



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

**Letitia James  
Attorney General**

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May 7, 2026

Via E-mail

Police Commissioner Patrick Ryder  
Nassau County Police Department  
1490 Franklin Avenue  
Mineola, NY 11501

Re: Executive Law §75(5)(b) Referral of Police Officer Dean Angell  
OAG Matter No. 1-816464758

Dear Commissioner Ryder,

The Office of the New York State Attorney General has reviewed your agency's Executive Law § 75(5)(b) referral of complaints involving Officer Dean Angell from November 2020 and May 2023. Based on our review, we have not made a finding of a pattern or practice of misconduct, use of excessive force, or acts of dishonesty by Officer Angell with respect to the referred complaints.

However, with respect to citizen complaints #182-2023 and #184-2023, Officer Angell participated in an improper vehicle search and a wrongful detention, respectively, in violation of federal and state law and Nassau County Police Department (NCPD) policy.

We also note several areas in which NCPD's command-level investigations of civilian complaints could be improved, including recording complainant, witness, and officer statements where possible, ensuring that all involved officers are interviewed, and providing greater detail on the officers' observations and actions, rather than relying on conclusory language. Please provide a written response within 90 days as to NCPD's actions in response to these recommendations pursuant to Executive Law § 75(5)(c).

**1. Complaint #182-2023**

This incident involved a traffic stop on the evening of June 16, 2023, during which Officer Angell and Officer Jerome Moore stopped and then searched the Complainant's vehicle. Body-worn camera footage of the incident shows that Officer Moore instructed the Complainant to exit the vehicle, frisked the Complainant's pockets and found no weapons, and then searched the Complainant's vehicle, including bags, compartments, and containers in the front seat, backseat, and trunk. Officer Angell detained the Complainant at the rear of the car while Officer Moore conducted the vehicle search, which lasted at least 15 minutes. In their interviews with

the investigating supervisor, which were summarized in Form 361, Officer Moore and Officer Angell described several reasons for the frisk and the search, including: a radio call a week prior regarding a suspect in a similar vehicle who was believed to have been in possession of a firearm and impersonating a police officer, a small folding knife found in the driver's side door pocket, the odor of gun cleaning solution in the car, the presence of a gun bag and ear protection in the backseat of the Complainant's vehicle (although it is not clear from BWC whether these items could be seen prior to the car search, given other objects covering them in the vehicle's backseat), and a summons the Complainant had received five months prior for possession of a knife. It is not clear how the officers would have been aware of this summons prior to the search because they were not involved in its issuance and had not run the driver's license before beginning the search of his vehicle. According to the 361, Officers Moore and Angell also stated in their interviews that they had received consent from the Complainant to conduct the search, although the BWC footage shows that the purported consent to search the vehicle consisted of the Complainant nodding after Officer Moore stated, "I'm going to take a look now, okay?" After the search was concluded, the Complainant was released without a summons. NCPD's final disposition regarding the complaint was "undetermined" and noted that both officers prematurely deactivated their BWCs.

Without probable cause, officers may conduct a limited search of a stopped vehicle whose occupants have been removed from the vehicle and patted down only "if the totality of the information available supports a reasonable conclusion that there is a substantial likelihood of a weapon within the vehicle that poses an actual and specific threat to the officers' safety."<sup>1</sup> In such a case, the search must be limited to the parts of the vehicle in which there is reason to believe the weapon may be located.<sup>2</sup> Additionally, consent to search, in order to be considered voluntary, must be a product of free and unconstrained choice.<sup>3</sup>

Here, the officers lacked probable cause to search the vehicle. The basis for the search articulated by the officers would at most have provided only a basis for a limited protective search for a weapon in the areas of the vehicle that the Complainant could easily access upon returning to the driver's seat and in which there was a basis to believe a weapon could be located. The vehicle search, which was exhaustive, lasted at least 15 minutes, and involved unzipping and opening bags and containers in the front seat, back seat, and trunk of the car, went far beyond the scope of such a limited protective search. In addition, Officer Moore's statement informing the Complainant that he was going to search the car was not posed in such a way that the Complainant would reasonably have believed he had a right to refuse, and as such there was no voluntary consent.

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<sup>1</sup> *People v. Scott*, 216 AD3d 552, 553 [1st Dept 2023].

<sup>2</sup> *People v. Jones*, 39 A.D.3d 1169, 1172 (4th Dept. 2007) (police were only justified in "conducting a limited search of those parts of the vehicle in which they had observed defendant's furtive movements," but not the entirety of the car)

<sup>3</sup> *People v. Gonzalez*, 39 N.Y.2d 122, 383 N.Y.S.2d 215, 347 N.E.2d 575 (1976)

Officer Moore's search of the Complainant's vehicle, including its trunk, extended beyond constitutional limits, and Officer Angell participated in the wrongful search by detaining the Complainant while it was conducted.

## 2. Complaint #184-2023

Incident 2 involves a traffic stop on the evening of June 17, 2023, in which Officer Angell and Officer Moore stopped the Complainants' vehicle in a hotel parking lot following an alleged traffic infraction. The Complainants (the driver and one passenger) parked their car in the parking lot, at which point Officers Angell and Moore parked their vehicle behind the Complainants' car. The Complainants exited their car and questioned why they were being stopped. Officer Angell and Officer Moore told the Complainants that they were free to leave, but their vehicle was parked behind the Complainants' car, impeding its access out of the parking spot. Additionally, Officer Moore instructed Complainant 1 to get back in her car at the outset of the interaction and at later points in the interaction requested identification from Complainant 2 and told Complainant 2, who had exited his car, that he could not re-enter the vehicle. Ultimately, Officer Angell and Officer Moore did not move their vehicle from behind the Complainants' car until a supervisor arrived at least 24 minutes later.

The test of whether a seizure has occurred is based on whether a reasonable person would have believed, under the circumstances, that the officer's conduct was a significant limitation on their freedom, and may be based on several factors, including whether the individual was prevented from moving and the issuance of verbal commands.<sup>4</sup> Given that Officer Angell and Officer Moore's vehicle blocked the Complainants' vehicles' path of exit, that Officer Moore requested identification from Complainant 2 and restricted his access to the car, and that Officer Moore instructed Complainant 1 to get back in her car, it was reasonable for the Complainants to believe that they were not free to leave the location in their car. In addition, the stop was unnecessarily prolonged, especially given that officers did not issue any summons or appear to have conducted any investigation into the alleged VTL violation.

## 3. Documentation of command-level investigations

Based on our review of the referred complaints, there are several areas in which NCPD's command-level investigations could be improved. First, in each case file we reviewed, the investigators did not record their interviews with complainants, witnesses, or involved officers (Complaints #338-2020, #93-2021, #365-2021, #420-2021, #325-2022, #182-2023, #184-2023, and #203-2023). Instead, any such statements were summarized in the Form 361 by the investigating supervisor. Preserving such recordings would provide more clarity regarding the investigation's conclusions and avoid interpretive errors in recounting statements, especially in cases involving allegations of improper stops and searches or other conduct that implicates constitutional protections.

Second, in several cases, not all officers were interviewed regarding their involvement in these incidents. In particular, in Complaints #93-2021 and #365-2021 included in Officer

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<sup>4</sup> *People v. Bora*, 83 N.Y.2d 531, 611 N.Y.S.2d 796, 634 N.E.2d 168 (1994)

Angell's referral, the investigating supervisor declined to interview Officer Angell's partner before reaching a disposition regarding the alleged misconduct.

Third, in at least two cases, the investigative summaries in the Form 361 lacked detail regarding officers' observations and relied on conclusory language in the investigating supervisors' summary in Form 361. For example, in Complaint #93-2021, the investigating supervisor cited "furtive movements" as the officers' justification for searching the Complainant's vehicle, but did not provide specific information regarding the nature of those movements. In Complaint #365-2021, the summary of Officer Angell's interview included no specific information regarding the Complainant's actions, the officers' actions, or the factors that raised the officers' suspicions that the Complainant had committed a crime. A more detailed account of these incidents would provide greater clarity regarding the justification of the officers' actions, especially in the absence of video evidence.

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In light of the findings detailed above, we recommend the following remedial actions:

To address the improper searches, we recommend retraining on legal principles and department policy regarding searches and seizure for Officer Angell.<sup>5</sup>

In addition, to improve NCPD's command level investigations, we recommend three changes to department policy and procedure. **First**, interviews conducted for command level investigations should be recorded in audio form, including interviews of complainants, witnesses, and officers, to avoid interpretative errors in recounting statements.<sup>6</sup> **Second**, in accordance with department policy, command level investigations should include interviewing or otherwise obtaining firsthand testimony from all individuals involved in an incident, including officers, complainants, and witnesses, regardless of whether their account is already documented in a case report. **Third**, investigating supervisors should, in their reports, provide greater detail regarding officers' observations and actions, and not rely on conclusory language such as "furtive movements," including by seeking further clarification from officers at the interview stage as required.

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<sup>5</sup> Our office previously recommended that Officer Moore receive retraining on the parameters for vehicle searches in our July 22, 2024 letter closing Officer Moore's 75(5)(b) referral. NCPD noted, in its November 19, 2014 response, that Officer Moore had received retraining on the laws governing vehicle searches during traffic stops.

<sup>6</sup> The US Department of Justice Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, in their Standards and Guidelines for Internal Affairs, further recommend audio recording of all telephone interviews, and provides guidelines for interview recording.

<https://portal.cops.usdoj.gov/resourcecenter/content.ashx/cops-p164-pub.pdf>

Pursuant to Executive Law § 75(5)(c), please notify the OAG within 90 days of any actions your agency has taken in response to our recommendations.

Thank you,

Tyler Nims  
Chief, Law Enforcement Misconduct Investigative Office