**2ND SHEFFIELD LAKE POLICE OFFICER FILES CIVIL RIGHTS CHARGE AS CITY DENIES ‘KKK’ HARASSMENT IN VIRAL VIDEO WAS RACE DISCRIMINATION**

***City Of Sheffield Lake Claims Former Police Chief’s Targeting of Black Officer with Ku Klux Klan Hat and Sign Merely “Inappropriate and in Poor Taste”; Latino Officer Files Separate Charge and Speaks Publicly for First Time About Racist Abuse.***

**SHEFFIELD LAKE, OH///JUNE 21, 2022///**A second police officer filed a charge of discrimination against the city of Sheffield Lake and spoke publicly about the racist and religion-based abuse perpetrated against him by the former police chief Anthony Campo. Officer A.J. Torres, who is the department’s only Latino officer, detailed Campo’s harassment, which included photoshopping Torres’ face onto an image of a Mexican hot sauce bottle that was posted to a department bulletin board. Campo also posted a photo of Torres, a devout Catholic, with two young children and a speech bubble implying Torres was a pedophile.

The development comes after a viral video of a June 25, 2021 incident showed Chief Campo [placing a “Ku Klux Klan” sign on a Black officer’s jacket](https://www.nbcnews.com/video/ohio-police-chief-out-after-leaving-ku-klux-klan-note-for-black-officer-115968581749) and then donning a paper Ku Klux Klan hat. That officer, Keith Pool, filed his own discrimination charge last year.

The [new charge of discrimination](https://www.peifferwolf.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/2022.02.08-OCRC-charge-of-employment-discrimination-Torres.pdf) was filed against the city of Sheffield Lake with the Ohio Civil Rights Commission by Officer Torres’ attorneys at the law firm Peiffer Wolf Carr Kane Conway & Wise (Peiffer Wolf), who also represent Officer Pool.

Kevin Conway, partner at Peiffer Wolf, said: **“If it wasn’t bad enough that the former police chief was engaged in rampant workplace harassment, now the city that hired him is trying to minimize his revolting racial and religious discrimination. The city of Sheffield Lake will face a reckoning for both its and its former police chief’s despicable behavior.”**

Officer A.J. Torres said: **“I don’t put away my ethnicity and heritage when I come to work, and I shouldn’t have to hide my religion, either. My faith and my humanitarian work on my personal time make me a better police officer. I am disappointed that the city I serve is not taking what former Chief Campo did to me more seriously.”**

Officer Torres has worked part-time as a Sheffield Lake officer since his 2013 retirement from distinguished service in the Ohio State Highway Patrol. Because Officer Torres is Catholic, the city agreed when he was hired that he would not work on Sundays and would be able to perform charitable work, including annual mission trips he leads to El Salvador. Yet, according to Officer Torres’ charge of discrimination, the former chief often tried to make him work Sundays and mocked him for refusing. Campo’s religion-based harassment also included publicly insulting Officer Torres for his charitable work and for his religious decisions to observe Lent and not eat meat on Fridays.

As he did with Officer Pool, Campo created and posted discriminatory images of Officer Torres on official police department bulletin boards. In addition to the racist hot sauce image, Campo posted images of Officer Torres’ face on a priest’s body on the bulletin board where schedules were posted, some of which had speech bubbles including the words “you want me to work on Sundays? OH, HELL NO!” referring to his observance of the Sabbath. The former chief also posted a photo of Officer Torres with two young children and a speech bubble Campo wrote, that read “want to play in the woods little boys I won’t hurt you,” to imply Officer Torres was a pedophile.

The city of Sheffield Lake’s response to Officer Torres’ charge of discrimination repeats verbatim much of its response to Officer Pool’s 2021 charge. The city, noting that Campo did not deny making the images, described Campo’s conduct as “perhaps inappropriate and in poor taste” but “not so offensive to the reasonable person that it would materially affect the terms and consequences of employment.” In both cases, the city denied that Campo’s conduct was “severe or pervasive,” characterizing it as merely “banter.”

But in an [interview with news media](https://www.cleveland.com/metro/2021/07/sheffield-lake-police-chief-resigns-after-putting-ku-klux-klan-sign-on-black-officers-desk.html) in the days after the KKK video was released, Sheffield Lake Mayor Dennis Bring said: “This is the most egregious and offensive thing you could possibly do. And it’s embarrassing and disgusting.”

Ashlie Case Sletvold, partner at Peiffer Wolf and lead counsel for Officer Pool and Officer Torres, said: **“The city’s position reveals how Mr. Campo got away with racial harassment for so long: City officials were never willing to hold him accountable. It is remarkable that the city continues to defend actions its mayor publicly admitted were egregious and offensive. Harassing employees based on race, ethnicity, and religion goes far beyond ‘poor taste.’ Sheffield Lake’s continued endorsement of its chief’s racist harassment is – to borrow the mayor’s own words – embarrassing and disgusting.”**

Officer Pool said: **“The city both allowed and enabled Chief Campo to do this to me and others for years. Now, they’re gaslighting me and acting like what Campo did was no big deal. It’s beyond frustrating; it’s insulting.”**

Along with the new charge by Officer Torres, the Ohio Civil Rights Commission is currently investigating Officer Pool’s charge and the charge of another employee who accuses the former chief of sexual harassment.

In addition to the [2021 discrimination charge](https://www.peifferwolf.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Pool-OCRC-complaint.pdf), Officer Pool filed a [mandamus petition with the Supreme Court of Ohio](https://www.peifferwolf.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/2021.11.11-Pool-Verified-Petition-for-Writ-of-Mandamus.pdf) to compel his employer to produce public records, including images the former chief created and posted mocking employees on the basis of race, gender, religion, and sexual orientation. Officer Pool requested these records on July 31, 2021, but the city has not provided them. That case remains pending.

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**ABOUT PEIFFER WOLF CARR KANE CONWAY & WISE**

The law firm [Peiffer Wolf Carr Kane Conway](https://www.peifferwolf.com/) & Wise maintains offices in Cleveland, Youngstown, New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco, St. Louis, Austin, and New Orleans.