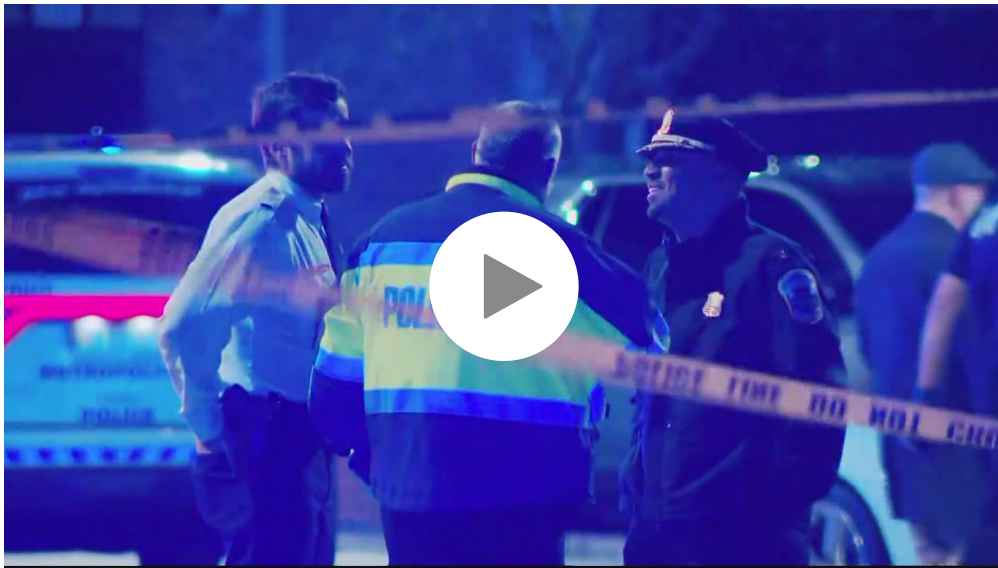


DC

90 drug and gun offenders released after police misconduct probe

The U.S. Attorney's dropped the cases linked to seven DC Police officers under investigation.



Author: Delia Goncalves

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WASHINGTON — Amid a rising crime rate, District leaders blame some police officers for putting more criminals on the streets. Ninety people arrested on drug and gun charges have been released from jail after the officers who first arrested the offenders are under investigation themselves.

Seven police officers from the [7th District's crime suppression unit](#) are under investigation for police misconduct. The U.S. Attorney's office dismissed 90 cases -- 25 related to drug crimes and 65 related to gun offenses -- linked to the officers from that special unit, which patrols the Anacostia, Washington Highlands, and Congress Heights neighborhoods.

About five months ago, internal investigators found these officers were stopping people, taking their guns, but never making arrests. That break in protocol led investigators to review all the officers' cases. According to the [Washington Post](#), nearly half of the offenders whose gun charges were dropped have long criminal records, including murder and armed robbery.

"That is something we don't want to see -- people who've been arrested back into community," Chief Robert Contee said. "But we have rules to follow as law enforcement and if we didn't follow the rules that unfortunately is the consequence as a result of the actions by some of our officers."

DC Council Chairman Phil Mendelson told the Post the officers were to blame for the offenders' return to the streets. Two officers are on administrative leave, the other five are on desk duty. The police union argued the officers were just following orders to get guns off the streets. Advocates said it's proof some officers stop people without cause or arrest.

Chief Contee told WUSA9 that when considering charges, the U.S. Attorney will likely take into account the impact on the community.

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