

**STATE OF RHODE ISLAND
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL**

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Attorney General*



**INVESTIGATIVE REPORT
October 7, 2025**

Incident Type:	Officer-Involved Shooting
Incident Location:	Reservoir Avenue, Providence
Incident Date:	June 16, 2024
Police Departments:	Cranston Police Department
Officers Involved:	Cranston Police Officer Kayleigh Cooper

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The Office of Attorney General has concluded its review of the June 16, 2024 officer involved shooting that occurred on Reservoir Avenue in Providence. Cranston Police officer Kayleigh Cooper fired her service weapon at a vehicle used by two shoplifting suspects to flee the scene. The shot struck the vehicle, but the suspects, Michael Campagna, the driver of the vehicle, and passenger, Megan O'Brien, both born in 1990 and from Massachusetts, were uninjured. The investigation of this incident was conducted pursuant to the Attorney General's Protocol for the Review of Incidents Involving the Use of Deadly Force, Excessive Force, and Custodial Deaths ("The Attorney General Protocol"), together with the Rhode Island State Police and Cranston Police. Based on this review, we conclude that the actions of the police officer were legally justified.

A thorough account of the investigation may be found in the Rhode Island State Police and Cranston Police Investigative Reports and attachments. As detailed in those reports, on June 16, 2024 at 5:16 p.m., Cranston Police received a call for shoplifting at Lululemon located at 65 Hillside Road, Cranston (Garden City Mall). The caller indicated that two suspects were fleeing in a gray Kia Forte heading north towards the City of Providence.

Cranston Police officer Kayleigh Cooper was monitoring her police radio and heard the dispatch call for the Lululemon larceny. She was travelling in the northbound lanes of Reservoir Avenue on the Providence/Cranston border when she saw the suspect vehicle. The Kia was stopped at a traffic light leading to the entrance of Route 10 North.

Officer Cooper parked her marked cruiser in the southbound lane of Reservoir Avenue. She exited her cruiser and approached the Kia from the rear of the driver's side of the vehicle. Cooper was yelling commands for the driver to "shut the car off". When the driver did not respond, Cooper opened the vehicle's door and repeatedly ordered the driver at gun point to exit the vehicle and shut off the car. The driver of the Kia, Michael Campagna, did not comply. He told Officer Cooper to "get away from my car" as he put the car in drive and accelerated towards the intersection. As he did so, Cooper was pulled along with the vehicle and felt pressure on her foot. She immediately reacted by yelling "You ran me over!"

Campagna closed his door as he sped away with Officer Cooper trailing him on foot. Just a few steps into her pursuit, Cooper fired one round from her firearm hitting the rear door on the driver's side of the Kia. The Kia drove onto Route 10 North with Officer Cooper following but after a brief pursuit, Cooper lost sight of the Kia and returned to the Cranston Police station.

This Report focuses only on the facts most pertinent to our conclusion that the force used by Officer Cooper was objectively reasonable under the circumstances as Officer Cooper reasonably perceived them.

EVIDENCE REVIEWED

1. Rhode Island State Police Officer Involved Shooting Investigation Report (34 pages)
2. Rhode Island State Police Incident Reports (13 pages)
3. Cranston Police Department Incident Report (3 pages)
4. Rhode Island State Police Warrant Report for Michael Campagna (3 pages)
5. Rhode Island State Police Arrest Report for Michael Campagna (8 pages)
6. Massachusetts State Police Arrest Report for Michael Campagna (14 pages)
7. Rhode Island State Police Warrant Report for Megan O'Brien (3 pages)
8. Rhode Island State Police Arrest Report for Megan O'Brien (8 pages)
9. Massachusetts State Police Arrest Report for Megan O'Brien (15 pages)
10. Narrative for Det. James Hudson, Rhode Island State Police (5 pages)
11. Narrative for Sgt. Wayne DeCosta, Cranston Police Department (1 page)
12. Narrative/Supplemental for Sgt. Jeffrey Chapman, Cranston Police Department (4 pages)
13. Narrative/Supplemental for Analyst Ryan Palmer, Cranston Police Department (3 pages)
14. Narrative/Supplemental for Det. Derik Braga, Cranston Police Department (5 pages)
15. Narrative for Lt. Ryan Shore, Cranston Police Department (1 page)
16. Narrative for Off. James Jaworski, Cranston Police Department (2 pages)
17. Narrative for Off. Austin Smith, Cranston Police Department (1 page)
18. Narrative for Off. Michael Schiappa, Cranston Police Department (1 page)
19. Narrative for Off. Peter Johnston, Jr., Cranston Police Department (1 page)
20. Narrative for Off. Shane Lynch, Cranston Police Department (1 page)
21. Narrative for Insp. Dyanna Detroia, Cranston Police Department (1 page)
22. Narrative for Insp. Mitchel Escobar, Cranston Police Department (1 page)
23. Providence Fire Department Report (4 pages)
24. Rhode Island State Police Forensic Services Unit (FSU) Report (11 pages)
25. Rhode Island State Police FSU Scene/Evidence Photographs (301 images)
26. Witness Statement of Off. Kayleigh Cooper, Cranston Police Department – audio and transcript (45 pages)
27. Witness Statement of Civilian 2 ([REDACTED]) – audio and transcript (15 pages)
28. Witness Statement of Civilian 3 ([REDACTED]) – audio and transcript (8 pages)
29. Witness Statement of Civilians 4 and 5 ([REDACTED]) – audio and transcript (23 pages)
30. Handwritten Witness Statement of Civilian 6 ([REDACTED]) (1 page)
31. Handwritten Witness Statement of Civilian 4 ([REDACTED]) (1 page)
32. Search Warrant/Return for Kia Forte (16 pages)
33. Search Warrant for Citizen's Bank ATM Surveillance Camera (8 pages)
34. Cranston Police Department Dispatch Log for Incident (4 pages)
35. Cranston Police Department Radio Recordings (14 recordings)
36. Cranston Police Department Use of Force Policy (10 pages)
37. Firearms Training Paperwork for Off. Kayleigh Cooper (2 pages)
38. Cranston Police Department Employee Injury Report/Health Care Waiver for Off. Kayleigh Cooper (14 pages)
39. Criminal Background/Driver's License Information for Michael Campagna (43 pages)
40. Criminal Background/Driver's License Information for Megan O'Brien (24 pages)
41. Body-worn Camera for Off. Kayleigh Cooper (2 recordings)
42. Body-worn Camera for Off. Shane Lynch (1 recording)
43. Citizen's Bank ATM Surveillance Footage (1 recording)
44. America's Food Basket Surveillance Footage (2 recordings)

SUMMARY OF THE FACTS

On June 16, 2024, at approximately 5:00 p.m., Michael Campagna and Megan O'Brien entered the Lululemon Store at Garden City Mall in Cranston. They remained in the store for less than ten minutes before Campagna exited with a number of items without paying. A few minutes later, Ms. O'Brien also exited the store with multiple stolen items as well. The store alarms sounded as Ms. O'Brien hurried outside into the waiting car driven by Mr. Campagna and they sped away. Lululemon determined that the two suspects got away with nearly \$1400 in stolen merchandise.

Civilian 1 watched all this unfold from inside the store. When O'Brien exited, Civilian 1 went outside and saw her get into a Kia sedan with a man now identified as Campagna behind the wheel. He quickly called Cranston Police and notified them of the shoplifting incident. He relayed to the dispatcher the make of the car, direction of travel and license plate number.

Kayleigh Cooper, a uniformed patrolwoman and three-year veteran of Cranston Police, was in the area and heard the dispatch. Within three minutes of the dispatch broadcast and travelling with her cruiser's lights and sirens activated, she located the vehicle at the intersection of Reservoir Avenue and the entry to Route 10 north. The grey Kia was stopped at the traffic light in the left hand turning lane and was boxed in on all four sides. There were two cars in front of it in the left turn lane, one car to the right side, one car behind it and on the left of the Kia there was a row of fixed plastic barriers separating northbound travel from southbound travel on Reservoir.

Cooper parked her police cruiser with the emergency lights on in the oncoming southbound lane of Reservoir Avenue and approached the Kia. As she approached the suspect vehicle from the rear and to the left, she called out commands to the driver to, "Shut the car off. Shut the car off."¹ Cooper could see the two occupants of the vehicle look back in her direction. When the driver did not comply with her commands, Cooper opened the driver's side door with her left hand and held her service weapon in her right hand. The BWC shows the car's gear shift in the park position as Campagna asked "What are you doing? What is this about?" Cooper informed him that it's about "the shoplifting" as she repeatedly told him to get out of the car. She then reached for his arm in an effort to direct him out of the car. Campagna recoiled and evaded her reach. During this interaction, O'Brien calmly advised Campagna to "Drive...drive...drive". Officer Cooper's BWC shows northbound traffic moving around the passenger side of the Kia at this point. Campagna reached for the center console and shifted the car into drive as he told Cooper to "get away from my car!"

Cooper remained at the driver's side door as the Kia moved slowly forward with the driver's side door open. Her drawn firearm is clearly visible on the BWC and pointed at Campagna through the open door. Cooper yelled out, "you ran me over" as the car passed her and she took a step back. Campagna reached to close the door and drove forward. The officer then took a few steps towards the traffic light in pursuit of the suspects with her firearm pointed at the vehicle. As the Kia approached the intersection, Cooper fired one round from her firearm at the suspect vehicle. The impact of the shot is visible on her BWC as the projectile made an imprint on the rear driver's side door. From the time Officer Cooper opened the door of the Kia to the time she fired her weapon, just thirteen seconds elapsed.

The gunfire did not induce Campagna to pull over. He sped through the intersection and onto Route 10 North. Cooper immediately radioed to dispatch "shots fired" and she hurried back to her cruiser. As she maneuvered her vehicle onto Route 10, she again radioed to dispatch

¹ Officer Cooper activated her body-worn camera (BWC) during the pursuit of the Kia and it was operational during the entire incident.

that “he tried to run me over...shot at his car that went on the highway...”. After a short pursuit, Officer Cooper lost sight of the Kia and stopped at Cranston Police Headquarters before returning to the scene of the confrontation.

Cooper was eventually transported to Kent Hospital to get evaluated. She was diagnosed with a “contusion” (bruise) to her left foot which showed swelling and some internal bleeding. Her footwear was seized and photographed by investigators. In her interview with investigators Cooper described “getting moved along, like pushed along with the [Kia]”² and a witness at the intersection said she saw the officer “getting dragged”³ before she fired her weapon. Cooper described feeling “pressure...[and] I just felt a pain on my left foot”⁴ before she freed herself from the vehicle. She was unsure which tire (front or back) ran her over. RISP FSU photos of Cooper’s left shoe she wore on that day reveal marks on the tip.

The following day police located and recovered the Kia in Providence. On June 18th, Michael Campagna and Megan O’Brien were arrested in South Boston by Massachusetts State Police on various Rhode Island charges including shoplifting and assault with a dangerous weapon stemming from the June 16 incidents at Lululemon and Reservoir Avenue.

LEGAL ANALYSIS

Applicable Law

When considering a police officer’s actions which involve the use of force in his/her capacity as a peace officer a two-prong analysis is required. First, it must be determined if the officer’s use of force in arresting or detaining the suspect was necessary and reasonable. If an officer’s conduct is found to be necessary and reasonable, then the inquiry ends, and no criminal charges will stem from the incident. If, however, it is determined that the use of force was not necessary and not reasonable then an inquiry must be made as to whether the use of force meets the elements of an applicable criminal statute, in this case Felony Assault under R.I. Gen. Laws § 11-5-2.

As to the first prong of the analysis, the Fourth Amendment protects “[t]he right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures.” A “seizure” of a “person,” can take the form of “physical force” or a “show of authority” that “in some way restrain[s] the liberty” of the person. Terry v. Ohio, 392 U.S. 1, 19 n16 (1968). An arrest or seizure of a person carries with it the right of police officers to use some degree of force. Graham v. Connor, 490 U.S. 386, 396 (1989). “All claims that law enforcement officers have used excessive force – deadly or not – in the course of an arrest ... or other ‘seizure’ of a free citizen should be analyzed under the Fourth Amendment and its ‘reasonableness’ standard....” Graham, 490 U.S. at 395; Tennessee v. Garner, 471 U.S. 1 (1985).

The Fourth Amendment instructs that the *degree* of force law enforcement officers are permitted to use must be “objectively reasonable” under the totality of circumstances. Id. at 8-9. Relevant facts include “the severity of the crime at issue, whether the suspect poses an immediate threat to the safety of the officers or others, and whether he is actively resisting or attempting to evade arrest by flight.” Graham, 490 U.S. at 396. The reasonableness of an officer’s use of force “must be judged from the perspective of a reasonable officer on the scene,

² Cooper stmt., pg. 9.

³ Civilian 4 stmt., pg. 5.

⁴ Cooper stmt., pg. 9.

rather than with the 20/20 vision of hindsight.” Graham, 490 U.S. at 396. The Supreme Court has held that the determination of reasonableness must allow “for the fact that police officers are often forced to make split-second judgements – in circumstances that are tense, uncertain, and rapidly evolving – about the amount of force that is necessary in a particular situation.” Graham, 490 U.S. at 396-97. Critically, the reasonableness inquiry is an objective, not a subjective, one. The “question is whether the officers’ actions are “objectively reasonable” in light of the facts and circumstances confronting them, without regard to their underlying intent or motivation.” Id. (emphasis added).

Applying these principles, Rhode Island law provides that “A police officer may use force dangerous to human life to make a lawful arrest for committing or attempting to commit a felony, whenever he or she reasonably believes that force dangerous to human life is necessary to effect the arrest and that the person to be arrested is aware that a peace officer is attempting to arrest him or her.” R.I. Gen. Laws § 12-7-9. The Use of Force Policies of the Cranston Police Department (General Order 310.01) apply the legal principles set forth above. They provide that an officer is authorized to use lethal force to:

1. Protect him/herself, another officer, or other person(s) when the officer has an objectively reasonable belief that an imminent threat of death or serious bodily injury exists to himself/herself, another officer, or other person(s).
2. To prevent the escape of a fleeing subject when the officer has probable cause to believe that the person has committed, or intends to commit, a felony involving serious bodily injury or death, and the officer reasonably believes that there is an imminent risk of serious bodily injury or death to the officer or another if the subject is not immediately apprehended. (Cranston PD General Order 310.01)

When considering the second prong of the analysis, the elements needed to support a charge of felony assault, in relevant part, are that the officer committed an assault and that he/she did so with a dangerous weapon.⁵ An assault is defined as an unlawful attempt or offer, with force or violence, to do a corporal hurt to another, whether from malice or wantonness. State v. McLaughlin, 621 A.2d 170 (R.I.1980). Malice means “wrongful intention...ill will or wickedness of the heart.” State v. Lomba, 37 A.3d 615, 620 (R.I.2012) quoting Black’s Law Dictionary 1042 (9th ed.2009). Wantonness in the context of assault is defined as recklessness in Rhode Island. United States v. Sabetta, 221 F.Supp.3d 210, 219 (D.R.I.2016).

Analysis

In applying the facts as determined by the joint investigation to the two pronged analysis set out above, we find the use of force by Cranston Police Officer Kayleigh Cooper to be objectively reasonable under the circumstances. However, even assuming for the sake of argument that the officer’s use of force was objectively unreasonable, her actions do not meet the legal elements of an assault particularly the element of criminal intent.

Officer Cooper justified her actions in a recorded interview⁶ with members of the Rhode Island State Police, the Attorney General’s office and the Cranston Police Department on June 18, 2024. During this interview, Cooper denied that her weapons discharge was accidental and stated that she discharged her weapon because she was in fear that the vehicle was going to hit

⁵ Off. Cooper was carrying a loaded, operable firearm which meets the definition of a dangerous weapon.

⁶ Off. Cooper waived her rights under Garrity v. New Jersey, 385 U.S. 493 (1967). She voluntarily sat for the above-mentioned interview with the investigators with her counsel present.

her. The officer perceived her ability to move away from the vehicle as limited based on an obstruction behind her and she believed that the operator of the vehicle was “in the process of turning around to either hit me into...oncoming traffic...or they were going to hit me.”⁷

Our review of the body-worn camera footage demonstrates that Officer Cooper likely misjudged the situation on both counts. First, while the curb and barriers she is referring to are certainly an impediment to her movement, they are not something that would prevent her from backing away from the car. As shown in the photos taken by investigators, the curb is just a few inches high, and the plastic pliable barriers are spaced a few feet apart from one another. With some mild exertion and dexterity, Officer Cooper could have navigated her way around the obstructions or taken a few steps backwards towards her vehicle and freed herself from the situation at the open door.

Second, just before Officer Cooper discharged her weapon, the vehicle slowly began to pull forward. Immediately after, she exclaimed “You ran me over!” and her body-worn camera shows the car driving away from her. At this point, Officer Cooper was clearly free of the “pull” of the vehicle. When she fired the single shot from her firearm, her body-worn camera showed that she was moving *towards* the vehicle under her own power as it proceeded into the intersection. Thus, it appears that Officer Cooper misjudged the actual danger to her at that moment.

But our analysis does not end there. The Supreme Court has long recognized that an officer’s actions may be predicated upon an erroneous perception, but that the error does not necessarily mean the officer used an unreasonable amount of force. “If an officer reasonably, but mistakenly, believed that a suspect was likely to fight back, for instance, the officer would be justified in using more force than in fact was needed.”⁸ Saucier v. Katz, 533 U.S. 194, 205 (2001). The critical determinant is, therefore, was the officer’s mistaken impression reasonable. Here the evidence indicates that it was.

In the moments immediately before Officer Cooper’s use of force, she was clearly in a very dangerous situation due to the actions of Campagna and O’Brien. Cooper stood in the well of the driver’s side door inches from the car. Cooper’s orders to shut off the engine and exit the car were met with a bizarre reaction. Campagna acted like he did not recognize the armed, uniformed police officer ordering him out of the vehicle as he stated, “What are you doing? Get away from my car.” His passenger, meanwhile, encouraged him to drive away. Their behavior signaled to Officer Cooper that they had no intention of complying with her demands thus making them very dangerous to the officer’s safety.⁹ As the Kia rolled forward slowly, Cooper was still standing between the driver’s side door and the vehicle and it appears that at that moment the car may have momentarily pulled her and went over her foot, before she stepped back. Independent witnesses at the scene likewise perceived her as being “dragged” by the

⁷ Cooper stmt., pg. 10.

⁸ Also, the seminal Fourth Amendment police officer use of force case of Graham v. Connor quoted above involved an arrest by Officer Connor of Mr. Graham under the mistaken belief that Graham had just robbed a convenience store. The truth was that Mr. Graham was diabetic and needed some orange juice to counteract an “insulin reaction.” Graham entered a convenience store but quickly exited because the line was too long for him to wait in his medical condition. Graham’s actions aroused the suspicions of Officer Connor who stopped Graham’s car which led to his arrest. Graham v. Connor, 490 U.S. 388-89.

⁹ “[A]ctions the officer took during the stop, such as giving warnings” are a relevant consideration when deciding if an officer’s use of force was reasonable as is “the stopped person’s conduct...because it indicates the nature and level of threat he poses...” Barnes v. Felix, 145 S.Ct. 1353, 1358 (2025).

vehicle.¹⁰ While Cooper could not be certain how she was being “dragged” by the Kia, she stated during her interview that a piece of equipment on her belt or vest such as a taser may have been caught on the vehicle and therefore caused her to be pulled along with the moving car.¹¹

Given her proximity to a moving vehicle in the middle of a busy road, it is reasonable for Officer Cooper to be startled and even terrified of being seriously harmed by Campagna’s operation of the Kia. Approximately two seconds after the vehicle pulled away from her, she fired one round from her firearm. While the body-worn camera clearly shows the Kia pulling away from her at that point, due to what had happened to her seconds before, her assessment of the danger to her, though mistaken, was still objectively reasonable.¹²

Cooper’s mistake may have been further compounded by the fact that, when she first saw the Kia, it was boxed in by other vehicles. As a result, she reasonably believed that any movement of the vehicle would likely result in bodily harm to her or other motorists. As it happens, by the time she fired her weapon, the traffic light changed, the cars in front of the Kia began moving, and the Kia had a clear lane of travel through the intersection. But Cooper likely did not process these developments – which took place over a matter of one or two seconds—because she was focused on the Kia’s passengers.¹³ She feared that with nowhere to go, Campagna in his desperate condition would reverse or otherwise maneuver the vehicle in her direction to escape.¹⁴ Again, this is an objectively reasonable perception of a dynamic, rapidly unfolding car stop.

The United States Supreme Court recently held that the totality of the circumstances inquiry that we are required to conduct in use of force cases “has no time limit.”¹⁵ “Earlier facts and circumstances may bear on how a reasonable officer would have understood and responded to later ones.”¹⁶ Here Officer Cooper’s entire interaction with Campagna and O’Brien lasted approximately thirteen seconds. In that short period of time, she reasonably determined that these suspects were desperate and were not concerned about their safety or hers. Her reaction to almost being run over by a vehicle appeared instinctive, and, under the circumstances here we do not find it unreasonable. The Fourth Amendment through judicial decisions like Graham gives officers some latitude to navigate these types of dangerous encounters.

Finally, although the offense precipitating the stop was a relatively minor one – shoplifting – Campagna and O’Brien’s reaction to the officer quickly escalated it. The officer did not pull or apply physical force to get Campagna out of the vehicle. She asked him several times to get out of the car without laying a hand on him. And he responded by driving forward, with his door open, as she was standing right next to his vehicle, and, in the process, he ran over her foot. Given this unexpected development applying the remaining Graham factors listed above also indicate that the officer’s actions were reasonable. During the brief interaction, the “severity of the crime” quickly escalated from shoplifting to assault with a dangerous weapon. All of these facts necessitated a higher level of force by the officer in response.

¹⁰ Cooper stmt., pgs. 9, 14 and 16. Civilians 4 and 5 stmt., pgs. 5 and 7. “She was getting dragged...I can’t tell if she was holding onto the car...But I mean [the car] dragged her...a little bit.”

¹¹ Cooper stmt., pg. 14.

¹² “Use of deadly force by police can be justified by a reasonable concern for the safety of [officers or] others in the immediate vicinity of a car that is either being recklessly driven or intentionally used as a weapon.” McGrath v. Tavares, 889 F.Supp.2d 157, 166 (D. Mass. 2012).

¹³ Cooper stmt., pg. 16.

¹⁴ Cooper stmt., pg. 27.

¹⁵ Barnes v. Felix, 145 S.Ct. at 1358.

¹⁶ *Id.*

As to the second prong of the analysis, even assuming *arguendo* that Officer Cooper's response was unreasonable under the Fourth Amendment, a charge of felony assault is still not warranted. As explained above, Officer Cooper was performing her sworn duties as a police officer. Her actions were prompted by her intent to safely make an arrest which quickly morphed into an attempt to protect herself and surrounding motorists. The totality of circumstances here simply does not support a finding that she acted with the requisite *mens rea* for an assault charge.

CONCLUSION

Our review of the investigation conducted by Cranston and Rhode Island State Police Departments concludes that the use of force by Officer Kayleigh Cooper was objectively reasonable and legally justified under the totality of the circumstances. In refusing to heed the officer's commands, Michael Campagna and Megan O'Brien created an extremely dangerous situation and put Officer Cooper in danger of serious injury. With the benefit of hindsight and body-worn camera, it is clear Officer Cooper misperceived the risk to her safety at the exact moment she discharged her firearm, but that does not diminish the fact that a mere second or two earlier she was clearly in an extremely dangerous situation. She was forced to make a split second decision under tremendous strain. Therefore, this Office finds that her use of force was legally justified, and this matter is closed.

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