

STATEMENT

For Immediate Release

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The Seattle Community Police Commission is Disappointed in the Findings of the Charleena Lyles Inquest

The Seattle Community Police Commission (CPC) is disappointed in the inquest's findings in the fatal shooting of Charleena Lyles' by Seattle police officers. The CPC hoped that the new reformed inquest would produce a better process where the coroner's office would provide facts on Lyles's shooting, and that her family would be able to participate.

The King County inquest reform had broad support from community and the CPC. The Lyles inquest shed new information on her death, increased transparency by opening the process to the public, and allowed the family to be represented by an attorney. However, the reformed inquest is new, and the CPC will monitor the process closely and make recommendations for improving the process when appropriate. In particular, the CPC is concerned with how the inquest questions were scoped and crafted. But most importantly, the CPC is interested in mitigating additional trauma to impacted families.

"Charleena Lyles' family and the community expected a different outcome. This doesn't feel like justice," said Rev. Patricia Hunter, Seattle Community Police Commission co-chair. "We will never have the chance to hear Charleena testify and her side of what happened. Our hearts are with Charleena's family, we want to center and honor their trauma and pain. Charleena's family and her children will continue to feel her absence long after this inquest is over."

A mental health crisis should not be a death sentence when SPD is called to respond. Responding officers knew that Lyles' had a history of mental illness when she called the police to report a burglary. Police officers should be equipped with the right training and tools to deescalate and prioritize life in such situations. Despite Lyles' small statute, neither of those things happened in this case. Officers should be held accountable when their actions violate department policy. Here, the inquest found that the only department policy that the officer that shot Lyles violated was failing to bring a taser, for which he served a two-day suspension.

The CPC supports Charleena Lyles' family during this difficult time and continues to stand with them.

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The [Seattle Community Police Commission](#) is committed to listening to, amplifying, and building common ground among communities affected by policing. The Commission champions policing practices centered in justice and equity.