



\*\*\*For Immediate Release\*\*\*

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## **Washington State Patrol Seeks to Fill Independent Investigation Team Community Representative Positions in Pierce County**

Olympia, WA - The Washington State Patrol (WSP) seeks qualified citizens to apply for the Independent Investigation Team (IIT) Community Representative Position(s) for the case review of police use of deadly force or substantial bodily harm incidents. The position summary, responsibilities, qualifications and application process may be found [here](#) or at [wsp.wa.gov](http://wsp.wa.gov).

With the passage of [Washington State Initiative 940](#) in 2018, and [Substitute House Bill 1064](#) in 2019, incidents where the use of deadly force by a peace officer results in death, substantial bodily harm, or great bodily harm require an independent investigation. This investigation must be conducted in the same manner as a criminal investigation and state law now requires an "independent investigation" completely independent of the involved agency. The Independent Investigative Team (IIT) consists of qualified and certified peace officer investigators and at least two Non-Law Enforcement Community Representatives who operate completely independent of any involved agency to conduct investigations of police deadly force incidents.

The IIT Non-Law Enforcement Community Representatives should have credibility with, and ties to, the communities impacted by the police use of deadly force. The community members selected for the two unpaid, volunteer roles must be at least 21 years old, will be required to pass a department/agency background check, and attend training in officer involved deadly force investigations. Before beginning their duties, successful applicants will need to sign binding confidentiality and conflict of interest agreements and agree to serve as needed for up to two years. The hours of this voluntary position will vary as investigatory needs demand.

An IIT is now being assembled to investigate the death of Mr. Manuel Ellis. Mr. Ellis died while being arrested in Tacoma on March 3, 2020. Governor Jay Inslee named WSP as the independent investigatory agency on June 17th and since that time, the agency has identified a family liaison, met with the Attorney General, and is now seeking applicants ([apply here](#)) for the two Pierce County IIT Non-Law Enforcement Community Representatives.

"The goal of this law and the participation of the two Community Representatives is to enhance accountability and increase trust between law enforcement and the communities served. Our hope is that we will find two individuals of great character and competence with a passion for service and an eye for accuracy to serve during this important time for our state and nation," said John R. Batiste, Chief of the Washington State Patrol. "This will be a new process for us and for the two successful candidates. We will do our best to honor their commitment of time and energy with a commitment of our own of effectiveness and efficiency. I urge those interested to apply as soon as possible so the investigation can move forward, and thus find and follow the facts wherever they may lead."

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