while unfairly reprimanding other officers for committing minor policy violations.

It is broadcasted on the news that there has been improvement within the department. Sadly this is not the case. The changes made within this department have only been cosmetic in nature. There is still corruption in this department, and the people who have the power to stop it are still turning a blind eye. These people knew of the corruption that took place under Chief Lovett, but they stood by and did nothing. They boast about doing the right thing but they do not act on it when they were needed to take action. These are deplorable and abusive conditions that we have to work under and why I am resigning.

I cannot with good conscious keep working for SCMPD due to these reasons. I wish a real change would come to the department before you lose the honest officers who do make a difference.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Frank Andrew Reteguiz". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Frank Andrew Reteguiz