

**PINELLAS COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE  
PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS BUREAU  
INTER-OFFICE MEMORANDUM**

**DATE:** MARCH 2, 2022

**TO:** DISTRIBUTION

**FROM:** CAPTAIN DEANNA CAREY   
Professional Standards Bureau

**SUBJECT:** SHERIFF'S FINDING

Per Sheriff Gualtieri, Demtri Ahart, #60338, will receive the following as a result of AI-21-013:

1. A forty (40) hours Suspension, reduced by Education Based Discipline, is amended to an eight (8) hours Suspension to be served on:

March 6, 2022 (8 hours).

Due to the nature of the above listed disciplinary action, Education Based Discipline is rendered in accordance with General Order 10-2(a).

**DISTRIBUTION:**

Sheriff Bob Gualtieri  
Chief Deputy George Steffen  
Assistant Chief Deputy Dave Danzig  
Assistant Chief Deputy Paul Halle  
Colonel Paul Carey  
Major Adrian Arnold  
Major Dennis Garvey  
Major Dennis Komar  
Major Jennifer Love  
Director Jennifer Crockett  
Director Nancy Duggan  
Director Susan Krause  
Director Jason Malpass  
Shannon Lockheart, General Counsel  
Payroll  
Purchasing-Uniform Supply  
Deputy Demitri Ahart

DC/blb

**PINELLAS COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE  
INTER-OFFICE MEMORANDUM**

**DATE:** FEBRUARY 24, 2022  
**TO:** DEPUTY DEMITRI AHART, #60338  
**FROM:** SHERIFF BOB GUALTIERI  
**SUBJECT:** CHARGES RE: AI-21-013

An investigation has been conducted by the Administrative Investigation Division, Professional Standards Bureau, of the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office. As a result of this investigation, the Administrative Review Board has determined you committed the following violation:

On, but not limited to, August 14, 2021, while on duty in Pinellas County, Florida, you violated the Pinellas County Sheriff's Civil Service Act Laws of Florida, 89-404 as amended by Laws of Florida 08-285, Section 6, Subsection 4, by violating the provisions of law or the rules, regulations, and operating procedures of the Office of the Sheriff.

1. You violated Pinellas County Sheriff's Office General Order 3-1.1, Rule and Regulation 5.4, Duties and Responsibilities.

Synopsis: You engaged in the pursuit of a vehicle that violated Pinellas County Sheriff's Office policy.

While on-duty and dispatched to a warrant service/attempt, you observed a vehicle you believed to be occupied by the wanted subject in your call. You and other deputies attempted a traffic stop on the vehicle by boxing it in as it was stopped at the Sunoco located at 5790 34<sup>th</sup> Street N, Saint Petersburg. The vehicle was able to reverse and then accelerate away from you, exiting the Sunoco parking lot. The vehicle began traveling southbound on 34<sup>th</sup> Street N with you following with your emergency equipment activated. The two deputies who attempted the traffic stop with you did not engage in the high speed pursuit and advised you via the radio to turn off your emergency equipment and distance yourself from the vehicle.

As you and the vehicle approached 34<sup>th</sup> Street N and 24<sup>th</sup> Avenue N, your emergency lights and siren were activated. Your supervisor told you to "back off" via the radio and when asked if your siren was activated, you immediately turned your siren off and advised no. You continued following the vehicle with only your emergency lights activated.

The driver of the vehicle took further evasive action by traveling southbound in the northbound lanes of 34<sup>th</sup> Street N and failed to stop for the red light at 22<sup>nd</sup> Avenue N, almost striking another vehicle. You followed behind the vehicle, also traveling the wrong direction in the northbound lanes to get around traffic and through the intersection.

The vehicle continued to flee from you as it turned east onto 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue N. You and the vehicle failed to stop at multiple stop signs while traveling through a residential neighborhood, with only your emergency lights activated. When your supervisor attempted to verify over the radio that your emergency lights were off, you immediately turned them off and replied affirmatively. A second supervisor advised you via the radio to give the vehicle "plenty of room" to which you responded, "Copy that, sir"; however, you continued to follow the vehicle at a close distance.

As the vehicle fled northbound on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr Street N, you followed the vehicle into the wrong lanes of travel in an attempt to catch up to the vehicle. The vehicle failed to stop at the red light at the intersection of 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue N and collided with another vehicle. After the crash, the vehicle continued to flee and you continued to pursue the vehicle until you were told by supervision to terminate.

During your Administrative Interview, you testified the only charges you had on the driver were fleeing and eluding and believed the passenger of the vehicle had warrants for his arrest. You acknowledged a pursuit of this vehicle for the aforementioned charges was not in compliance with policy. You testified you considered the vehicle's driving to be "extremely dangerous" and acknowledged it was because you were behind it. You testified you believed the vehicle crash occurred as a result of you pursuing the vehicle. You stated you did not have a plan if the vehicle stopped, or the occupants ran from the vehicle, and you knew no other deputies were with you at that point. You also testified, "After all this, I realized that it just wasn't worth it. It wasn't safe enough."

During your Administrative Review Board, you admitted to violating policy and stated, "I was locked in on the person and I didn't register anything that came through the radio."

You admitted to this violation.

Disciplinary Points and Recommended Discipline Range:

You were found to be in violation of one (1) Level Five Rules and Regulations violation totaling fifty (50) points. These points, which were affected by no modified points from previous discipline, resulted in fifty (50) progressive discipline points. At this point level, the recommended discipline range is from five (5) days Suspension to Termination.

Disciplinary action shall be consistent with progressive discipline, for cause in accordance with the provisions of the Pinellas County Civil Service Act.

  
MAJOR DENNIS KOMAR  
PATROL OPERATIONS BUREAU  
FOR BOB GUALTIERI, SHERIFF

I have received a copy:

Date 3/2/22

Time 1110

*Vern Aske*

SIGNATURE

BG:SLT:blb