Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training
Peace Officer Standards Accountability Division
860 Stillwater Road, Suite 100
West Sacramento, CA 95605
www.post.ca.gov

STATEMENT OF FINDINGS

POST makes the following information available to the public pursuant to Penal Code §13510.85(c) which establishes that POST shall publish the names of any peace officer whose certification has been suspended or revoked and the basis for the suspension or revocation.

CASE NO.: POST2315312

SUBJECT OFFICER: Esteban Castaneda **POST ID:** C33–S55

EMPLOYING AGENCY: Monrovia Police Department

ALLEGED MISCONDUCT: Penal Code section 13510.8(b)(1)/11 CCR 1205. (a)(1) – Dishonesty

CASE SUMMARY:

On July 24, 2023, the Monrovia Police Department submitted a report of potential serious misconduct to POST against Officer Esteban Castaneda, hereinafter "Respondent," alleging that Respondent engaged in dishonesty while employed as a peace officer. Following POST's investigation and review, POST found, by clear and convincing evidence, that reasonable grounds existed for consideration of revocation pursuant to PC 13510.8. A summary of the investigative findings of the Division are as follows:

On March 6, 2019, a resident of Monrovia, CA noticed a portion of his fence was on fire and extinguished it. He saw Respondent driving by and flagged him down to report it. Respondent conducted a cursory investigation but did not document anything or collect any evidence despite the city experiencing an on-going series of arson cases. Later that day when the resident called to follow up on the investigation, the Department had no record of the call. When asked about it, Respondent denied he was told about a fire and said he did not see any evidence of a fire. Respondent insisted that the resident only told him about a suspicious person.

The Monrovia Police Department conducted an internal investigation into Respondent's failure to investigate and document a crime. During the entire investigation, Respondent continued to deny he was told about a fire, despite overwhelming evidence to the contrary. The allegations were sustained, and Respondent was terminated from employment. Respondent appealed the sustained finding to an Administrative Law Judge, and the appeal was denied. Respondent then

filed a Writ of Mandate in Los Angeles County Superior Court challenging his termination, which was denied.

ANALYSIS/FINDINGS:

1. **The alleged misconduct violated Penal Code Section 13510.8 (b)(1) and Title 11, California Code of Regulations Section 1205 (a)(1) – Dishonesty**

Penal Code Section 13510.8 (b)(1) and Commission Regulation 1205 (a)(1) defines as serious misconduct "Dishonesty relating to the reporting, investigation, or prosecution of a crime, or relating to the reporting of, or investigation of misconduct by, a peace officer or custodial officer, including, but not limited to, false statements, intentionally filing false reports, tampering with, falsifying, destroying, or concealing evidence, perjury, and tampering with data recorded by a body-worn camera or other recording device for purposes of concealing misconduct."

The agency initiated an internal investigation into the alleged inaction of Respondent for failing to take a report of a suspected arson. During their investigation, the Monrovia Police Department collected physical evidence that a fire occurred and took multiple Witness statements refuting Respondent's statements.

When Respondent was interviewed, he confirmed he had contacted the residents but denied they told him about a fire. Respondent stated they only told him about a suspicious male with a light standing in the driveway. Respondent stated he didn't see any smoke, any burn damage, or any charring to the fence.

At the conclusion of their investigation, the agency sustained an allegation of dishonesty, finding that Respondent had lied about his actions and the residents' statements during the administrative investigation. The recommended discipline was termination. Respondent appealed the findings all the way through a Writ of Mandate, which was denied. Based on the investigation conducted by the Monrovia Police Department, the appeals hearings, and the ruling by the Los Angeles County Superior Court, there is clear and convincing evidence to show that Respondent was dishonest during the course of an investigation into misconduct.

OUTCOME/IMPOSITION OF DISCIPLINARY ACTION AGAINST PEACE OFFICER CERTIFICATION:

The Peace Officer Standards Accountability Division determined that reasonable grounds existed to seek revocation of the Respondent's certifications in this case. A notice of intent to revoke

Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training
Peace Officer Standards Accountability Division
860 Stillwater Road, Suite 100
West Sacramento, CA 95605
www.post.ca.gov

was served on Respondent on May 14, 2025. Respondent did not file a request for review within the 30-day response period, pursuant to Penal Code section 13510.85 (a)(2), thus resulting in default revocation of Respondent's certification with no further proceedings. On June 20, 2025, the default order was issued and served on Respondent. Respondent Esteban Castaneda's (POST2315312) (POST ID: C33–S55) peace officer certification was revoked on June 20, 2025.