

Maryland police corporal sues Prince George's County alleging retaliation

Complaint alleges supervisors falsified performance records and submitted an altered document to the EEOC after corporal backed colleagues' bias claims.

BOWIE, MD, UNITED STATES, May 20, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Justly Prudent](https://www.justlyprudent.com), a civil rights law firm, recently announced the filing of a retaliation lawsuit on behalf of a 19-year veteran of the Prince George's County Police Department against the County and two of his former supervisors. The [complaint](#) alleges a sustained campaign of retaliation that began after Corporal James E. Carpenter supported colleagues who filed race discrimination charges and culminated with the County's submission of an altered personnel document to a federal civil rights agency.



County police corporal sues Prince George's County, MD alleging retaliation

According to the complaint, Carpenter is an African-American investigator who has served in the Department's WAVE Auto Theft Task Force since 2017. He claims that two of his former

supervisors targeted him after he raised concerns in November 2022 about the differential treatment of Black officers in the unit and after he later served as a participating witness in race discrimination charges filed by two of his colleagues.

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This lawsuit is about restoring Corporal Carpenter's record and ensuring accountability for the conduct alleged in the complaint.”

Attorney Jordan D. Howlette

The complaint alleges that Carpenter's annual performance appraisals had consistently rated him at the "Outstanding" or "Exceeds Satisfactory" level through the rating period that ended in January 2022, with a most-

recent numerical score of 3.85. According to the complaint, Carpenter has no sustained

disciplinary actions, no use-of-force violations, and no findings of professional misconduct in his service record.

The complaint alleges that, on March 15, 2023, Carpenter's first-line supervisor delivered a performance appraisal that lowered Carpenter's overall numerical rating to 2.80 and assigned him a "Needs Improvement" rating in Investigations. Then, just five days after Carpenter submitted a written rebuttal supported by approximately 35 pages of documentary evidence, the supervisor added a five-page supervisor rebuttal to Carpenter's personnel file without notice and removed Carpenter's supporting documentation from the rebuttal package. According to the complaint, Carpenter did not learn of the supervisor rebuttal until August 2024, more than 17 months after it was added to his file.

The complaint identifies four other officers in or around the unit who, according to the pleading, were the subjects of similar conduct by the same two supervisors. An African-American corporal filed an EEOC charge against the supervisors in November 2023 and was subsequently transferred out of the unit, the complaint alleges. A Caucasian corporal filed an EEOC charge in July 2024 in which, according to the complaint, he identified Carpenter and two other African-American officers as the targets of the supervisors' conduct; that corporal was likewise transferred out, the complaint alleges. An African-American sergeant in the chain of command was suspended for approximately 17 months following an Internal Affairs investigation initiated by the same supervisors, the complaint alleges, and was exonerated on all 20 charges in February 2025.

The complaint further alleges that, on December 30, 2024, the County's Office of Law submitted to the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission a position statement that included a copy of Carpenter's 2023–2024 performance appraisal that had been materially altered from the document Carpenter signed on February 12, 2024. Specifically, the complaint alleges, the version submitted to the EEOC contained a check mark in a box stating that Carpenter had reviewed and agreed that his position description was accurate and current—a box Carpenter expressly declined to mark and which is unmarked on his retained original. According to the complaint, the County did not respond after Carpenter submitted a reply to the EEOC that included side-by-side copies of the original and altered documents.

Carpenter claims that the County's Office of the Chief sustained Carpenter's grievance in August 2025 and ordered the altered appraisals permanently removed from his personnel file, replacing them with revised appraisals reflecting overall "Outstanding" ratings of 3.85. According to the complaint, no disciplinary action was imposed on either of the supervisors.

"James Carpenter spent 19 years building a record that any officer in this country would be proud of, and he risked all of it to do the right thing for his colleagues," said Jordan D. Howlette, Managing Attorney at Justly Prudent and counsel for Carpenter. "This lawsuit is about restoring his record and ensuring accountability for the conduct alleged in the complaint."

The complaint seeks, among other things, expungement of the challenged records, retraction of the document submitted to the EEOC, restoration of Carpenter's federal deputization, and referral of his Internal Affairs complaint to an external investigative authority. The case is James E. Carpenter v. Prince George's County, Maryland, et al. (C-16-CV-26-002878), filed in the Circuit Court of Maryland for Prince George's County.

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