

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

DATE: **SEPTEMBER 15, 2026**

TO: **DISTRIBUTION**

FROM: **CAPTAIN ROBERT OSTERLAND** ^{PO}
 Professional Standards Division

SUBJECT: **SHERIFF'S FINDING**

Per Sheriff Gualtieri, Deputy Chelsea Pacheco, #59941, will receive the following as a result of AI 26-014:

1. A seventy (70) hour Suspension to be served on:

 September 23, 2026 (12 hours), September 24, 2026 (12 hours), September 28, 2026 (12 hours), September 29, 2026 (12 hours), October 2, 2026 (12 hours), and October 3, 2026 (10 hours).
2. Remedial training on law and constitutional law.
3. Remedial training on presumptive testing.

DISTRIBUTION:

Sheriff Bob Gualtieri
Chief Deputy Dave Danzig
Assistant Chief Deputy Paul Carey
Assistant Chief Deputy Dennis Komar
Colonel Joe Gerretz
Major Jose Camacho
Major Deanna Carey
Major Greg Danzig
Major Alyson Henry
Major Jon Tobeck
Major Matt Wroe
Director Jennifer Crockett
Director Susan Krause
Director Jason Malpass
Director Kristi Wong
Shannon Lockheart, General Counsel
Payroll
Purchasing-Uniform Supply
Deputy Chelsea Pacheco

RO/blb

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

DATE: **SEPTEMBER 10, 2026**

TO: **DEPUTY CHELSEA PACHECO, #59941**

FROM: **SHERIFF BOB GUALTIERI**

SUBJECT: **CHARGES RE: AI 26-014**

An investigation has been conducted by the Administrative Investigations Section, Professional Standards Division, 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, December 28, 2025, 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: On December 28, 2025, while investigating a lodging-related dispute, you failed to take prompt and effective action within the scope of your duties. You failed to conduct a thorough preliminary investigation, establish an adequate legal basis for the subject's arrest for obtaining lodging with intent to defraud, preserve and document material evidence, maintain appropriate supervision of the arrestee, refrain from conducting an unlawful search of the subject's hotel room and property, properly safeguard the subject's personal property, appropriately conduct and reconcile material substance testing, disclose relevant testing information, and completely and accurately document your investigative actions.

At approximately 1147 hours, you responded to a local hotel regarding a complaint involving a guest who refused to leave. Hotel staff advised that the subject's original reservation ended on December 27, 2025, and requested that she be removed from the property. Staff also advised that the subject had a second reservation that the hotel declined to accept. You failed to obtain identifying or demographic information for the hotel employees, independently verify the information provided by hotel staff, obtain complete registration or booking records, determine whether the second reservation had been prepaid, determine why the reservation was declined, verify whether any unused payment had been returned, or determine whether the applicable statutory requirements for removal had been satisfied.

Hotel staff provided a one-page document related to the subject's reservation. You did not meaningfully review the document until after the subject had been arrested and failed to recognize that it was only the first page of a two-page document. You did not obtain the second page or additional records supporting the hotel's assertions concerning the subject's second reservation. You later wrote "\$80" directly on the original hotel document after obtaining the claimed monetary loss from hotel staff, thereby altering the evidentiary document rather than preserving it in its original condition. During the ARB, you acknowledged that you should not have written on the evidentiary document.

At the time of the incident, you did not have sufficient knowledge of the applicable statutes governing removal of a guest from a public lodging establishment or the elements necessary to establish obtaining lodging with intent to defraud. You did not review the applicable statutes before making the arrest or preparing the arrest affidavit, despite being able to readily access the Florida Statutes. During the ARB, you acknowledged that you did not follow the statutory process.

The subject invited you and the backup deputy into the hotel room and attempted to locate documentation supporting her claimed extended reservation. The subject specifically attempted to locate payment information on her phone, including through Cash App. You did not adequately investigate the second reservation or allow the subject a reasonable opportunity to produce the requested information before initiating the arrest. You gave the subject just over two minutes to locate the information. During the ARB, you acknowledged that you approached the call with a preconceived notion of how similar calls at that location typically unfolded and that you rushed the investigation despite no external pressure to do so, stating, "It's a me thing."

You subsequently arrested the subject for obtaining lodging with intent to defraud. During the arrest, the subject physically resisted and kicked you. After the arrest, the subject requested that a family member be permitted to retrieve her personal property and pet. You denied that request and told the subject, "I'm really fucking chill until I'm not. And you've lost that opportunity." The subject's pet was subsequently relinquished to Animal Control, and her property was left at the hotel. During the ARB, you acknowledged that your decision was an "emotional response" to the resistance and that it was not the correct response.

After the subject was secured in the rear prisoner compartment of an agency vehicle, you and the backup deputy returned to the hotel room to continue the investigation, conduct presumptive substance testing, and search the subject's property. No deputy remained with the subject, and no additional deputy was requested to stand by with her. The subject remained alone in the secured agency vehicle while both deputies were inside the hotel room, with only intermittent checks of the vehicle. During the ARB, you acknowledged that neither deputy actively remained with the subject during this period.

While lawfully inside the hotel room, you observed white powder in plain view on a television stand and on a violin case. The presence of the suspected substance in plain view did not provide authority to conduct a general search of the room and the subject's belongings. Nevertheless, you and the backup deputy began going through bags and other personal property. Although you characterized this activity as an inventory, you did not take the property into agency custody, did not prepare an inventory identifying the property examined or left behind, and ultimately left it

with hotel management. During the ARB, you agreed that the search of the hotel room and property was unlawful.

You presumptively tested the white-powder substances for cocaine and communicated that both substances tested positive. Body-worn-camera footage of the testing did not depict the positive result you later described. During your subject interview, you stated that you observed a “small sliver of blue,” while also acknowledging that the video and still images “don’t depict what I saw.” You further acknowledged that you had never read the instructions supplied with the presumptive test kits. During the backup deputy’s July 29, 2026, administrative interview, he reviewed the recorded testing, observed that one of the test pouches appeared entirely pink, and stated that the pink result indicated a negative test for cocaine. Nevertheless, the white powder substances were documented as presumptively positive for cocaine, and the subject was charged with cocaine possession.

During the unlawful search of the room, a clear bag containing approximately sixty (60) pink, cake-shaped pills was located. At your direction, the backup deputy tested one of the pills with an agency-issued presumptive substance-identification device. The device failed two consecutive self-checks, then returned a Clear/Dextrose result. You were advised of the dextrose result. You did not know what dextrose was, did not ask for clarification, and did not independently determine what the result meant before proceeding further.

After the backup deputy and prisoner transport had left, you conducted a separate presumptive field test of the pills and reported a positive result for MDMA. You performed the test alone, without activating your body-worn camera, photographing the result, or having another member present to witness the testing. During the ARB, you acknowledged that you should have activated your body-worn camera. Your body-worn camera was also not recording when you later tested suspected marijuana or issued the subject a trespass warning.

Despite the materially conflicting substance-testing results, you proceeded with charging the subject with Trafficking in MDMA rather than withholding the charge pending laboratory analysis. You did not disclose the Clear/Dextrose result to the State Attorney’s Office before the subject’s first appearance or before the original criminal information was filed. During the ARB, when asked why you did not wait for laboratory confirmation given the conflicting results, you could not provide a reason and acknowledged that you should have withheld the charge and submitted the pills for laboratory analysis.

As the primary investigating deputy, you also failed to review the backup deputy’s supplemental report before the investigation proceeded. You did not review that report until months later in preparation for a deposition and therefore did not identify that the pill testing and conflicting substance-identification result had been omitted from the supplemental report.

The Court subsequently assigned a \$75,000 bond for the trafficking charge. The subject remained in custody for seventy (70) days and was released following a bond-reduction hearing. The white powder and pills were ultimately submitted to the Pinellas County Forensic Laboratory, which reported no controlled substances detected in either substance.

During your administrative interview, you admitted that your failure to conduct a thorough preliminary investigation violated General Order 3-1.1, Rule and Regulation 5.4, Duties and Responsibilities, stating that your failure "led to all of this" and that taking additional time likely would have produced a different outcome. During the ARB, you again accepted responsibility for the investigation and your charging decisions. When asked why you disregarded the conflicting substance-identification result before pursuing the trafficking charge, you stated, "I don't know."

The Administrative Review Board determined that you committed the violation.

Your failure to conduct a thorough preliminary investigation, establish an adequate legal basis for the subject's arrest, preserve and document material evidence, maintain appropriate supervision of the arrestee, refrain from conducting an unlawful search of the subject's hotel room and property, properly safeguard the subject's personal property, properly conduct and reconcile material substance testing, disclose relevant testing information, and completely and accurately document your investigative actions violated General Order 3-1.1, Rule and Regulation 5.4, Duties and Responsibilities.

Disciplinary Points and Recommended Discipline Range:

You were found to be in violation of one (1) Level Five Rule and Regulation 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 a forty (40) hour 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 ALYSON HENRY
PATROL OPERATIONS BUREAU
FOR BOB GUALTIERI, SHERIFF

I have received a copy:

Date 09/15/2026

Time 1028 hours

Rep. C. Pineda
Member's Signature

BG:PEH:RO