

Seattle Community Police Commission



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For immediate release

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Statement in response to Councilmember Gonzalez's memo: <https://bit.ly/2ySLemc>

We appreciate Councilmember Gonzalez's commitment to carefully examine the impact of the proposed SPOG contract on the 2017 Accountability Ordinance. We are concerned, however, that the request for analysis from the Inspector General and the Office of Police Accountability Director misconstrues the CPC's position.

Our concerns about the proposed contract's impact on the accountability ordinance are systemic. They are not just, or even primarily, about a reduction in the IG's or OPA's authority, although there are some serious issues about the impact on OPA's prerogatives to coordinate with criminal investigations, determine its own staffing, and complete investigations.

The primary concerns with the contract include:

- the failure to narrow the post-disciplinary appeals process and failure to ensure it is public;
- impeding the Chief's ability to sustain employee terminations on appeal;
- curtailing the Chief's ability to place employees under investigation for troubling behavior on administrative leave in cases where keeping the employee on active duty would compromise public trust
- allowing employees to serve suspensions with paid leave
- and compromising disciplinary records retention obligations.

None of these pertain to the scope of IG or OPA, and there are many other examples.

Most fundamentally, the contract departs so far from the ordinance that it either effectively repeals much of the ordinance or creates uncertainty as to whether specific provisions of the ordinance are in effect. This is likely to make it harder to sustain appropriate discipline and also compromises public trust.

Before others examine these questions, it is important that the issues be accurately.

- CPC Co-Chair Rev. Harriet Walden, Isaac Ruiz, Enrique Gonzalez

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.