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GOVERNOR

Lamar A. Davis, COLONEL
DEPUTY SECRETARY

State of Louisiana
Department of Public Safety and Corrections
Public Safety Services

May 16, 2022
4750/0501/MMG/22-23881
HQ-01-670

Lieutenant Gerald Varnado
Troop A

IA-2200014; OLA#076810
VIA PERSONAL DELIVERY

RE: 36 Hour Suspension

Lt. Varnado:

In accordance with State Police Commission Rule 12.8, you are hereby notified that you are suspended from duty without pay and allowances for 36 hours. Your suspension will begin at 1700 hours on Friday, July 15, 2022 and will end at 0500 hours on Monday, July 18, 2022. You shall report back to your assigned duty station at 1700 hours on Wednesday, July 20, 2022. You are suspended for the following reasons:

On February 5, 2022, Trooper Paul Davis intervened in a domestic incident involving Trooper Garrett Yetman and his girlfriend, who will be referred to as Jane Doe, which resulted in Trooper Yetman's arrest. On February 9, 2022, Trooper Davis spoke to Captain Aaron Marcelle about concerns for his safety upon Trooper Yetman's release from jail. During this meeting, Trooper Davis advised Captain Marcelle that on July 23, 2021, at approximately 1800 hours, he called you and advised you of a domestic incident that occurred on July 22, 2021, between Trooper Yetman and Jane Doe, wherein Trooper Yetman allegedly covered Jane Doe's eyes while she was driving and stated he would kill them both, slammed her head into the steering wheel, and threw a cell phone that struck her in the neck. Captain Marcelle had not heard anything about this incident from you. Captain Marcelle notified his chain of command about the incident and an Internal Affairs investigation was ordered to be conducted into your failure to properly report the matter.

On March 16, 2022, during a recorded interview, you advised IA investigator Lt. Arman Douglas that Trooper Davis did report a domestic incident to you in April or May of 2021, to your recollection. You recalled that Trooper Davis called you and reported that his (Davis') girlfriend had received a message from Jane Doe, Trooper Yetman's girlfriend, advising that Doe and Yetman had gotten into an argument while driving down Highway 30 the prior night. You recalled Trooper Davis told you Yetman hit Doe with a phone and covered Doe's eyes while she was

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driving, and that Doe was afraid to go back to Yetman's residence. Trooper Davis advised you that Yetman and Jane Doe did not get along, and he (Davis) was thinking about switching to a different shift from Yetman.

You advised IA investigators that you later asked Trooper Yetman what was going on with him and Jane Doe and he told you that there was nothing to it. Yetman told you that she (Doe) gets drunk, he gets drunk, "she starts some shit," then he "starts some shit," and then "she starts more shit." When you asked Trooper Yetman to explain what happened on Highway 30, Yetman told you that Jane Doe likes to rummage through his phone so he changed the passcodes, which made her mad. Doe was driving and attempted to unlock his phone, so he snatched the phone from her, she snatched it back, at which time the phone struck her in the neck and fell on the floor. She would not stop the vehicle so Yetman could get his phone, so he covered her eyes while she was driving to make her stop the vehicle. Yetman advised that they fought all day long over the phone, but it never got physical, and he denied that he had been drinking. You denied that Trooper Davis ever told you that Trooper Yetman had slammed Jane Doe's head into the steering wheel. You further advised that you instructed Trooper Yetman to stay away from Jane Doe, but you later found out that they went to Hawaii together.

In spite of the fact that the Department has a policy relating to domestic violence¹, you did not do anything further to investigate the incident or Yetman's version of the event, such as obtain a written incident report from Trooper Yetman, a statement from Jane Doe and Trooper Davis' girlfriend, or even notify Captain Marcelle about the incident. You agreed with IA investigators that you should have at least reported the incident up your chain of command to Captain Marcelle.

By failing to report up your chain of command, a domestic incident involving Trooper Yetman and Jane Doe that was reported to you by Trooper Davis on July 23, 2021, you violated Louisiana State Police Policy and Procedure Order No. 901 – Code of Conduct and Ethics, Section 45 – Reporting of Information, which states in pertinent part:

- ...
- ii) A commissioned officer shall promptly report to his superior officer any information which comes to his attention which tends to indicate that an officer or employee of the Department has violated any law, rule, regulation or order.

You failed to take the appropriate action when Trooper Davis reported to you on July 23, 2021, that Trooper Yetman had been involved in a domestic incident with Jane Doe, as detailed above. Your failure to further investigate the incident, or report it up your chain of command for consideration, was in violation of Louisiana State Police Policy and Procedure Order No. 901 – Code of Conduct and Ethics, Section 12 – Unsatisfactory Performance, which states in pertinent part:

¹ DPS Policy 03-01.19 requires reporting of domestic incidents involving DPS employees.

- i) A commissioned officer shall maintain a competency level sufficient to properly perform his duties and assume the responsibilities of his position. Officers shall perform their duties in such a manner as to maintain the highest standards of efficiency. Unsatisfactory performance may be demonstrated by:

...

- d) A failure to take the appropriate action on the occasion of a crime, disorder or matter deserving attention.

Any future violations of this or any nature may result in more severe discipline, up to and including termination.

You have the right to appeal this action to the Louisiana State Police Commission. The time limits and procedure for appealing are contained in Chapter 13 of the State Police Commission Rules. A copy of Chapter 13 can be obtained from the State Police Commission. Their current mailing address is P.O. Box 66555, Baton Rouge, LA 70896-6555. Their current telephone number is (225) 925-7057 and their fax number is (225) 925-7058.

Your attention is directed to Louisiana State Police Policy and Procedure Order No. 201.5.iv, which states:

- iv) No officer shall work escorts, paid off-duty details, or overtime in any pay period wherein he has taken leave without pay, been suspended without pay, placed on forced or administrative leave, or worked at a reduction in pay as a result of a disciplinary action unless authorized by the appointing authority.

Sincerely,



Colonel Lamar Davis
Superintendent, Louisiana State Police

- c: Lt. Col. Chavez Cammon
Major John Riles
Captain Aaron Marcelle
Internal Affairs
Office of Legal Affairs
Human Resources

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