

# Seattle Community Police Commission



OUR CITY. OUR SAFETY. OUR POLICE. BETTER TOGETHER.

**For immediate release**  
January 1, 2019

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## **CPC Letter Regarding Last Night's Police-Involved Shooting**

**The Community Police Commission has sent the following letter regarding how Initiative 940 may affect the investigation of last night's police-involved shooting.**

**I-940 requires independent investigations of police shootings. However, the Seattle Police Department's internal investigation process was created under and mandated by the federal consent decree and arguably can't be changed without court permission.**

**The CPC is urging city leaders to meet with Community to clarify how that process will work.**

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Dear Council President Harrell, Council Member Gonzalez, Mayor Durkan, Chief Best, and Attorney Holmes,

We were sorry to learn of the police-involved shooting in the North Precinct yesterday. We understand from the SPD blotter that the incident is being investigated by SPD personnel, led by the Force Investigation Team (FIT), with the Office of Police Accountability, and the Office of Inspector General observing.

While these processes are mandated under the consent decree supervised by the U.S. District Court, they do not constitute an investigation "entirely independent" of the involved police agency, as required by Initiative 940, adopted by the voters this fall and presently in effect.

We understand that state legislators, with broad support from the organizations and leaders who comprised De-Escalate Washington and from statewide law enforcement organizations, are poised to introduce and vote on HB 1064 (and its companion SB 5029), which brings forward the same language from then-HB 3003 in the last legislative session making certain changes to I940, including an explicit exclusion for jurisdictions under consent decree from immediate

application of the independent investigation requirement. Arguably, that exclusion is implicit even before HB 1064 is acted on, since the federal court has expressly required Seattle to follow its present internal investigation process while under court supervision, unless the court determines otherwise.

However, because I940 is in effect and no express exclusion that would apply to Seattle has yet been adopted by the legislature, there is a strong likelihood that members of the public who voted for, organized for or are aware of the I940 independent investigation requirement will be surprised or troubled to learn that SPD is still, even after voters approved the initiative, using an entirely internal forensic investigation process.

We urge that City leaders clarify your stance on the applicability to Seattle of the I940 independent investigation requirement, and engage in an open-agenda discussion with organizations and leaders who led work in I940 so that they may convey the situation and the City's stance accurately to the hundreds of thousands of people who voted for an initiative that is now in effect that they understandably believed would mean this incident would not be investigated solely by SPD personnel.

The CPC offers to convene that conversation in the next few days.

Thank you for your consideration.

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**About the Community Police Commission:**

***The CPC listens to, amplifies, and builds common ground among communities affected by policing in Seattle. We champion policing practices centered in justice and equity. The CPC is independent and led by volunteer commissioners.***