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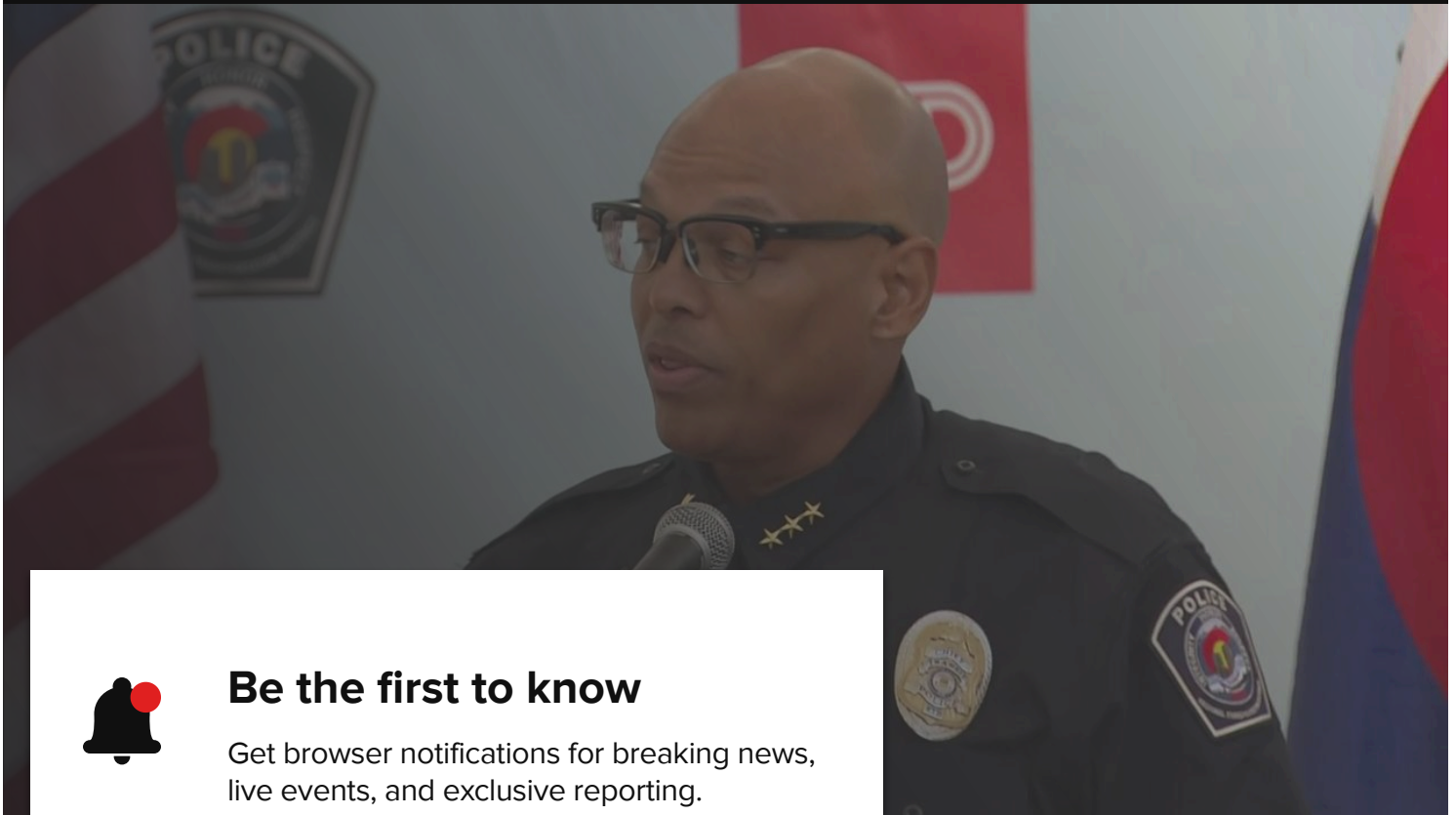
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LOCAL NEWS

# Amid RTD security issues in Colorado, agency police chief on investigative leave; "None of your concern," says CEO

By Brian Maass, Karen Morfitt

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with crime issues on buses and  
s Colorado has learned that its  
Chief of Police and Emergency Management, Joel Fitzgerald Sr., has been placed

on leave as an outside investigator looks into alleged "policy violations."  
Fitzgerald was hired to head RTD's police force in August 2022.



Joel Fitzgerald Sr.

CBS

In recent years, RTD doubled its police force and took additional steps to protect drivers and passengers.

When asked about the leave, RTD CEO Debra Johnson said, "That is none of your concern."

In June, the Denver Post reported that passengers on RTD trains and buses were threatened or assaulted at the rate of one incident per day over the last three months. RTD sources said that in the last three months, passengers were assaulted an average of 100 times.



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RTD sources said that the agency investigates allegations of sexual harassment. A memo dated July 1, RTD CEO Debra Johnson said that as of July 1 and that the deputy

chief of police was acting chief "until further notice." She did not provide any information to employees about the nature of the leave.

When CBS News Colorado inquired about the reason for Fitzgerald's leave, the agency's communications staff did not respond to calls or emails. RTD board members also were unresponsive to inquiries about the chief's leave, with one suggesting the media contact Johnson.

RTD employees contacted by CBS News Colorado said they were prohibited from speaking publicly, but acknowledged that numerous employees had been informed that an outside investigations company was in the process of conducting interviews regarding allegations of policy violations by Fitzgerald.

When CBS News Colorado investigative reporter Karen Morfitt approached Johnson this month seeking more information, Johnson refused to discuss the chief being placed on leave and refused to answer questions on the topic.

"It's a personnel matter and people have privacy issues," said Johnson. "I am not personnel matter."



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s set at \$250,000.

It's unclear what alleged policy violations are being scrutinized.

A text message and phone call to a phone number listed to Fitzgerald did not elicit a response.

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### [Brian Maass](#)

Your Investigator Brian Maass has a reputation for breaking major stories at CBS News Colorado. He is a veteran reporter who has established a high level of trust and credibility in the community. Read [his reports](#) or [check out his bio & send him an email](#).



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