



**Office of the New York State
Attorney General**

**Letitia James
Attorney General**

April 2, 2026

Police Commissioner Jessica Tisch
New York City Police Department
1 Police Plaza
New York, NY 10038

Via Email

Re: Executive Law § 75(5)(b) Referral of Sergeant Steven Cosentino
OAG Matter No. 1-794796027

Dear Commissioner Tisch,

The Office of the New York State Attorney General has reviewed your agency's Executive Law § 75(5)(b) referral of complaints involving Sgt. Steven Cosentino from February 2019 to May 2024. Based on our review we have not made a finding of a pattern or practice of misconduct, excessive use of force, or acts of dishonesty by Sgt. Cosentino with respect to the referred complaints.

However, we note that Sgt. Cosentino engaged in an unlawful strip search on May 2, 2024. On that date, Sgt. Cosentino, Officer Christina Harman and Lieutenant Hasad Baksh stopped an individual and his young child because he failed to pay bus fare. When he placed what officers believed to be narcotics in his pants, Lt. Baksh pulled at his waistband and attempted to place him under arrest, prompting him to bend down and walk away from the officers. Upon taking the individual to the ground, Lt. Baksh repeated, "Where's the weed?" and, "It's inside." Sgt. Cosentino then pulled at the individual's pants and underwear, drawing both down and exposing his genitals while his child and other commuters stood nearby. The officers later placed the individual in a department vehicle where they further searched him and discovered narcotics. Although the officers had a reasonable suspicion that the individual was secreting contraband, the strip search was not "conducted in a reasonable manner" as no emergent circumstances, such as risks to officer safety or the preservation of evidence, justified a public disrobing. *People v. Hall*, 10 N.Y.3d 303, 306-07 & n.8 (2008). Further, we note that in investigating the individual's complaint that he was strip searched, the Internal Affairs Bureau determined that the officers "did not go underneath [the individual's] underwear," though that is clearly captured on body-worn camera footage. Log No. 2024-12766 (BWC X60A3396K at 16:17:13-16:17:29.)

In light of this egregious conduct, we recommend that Sgt. Cosentino be retrained on search and seizure law, particularly regarding strip searches.

We appreciate the cooperation of you and your agency.

Thank you,

Lillian Marquez, Deputy Bureau Chief
Magdalena Azmitia, Senior Investigative Analyst

Law Enforcement Misconduct Investigative Office
Office of the New York State Attorney General