

P-File



Mike A. Hagar
Secretary

State of Arkansas
Governor Sarah Huckabee Sanders



Mike A. Hagar
Director

ARKANSAS STATE POLICE

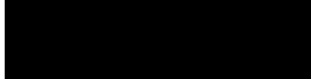
1 State Police Plaza Drive Little Rock, Arkansas 72209-4822 www.asp.arkansas.gov

"SERVING WITH PRIDE AND DISTINCTION SINCE 1935"

January 8, 2025

ARKANSAS
STATE POLICE
COMMISSION

Trooper First Class Christian Morphis



Jeff Teague
Chairman
Fayetteville

Re: OPS File No. B24-012
Final Administrative Decision: **Sustained**
Appropriate Discipline: **Termination**

John Allison
Vice-Chairman
Conway

Dear Trooper First Class Morphis:

Jim Hinkle
Secretary
Conway

An investigation was initiated and conducted into allegations of violations of policy alleged to have occurred stemming from your actions as discussed in OPS File No. B24-012.

Ken Reeves
Harrison

The complaint alleges facts that – if found by a preponderance of the evidence to be true – would violate:

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Bella Vista

- **DPS Policy 108 – Rules of Conduct II (A) III (C)**
- **DPS Policy 601 – Documentation III (C)**
- **ASP Policy LE SEC 14 – Prisoners - Transportation of Prisoners**

Mike Akin
Monticello

Steve Edwards
Marianna

As you know, the Arkansas Department of Public Safety (DPS) takes all complaints constituting a violation of DPS and ASP Policy seriously and each one must be thoroughly investigated to determine the veracity of the allegation.

The investigation into this complaint has been completed, the evidence examined, and a determination has been made that you were in violation of DPS Policy 108 – Rules of Conduct II (A) III (C), DPS Policy 601 – Documentation III (C), and ASP Policy LE SEC 14 – Prisoners - Transportation of Prisoners.

Facts:

On December 17, 2023, TFC Christian Morphis stopped and arrested Ms. Amanda Prince for driving on a suspended license. Ms. Prince was transported to the Drew County Jail. While at the jail, TFC Morphis had Ms. Prince step out of the back of his patrol car. In doing so, TFC Morphis observed a baggie in the backseat floorboard. TFC Morphis grabbed a glove from his front passenger seat and retrieved the baggie containing a solid white substance, later identified as cocaine. TFC Morphis charged Ms. Prince with crimes related to the cocaine to include Possession with Intent to Deliver, Tampering with Physical Evidence, and Obstructing Governmental Operations. TFC Morphis contacted Tenth Judicial Drug Task Force (DTF) Agent James Slaughter to transfer the case for prosecution. On December 19, 2023, Ms. Prince had her first appearance in

front of Drew County Circuit Judge Robert Gibson; he set her a commercial bond of \$5,000. Agent Slaughter filed the charges with the prosecutor the same day. TFC Morphis completed and submitted his ASP incident report through his chain of command on December 23, 2023. The report was approved on December 24, 2023. The report noted specific details regarding movement and actions of Ms. Prince to support the charges. These details were also communicated to Agent Slaughter, which was reflected in his case file. Ms. Prince later pled Not Guilty to the charges. The case was set for Jury Trial on September 20, 2024. Daniel Wigley was the Deputy Prosecutor (DPA) trying the case. Ms. Prince was represented by Public Defender Tim Leonard. The trial was 1-Day with an end result of Not Guilty on behalf of Ms. Prince. DPA Daniel Wigley advised the case was lost in court due to the jurors not being able to see on the video where Ms. Prince could have discarded the narcotics.

OPS File No. B24-012

DPS Policy 108 – Rules of Conduct II (A) III (C)

II. Definitions

- A. "Acceptable Behavior" means acting in a courteous, competent, fair, impartial, reasonable, professional, and ethical manner, respecting the rights of others, and adhering to the core values and policies established by the Department.

III. Policy

- C. Employees are expected to comply with all standards of "Acceptable Behavior" and conduct themselves in a manner that contributes to the positive reputation of the Department and its Divisions.

TFC Morphis admitted to violating this policy stating, "in that instance, yes, wholeheartedly." The Command Staff Review Board determined that TFC Morphis violated this policy by displaying an unprofessional attitude toward the complainant from the initiation of a traffic stop and subsequent arrest for driving on a suspended driver's license, then charging her with a significant felony offense for drugs he located in his car after removing her, and writing details in an incident report to support the charge that was not supported by his in-car video. These actions are not acceptable, and do not contribute to the positive reputation of the Department. The Command Staff Review Board unanimously sustained this policy violation.

DPS Policy 601 – Documentation III (C)

III. Policy

- C. Documentation submitted by employees should be truthful, accurate, complete, legible, and submitted on time. Employees will not knowingly enter, or cause to be entered, any inaccurate, false, untrue, or improper information or misrepresentations on any report, or on any other document that relates to Department or Division business.

TFC Morphis admitted he violated this policy stating, "without being able to tell you a specific time that I felt as though she did those things in that video, yes." The Command Staff Review Board determined that TFC Morphis violated this policy by making inaccurate statements in his incident report to support charging the complainant with a significant felony charge for a substantial amount of crack cocaine he located in his rear floorboard after removing the complainant from his backseat at the jail. TFC Morphis wrote in his report he had just vacuumed the immediate area where she had been seated, she had been moving very

erratically for a short period of time while in his backseat, and she'd been digging in her waistline shortly before the narcotics were found. Although TFC Morphis wrote in his report he had reviewed his in-car video prior to writing the report, and he stated during Office of Professional Standards and Command Staff Review Board interviews that this review took place on his camera's small screen, he agreed his in-car video only showed the complainant move her head a time or two the entire time she was in his backseat, and it would not be considered "moving very erratically." He further agreed there was no evidence she ever dug in her waistline. TFC Morphis stated he'd been completely convinced the drugs came from her and allowed a false narrative to be created in his mind, which influenced his report. The statements of her making erratic movements and digging in her waistline are not accurate, misrepresent the circumstances, and therefore violate the Documentation policy. The Command Staff Review Board unanimously sustained this policy violation.

ASP Policy LE SEC 14 – Prisoners

Transportation of Prisoners: Prior to being placed in the patrol vehicle and transported, prisoners should be thoroughly searched.

TFC Morphis admitted he violated this policy stating, "yes ma'am." TFC Morphis violated this policy by arresting the complainant for driving on a suspended license, and not conducting any type of search of her prior to placing her in his patrol vehicle and transporting her to jail. This violates the transportation of prisoners policy. The Command Staff Review Board unanimously sustained this policy violation.

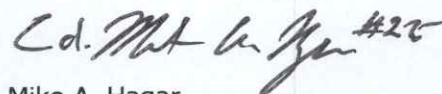
CONCLUSION

Under A.C.A. § 12-8-104(f)(1), I am charged with the responsibility of executing supervision and control for the purposes of discipline and proper management of this department. In determining the appropriate disciplinary action in this matter, I considered the nature and number of your violations of policy in this incident.

As a result of the determination that the evidence presented was sufficient by a preponderance of the evidence to support a finding of the stated violations of policy, I have determined that the appropriate disciplinary action for these violations is immediate termination of your employment with the Arkansas State Police.

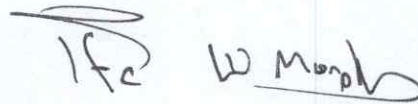
You have the right to appeal your termination to the Arkansas State Police Commission in accordance with A.C.A. § 12-8-204 and DPS Policy No. 112 – Disciplinary Matters.

Sincerely,



Mike A. Hagar
Colonel

cc: Major Ron Casey
Captain Rick Neill
Human Resources
Administrative Services
Fiscal
OPS File No. B24-012
25-006



1/8/25