

Seattle Community Police Commission



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

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Statement on WA Supreme Court I-940 ruling

While the police reforms of I-940 are now in the hands of the voters, the Community Police Commission repeats its call for the Seattle Police Department to take action now to update its use of force policy.

The legislation approved by the legislature would have established a new “good faith” standard to determine whether an officer’s use of deadly force is lawful. We recommend SPD voluntarily move to adopt the same widely supported “good faith” standard.

“This is common-sense policy that is necessary to rebuild trust between police and the community. We can’t wait until it’s, once again, too late. We need it now.”

“The Seattle Police Department can take the lead right now to undue a rule that every other state in the country has found to be an unreasonable barrier to justice and accountability.”

Much of the attention regarding I-940 has focused on unlawful use of deadly force by an officer. Washington is the only state requiring proof of “malice” or evil intent to criminally charge officers. Criminal liability is not something SPD can unilaterally change.

What SPD can do is change its own policy. This would mean only deadly force a reasonable officer objectively would have deemed necessary would fall within department policy. Officers who unreasonably use force could be held accountable in SPD administrative proceedings.

[The CPC sent a letter to Police Chief Carmen Best on July 18, 2018 calling for these changes.](#)

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.

To learn more about the CPC visit www.seattle.gov/community-police-commission