

# **Compliance Audit Report**

# **Reviewing Investigations of Police Use of Deadly Force**

Valley Independent Investigative Team – The Alexander Whittal Case

**Use of Deadly Force Incident on November 8, 2021, by the Renton Police Department** 

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# Office of the Washington State Auditor Pat McCarthy

May 20, 2024

Assistant Chief Mark Couey Valley Independent Investigative Team

#### Report on Use of Deadly Force Investigation Audit

Attached is the official report on our audit of the investigation into the use of deadly force on November 8, 2021, that resulted in the death of Alexander Whittal.

The audit assessed the Renton Police Department's and the Valley Independent Investigative Team's compliance with state laws and rules regarding independent investigations of police use of deadly force as defined in WAC 139-12-030.

Our independent audits provide essential accountability and transparency regarding police use of deadly force investigations. These audits are valuable to the Legislature, law enforcement agencies and the public in assessing police accountability efforts.

If you are a member of the media and have questions about this report, please contact Director of Communications Kathleen Cooper at (564) 999-0800. Otherwise, please contact Use of Deadly Force Investigations Program Manager Michael Huynh at (564) 999-0831.

Pat McCarthy, State Auditor

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Olympia, WA

cc: Monica Alexander, Executive Director, Criminal Justice Training Commission Steve Strachan, Executive Director, Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs Isaac Helgren, Detective Sergeant, Des Moines Police Department Breanna Perry, Assistant State Auditor

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

#### Results in Brief

Valley Independent Investigative Team (VIIT) investigators and officers involved in the use of force incident complied with many requirements to ensure the investigation of the shooting on November 8, 2021, was independent, transparent, credible and communicated to the public timely, as state laws and rules require. These actions included, but were not limited to, providing first aid to people with life-threatening injuries, securing and maintaining a perimeter around the scene of the shooting, and canvassing the area for witnesses.

The audit found instances where VIIT did not follow state rules, as well as opportunities to improve its documentation to demonstrate compliance. Specifically, we found VIIT did not:

- Maintain documentation to demonstrate that VIIT restricted the case file to only participating investigators
- Ensure community representatives completed confidentiality agreements and conflict of interest assessments within 72 hours of starting the investigation
- Include questions in its conflict of interest form about potential biases
- Provide public updates about the investigation for one out of 12 weeks during the investigation

We also found that Renton Police Department supervisors did not document whether they directed involved and witness officers to not discuss the incident.

#### Recommendations

We recommend VIIT ensure:

- Ensure access to the case file is properly limited to VIIT members participating in the investigation, and maintain documentation demonstrating it did so
- Ensure community representatives sign a confidentiality agreement and conflict of interest form within 72 hours of the start of each investigation, and maintain documentation demonstrating it did so
- Ensure conflict of interest forms that are completed by investigators and community representatives include questions related to biases
- Provide weekly public updates, as required

We also recommend VIIT's member agencies instruct involved and witness officers not to discuss the case before providing statements to VIIT, and maintain documentation that they did so.

#### **BACKGROUND**

#### **Use of Deadly Force Incident**

The following summary of events is based on the investigation's case files:

On November 8, 2021, at about 1:50 p.m., an employee at an office building in Renton called 911 to report that a man was outside shooting a pistol at another building nearby. The caller reported that the man then walked toward an apartment complex.

Four Renton Police Department officers responded to the area. Cmdr. Lance Gray arrived first and saw the man, later identified as Alexander Whittal, in a grassy area near the apartment complex. Gray said he saw Whittal put a magazine into a handgun, and then put the gun into his right pocket. Shortly after, Sgt. Scott Woodward, Officer Rylee Phillips and Cmdr. Chandler Swain arrived at the scene. All four officers then took cover behind one unmarked SUV.

At about 2:05 p.m., Gray called dispatch to report that Whittal was now holding a gun and walking toward the officers. Once Whittal saw the officers, he began walking toward them with his gun pointed directly at them. In response, Gray, Swain and Phillips fired at least five rounds at Whittal, hitting him twice: once in the torso and once in the leg. Whittal then shot himself in the head as he fell to the ground. At 2:06 p.m., Gray notified dispatch of the shooting and requested medical aid.

The officers ordered Whittal to show his hands so they could provide medical aid. More officers arrived, and they secured Whittal's gun and tried to give him first aid. However, Whittal was pronounced dead at the scene. The medical examiner determined both the gunshot wound to Whittal's torso and his self-inflected gunshot wound would have been fatal.

The Valley Independent Investigative Team (VIIT), an independent investigation team that investigates police use of deadly force incidents in southeast King County, responded to the shooting. Investigators from the Des Moines Police Department led the investigation with assistance from the Auburn, Federal Way, Kent, Tukwila, Port of Seattle and Seattle police departments.

On January 28, 2022, VIIT submitted its investigation report to the King County Prosecuting Attorney's Office. The prosecutor reviewed the case and announced on July 11, 2023, that he would not file charges against the three officers who shot Whittal.

# **Independent Investigation Teams**

Voters approved Initiative 940 in 2018. It ensures that one of an Independent Investigative Team (ITT)'s key functions is to investigate police use of deadly force incidents. The initiative requires an agency completely independent of the one with the involved officer(s) to conduct investigations of police use of deadly force. Regional IITs allow law enforcement agencies to respond quickly to use of deadly force incidents while keeping the involved agency out of the investigation. IITs are made up of command staff, detectives and other crime scene investigators from law enforcement

agencies in a given region. An IIT also consists of volunteers, called non-law enforcement community representatives, who provide perspective to the community during an investigation.

Washington has 17 IITs throughout the state. Many of these teams existed before recent police reform and accountability laws, including Initiative 940, and allowed law enforcement agencies to pool resources for major investigations. Prohibiting the involved agency from participating in these investigations was intended to improve the agency's impartiality and independence by preventing people who are more likely to have a personal relationship with the involved officers from investigating the incident.

The initiative tasked the Washington State Criminal Justice Commission (CJTC) with adopting rules to govern these investigations. The CJTC adopted Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 139-12-030, which requires independent use of deadly force investigations to meet four key principles:

- Independence the involved agency cannot have undue influence or the appearance of undue influence on the investigation.
- Transparency community members are able to assess whether the investigation is conducted in a trustworthy manner and complies with the standards defined in state laws and rules.
- Communication the IIT must communicate the investigation's progress to the public and family of the person killed or harmed by police use of deadly force.
- Credibility use of deadly force investigations follow best practices for criminal investigations, and investigators meet necessary training requirements and demonstrate ethical behavior and impartiality.

# **Audit Objective**

State law (RCW 43.101.460) requires the Office of the Washington State Auditor to audit all investigations into police use of deadly force resulting in death, substantial bodily harm or great bodily harm.

To determine whether the Renton Police Department and VIIT complied with state laws and rules in the investigation of the death of Alexander Whittal, we reviewed investigative files related to the case, reviewed training records held by the CJTC and member police agencies, and interviewed IIT members, including community representatives. We assessed the involved agencies' and IIT's compliance with each of the requirements under the key principles in WAC 139-12-030. This included whether the IIT followed the CJTC's published best practices for conducting homicide investigations.

This report outlines the steps the investigation team took to meet each of these key principles. **Appendix A** contains information about our methodology.

#### **AUDIT RESULTS**

Appendix A outlines our Office's authority and methodology for this audit. In short, state law (RCW 43.101.460) requires the Office of the Washington State Auditor to audit all investigations into police use of deadly force resulting in death, substantial bodily harm or great bodily harm. Our charge is to assess whether the investigations complied with relevant rules and laws. The audit only reviewed the investigation. It did not assess the incident itself or whether the use of force was justified.

#### Independence

To help ensure the investigation was conducted independently of the involved agency, VIIT investigators assumed control of the scene upon arrival and excluded officers from the Renton Police Department. We reviewed the investigation files and found that Gray reported the shooting at 2:06 p.m. At about 2:30 p.m., VIIT's alert system notified members to respond to the crime scene. VIIT investigators met at the Renton Police Department to conduct a briefing about the shooting and assign tasks. IIT personnel arrived and assumed control of the scene between 4:45 p.m. and 8 p.m. Several responding officers remained on site for scene security until 9:50 p.m. We did not find evidence that any employees from the Renton Police Department took part in the remainder of the investigation.

VIIT did not share information about the investigation with any member of the involved agency. The WAC prohibits IITs from sharing investigative information with an involved agency, except for limited information about the investigation's progress. VIIT held one internal briefing with the community representatives and King County Prosecuting Attorney. According to the Des Moines lead detective, VIIT did not hold an initial briefing with the involved agency. He also said that the IIT's current practice is to conduct only one briefing at the end of the investigation to go over the results at a high level of detail. This limits the potential sharing of prohibited information.

# **Transparency**

VIIT invited two community representatives to participate in the investigation, as required by WAC 139-12-030. Community representatives are volunteers, not law enforcement agency employees, who provide community perspective on key processes in use of deadly force investigations. They must complete a confidentiality agreement, be present at any briefings with the involved agency, and have access to the completed investigation file.

VIIT included two community representatives in the investigation. However, we were only able to find documentation to support that one representative signed a confidentiality agreement. The representative completed the agreement on November 12, 2021, four days after the investigation started.

During an interview, one of the community representatives said that she was aware that she could access the completed case file, and that she had the ability to ask the IIT questions about the investigation as it progressed. In addition, VIIT's policy states that community representatives have the authority to access the completed investigation file. We contacted the second community representative but did not get a response.

#### Communication

A VIIT family liaison communicated with Whittal's family throughout the investigation. However, VIIT did not follow the WAC's requirement to update the public at least weekly. The WAC requires IITs to communicate with the family of the person who was killed or injured by police use of deadly force. The involved agency or IIT is required to notify the family of the use of force incident, and the IIT is required to provide the family with updates on all significant developments throughout the investigation. Additionally, the WAC requires an IIT to post, at minimum, weekly public updates on the investigation's progress even if there is no new information to report. The community representatives and family must receive advance notice of each press release.

Documentation from the investigative files showed that VIIT assigned a family liaison within 24 hours of starting the investigation. Whittal's family did not need to be informed of the shooting because two of his relatives were present when it occurred. The investigation file showed that the family liaison contacted Whittal's family several times throughout the investigation via email or phone calls to provide them with significant updates. In addition, we noted that VIIT sent the family emails with copies of each press release before VIIT released them to the media.

VIIT posted public updates about the investigation's progress in 11 of 12 weeks during the investigation. VIIT published one of the press releases late because the member who was responsible for issuing them was out of the office. We confirmed that VIIT also emailed advance copies of each press release to both community representatives. In an interview with one community representative, she said that she remembered receiving copies of the press releases before they were sent to the media.

We did not find any indication that VIIT or the involved agency provided criminal background information prohibited by the WAC. We read online news articles and each press release, and searched the social media accounts of the Des Moines and Renton police departments. We did not find any mention of criminal history.

# Credibility

#### **Crime Scene Investigation**

In accordance with the WAC, members of the involved agency and VIIT secured and maintained the integrity of the scene and located evidence. Renton officers helped with blocking traffic and providing security at the site of the shooting and around the scene's perimeter. They immediately started a log to record the names of any personnel who entered and exited. Renton officers also placed caution tape to clearly establish the scene's boundaries.

To preserve evidence, responding officers began marking and taking photographs of Whittal's resting position, his personal belongings, including the handgun, and the surrounding area. Because Whittal's handgun was so close to his body, one Renton officer photographed it and then moved the gun to a secure location so other officers could give first aid. Later, VIIT collected the handgun, a single unspent round of ammunition, and a magazine that had three unspent rounds of ammunition from the Renton officer.

Once VIIT investigators arrived, they located and collected each item for evidence. The team obtained one 9 mm and four .223 mm spent casings in the area where the officers had discharged their firearms. Investigators next also found one spent casing on the sidewalk next to Whittal's body. Using a metal detector, investigators also attempted to locate bullets and casings where Whittal had previously fired shots into the nearby building.

Investigators obtained drone footage and blood samples from the scene. They also asked management of the nearby apartment complex if they had any surveillance camera footage, however none was available. During canvassing efforts, several witnesses provided video footage of the shooting and the events preceding it, which investigators collected.

VIIT processed the involved officers at the Renton Police Department. This included photographing them and their equipment, and collecting firearms for evidence. As part of this process, investigators also counted the remaining ammunition in the officers' firearms. Officers did not have body cameras, and only one police vehicle had dashboard camera footage.

#### **Interviewing Involved Officers and Witnesses**

The Renton Police Department made efforts to ensure involved officers and witnesses gave their statements independently. IITs and their member agencies must follow the CJTC's published best practices. As such, agencies must ensure involved and witness officers do not discuss the case with any other witnesses before the IIT obtains statements. Involved officer(s) must be separated, removed from the immediate scene, and assigned a support officer.

According to VIIT policy, the involved agency is responsible for separating and sequestering involved officers, summoning peer support, and arranging the transport of involved officers from the scene to a designated location. Based on our review of the case file, we confirmed that each involved officer provided a public safety statement immediately after the shooting, and then responding officers individually transported them to the police station. Involved officers waited for VIIT to contact them in separate rooms at the station, and they had access to a peer support team member.

VIIT's protocol for member agencies does not instruct supervisors to restrict discussions between involved officers or witness officers about the incident. We found no mention of such directives in any incident reports. The VIIT lead detective explained that it is general practice for member

agencies to instruct officers not to speak about the incident when obtaining a public safety statement. Because a public safety statement is considered a compelled statement, these instructions would not be available to the IIT.

VIIT did not interview the involved officers. Each officer provided a voluntary written statement about one month after the shooting. We reviewed these statements and noted that Swain wrote that he did not speak with anyone about the incident, and Gray did not mention any discussions with other officers. Woodward, who directly witnessed the shooting, was assigned to transport Phillips back to the station. However, neither officers' statements mentioned any discussions that may have occurred.

VIIT investigators also attempted to obtain statements from potential witnesses. They interviewed and obtained recorded statements from Whittal's father and sister on the day of the shooting. Investigators canvassed the nearby area, contacting more than 25 households and obtaining verbal, written or recorded statements from those who witnessed the shooting in some capacity. Many witnesses said that they heard gun shots and officers' commands to drop a weapon. We also reviewed first responders' narratives and their actions, and determined that they addressed conditions at the scene when they arrived.

#### **Case File Integrity**

VIIT does not have a process to limit access to the case file to only investigators participating in the investigation. During an active investigation, the WAC requires IITs to restrict the case file from everyone except for IIT members involved with the investigation.

Each VIIT member agency maintains its own records management system. This decentralized approach inherently establishes firewalls between each agency, so the involved agency would not have access. However, this does not limit access to only IIT members within the lead agency investigating the incident. The system would not prevent lead agency employees who did not have a role in the investigation from accessing case files. The Des Moines lead detective said that due to the small size of the agency, all detectives on the team generally participate in investigations. Ultimately, we were unable to obtain support demonstrating that any non-participating IIT members did not access the case file.

We did not find evidence that any VIIT members received prohibited information during the investigation. The WAC prohibits IIT members from remaining on an investigation if they receive compelled information that could contaminate the investigation.

#### **Conflicts of Interest**

VIIT investigators completed forms to determine if they had any connections with the involved officers that would prevent them from completing an objective investigation. However, the form did not include all required questions, and one investigator did not complete the form on time.

The WAC requires that investigators and community representatives complete a "conflict of interest" assessment regarding any connection to the officers that are under investigation within

72 hours of the start of the investigation. The assessment should include questions about prior interactions or relationships with the officers under investigation, as well as address social conflicts, work conflicts and biases. Community representatives and the IIT commander are required to review investigators' conflict of interest assessments to determine if any investigators should be removed from the case.

We reviewed these assessments and found that all the participating investigators completed them. However, VIIT could not find an assessment for one community representative, and the second representative completed the form after the 72-hour deadline. Additionally, the forms did not include any questions related to potential biases that could affect an investigator's objectivity, as required by the WAC.

We found evidence that the VIIT commander reviewed investigators' assessments and sent them to both community representatives to review. At this time, the commander granted the community representatives the opportunity to discuss possible conflicts. The Des Moines lead detective said VIIT gives community representatives an opportunity to review these forms during an initial briefing at the start of the investigation.

See **Appendix B** for a complete list of the requirements we reviewed and a summary chart of our audit results.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

#### We recommend VIIT:

- Ensure access to the case file is properly limited to VIIT members participating in the investigation, and maintain documentation demonstrating it did so
- Ensure community representatives sign a confidentiality agreement and conflict of interest form within 72 hours of the start of each investigation, and maintain documentation demonstrating it did so
- Ensure conflict of interest forms that are completed by investigators and community representatives include questions related to biases
- Provide weekly public updates, as required

We also recommend VIIT's member agencies instruct involved and witness officers not to discuss the case before providing statements to VIIT, and maintain documentation that they did so.

#### INDEPENDENT INVESTIGATION TEAM RESPONSE



May 15, 2024

The Honourable Pat McCarthy Office of the Washington State Auditor PO Box 40021 Olympia, WA 98504

Dear State Auditor McCarthy,

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the State Auditor's Compliance Report reviewing the deadly force incident that occurred on November 8, 2021, in Renton, investigated by the Valley Independent Investigative Team (VIIT). The Valley Independent Investigative Team values integrity, credibility and independence in order to maintain the trust of stakeholders.

This letter is to address audit recommendations that you provided as follows:

- Ensuring that access to the case file is properly limited to VIIT members participating in the investigation, and maintain documentation of such.
  - Although no evidence exists that non-VIIT members accessed files, we have worked with our IT department to partition cases within our case management system as well as documenting who is designated VIIT members.
- Ensure community representatives sign a confidentiality agreement and conflict of interest form within 72 hours of the start of each investigation, and maintain documentation of such.
  - These forms will be presented to volunteer community representatives at the onset of investigations.
- Ensure conflict of interest forms that are completed by investigators and community representatives include questions related to biases.
  - Forms were updated with guidance from the Criminal Justice Training Commission and have been instituted within VIIT.



Provide weekly public updates, as required.

Press releases are required by WAC on a weekly basis, even when no change has occurred in the investigation, until the case is forwarded to the prosecutor. Cases may take a year or more, due to a backlog of cases at the Crime Laboratory. We will continue to abide by this WAC, though we believe that it should be amended to require releases only when a substantial change in the investigation occurs.

Lastly, law enforcement agency policies instruct involved and witness officers not to discuss the case with each other (excluding a public safety statement) before providing statements to VIIT. Often this type of guidance is also included in body worn videos worn by supervisors on scene.

The Valley Independent Investigative Team always strives to produce a quality, impartial investigation and appreciated your review of this case in order to maintain the highest standards.

Sincerely

Mark Couey Assistant Chief

# APPENDIX A: AUTHORITY, SCOPE, OBJECTIVE AND METHODOLOGY

#### **Authority**

In 2018, Washington voters passed Initiative 940, which, in part, required investigations of police use of deadly force be conducted by an agency completely independent of one with the involved officers. It tasked the Washington State Criminal Justice Commission (CJTC) with adopting rules to govern these investigations. In 2019, the CJTC created a workgroup, including stakeholders from community groups and law enforcement agencies, to adopt rules for independent investigations. The rules were outlined in Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 139-12-030 and took effect in January 2020.

The rules were designed to help ensure investigations are independent, transparent, credible and communicated timely to the public and affected people. The rules define the elements of an independent investigation, and explain the duties of the involved agency and independent investigation team (IIT) after police use deadly force that results in death, substantial bodily harm or great bodily harm. In 2021, the Legislature amended state law (RCW 43.101.460) to require our Office audit investigations into police use of deadly force to ensure compliance with the new rules.

#### Scope

This audit assessed whether the Renton Police Department and the Valley Independent Investigative Team (VIIT) complied with state laws and rules regarding the investigation of the use of deadly force that resulted in the death of Alexander Whittal. It reviewed whether the law enforcement agencies met the criteria for independent investigations as outlined in WAC 139-12-030.

By law, the audit only reviewed the investigation. It did not review the use of deadly force incident nor assess whether the use of force was justified.

### **Objective**

This audit examined whether the Renton Police Department and VIIT complied with state laws and rules regarding independent investigations of police use of deadly force.

#### Methodology

To determine whether the Renton Police Department and VIIT complied with state laws and rules regarding independent investigations of police use of deadly force, we reviewed investigative files related to the case and interviewed IIT members. We interviewed IIT members to understand their investigative process and how they documented their procedures and findings. We also spoke to one of the IIT's community representatives to confirm whether she was involved in required processes of the investigation. In the case files, we searched for evidence demonstrating the IIT followed the legal requirements. We also reviewed training records from the CJTC and member police agencies.

# APPENDIX B: WAC 139-12-030 COMPLIANCE SUMMARY

# Independence

Requirement	Compliant?
The involved agency and/or other first responders will provide or facilitate first	Yes
aid at the scene if necessary.	
The involved agency will relinquish control of the scene.	Yes
The involved agency will not participate in the investigation.	Yes
Any specialized equipment belonging to the involved agency will be approved by the community representatives and the independent investigation team (IIT) commander before it is used in the investigation.	Not applicable
Information shared by the IIT to the involved agency will be limited to briefings about the progress of the investigation.	Not applicable
The IIT commander will honor requests from the involved agency to release body cam video or other investigation information of urgent public interest.	Not applicable

# **Transparency**

Requirement	Compliant?
A minimum of two non-law enforcement community representatives will be assigned to the IIT.	Yes
The community representatives will:	
Review conflict-of-interest statements submitted within 72 hours of the commencement of each investigation	Yes
<ul> <li>Be present at the briefings with the chief or sheriff of the involved agency(ies)</li> </ul>	Not applicable
Have access to the investigation file when it is completed	Yes
Be provided a copy of all press releases and communication sent to the media prior to release	Yes
Review notification of equipment use of the involved agency	Not applicable
The community representatives will sign a confidentiality agreement at the beginning of the investigation.	No
The IIT will provide public updates about the investigation at a minimum of once per week, even if there is no new progress to report.	No
When an independent investigation is complete, the information will be made available to the public in a manner consistent with applicable state law.	Yes

# Communication

Requirement	Compliant?
A family member of the person against whom deadly force has been used will be notified of the incident as soon as possible.	Not applicable
The IIT will assign a family liaison within the first 24 hours of the investigation.	Yes
The family liaison will keep the family informed about all significant developments in the investigation.	Yes
The family liaison will give the family advanced notice of all scheduled press releases.	Yes
Neither the involved agency nor the IIT will provide the media with criminal background information of the person against whom deadly force has been used, unless it is specifically requested, and release of the information is required by the Public Records Act or other applicable laws.	Yes
The involved agency will notify the Governor's Office of Indian Affairs (GOIA) in accordance with RCW 10.114.021 if the person against whom deadly force is used is a member of a federally recognized tribe.	Not applicable
A member of the IIT will be assigned as a tribal liaison within the first 24 hours and keep the tribe (or a representative of the tribe's choice) informed about all significant developments of the investigation.	Not applicable

# Credibility

Requirement	Compliant?
The involved agency and other first responders will secure the incident scene and maintain its integrity until the IIT arrives.	Yes
The involved agency and other first responders will locate and preserve evanescent evidence.	Yes
The IIT will follow these accepted best practices for homicide investigations published and annually updated by the Washington State Criminal Justice Training Center (CJTC):	
<ul> <li>Until all statements have been taken, involved and witness officers shall not discuss the case with any other witnesses.</li> </ul>	Unable to determine
• The involved agency or first responders will separate involved officer(s) and remove them from the immediate scene.	Yes
<ul> <li>The IIT will obtain statements from subjects and witnesses. Audio and/or video recording is preferred and should be attempted.</li> </ul>	Yes
<ul> <li>Interviews of involved officers should follow the policies of their individual agency, collective bargaining agreement and case law.</li> </ul>	Not applicable
• Interviews with emergency medical personnel, fire department personnel, and first responding officers should address conditions at the incident scene.	Yes
• The IIT will canvass the immediate area for potential witnesses who have not come forward and obtain information or statements as available.	Yes
• In the event of death, consult with the coroner or medical examiner at the scene and at, or subsequent to, the autopsy. A member of the IIT must attend the autopsy and take all appropriate investigative steps, consistent with other criminal investigations.	Yes
• Until the case file is delivered to the prosecutor, access to the IIT case file should be restricted to the IIT members involved.	No
If any member of the IIT receives prohibited information, the investigator receiving the prohibited information must immediately report it to their supervisor and the member must discontinue participation in the investigation.	Not applicable
Within 72 hours of the start of each investigation, investigators and community representatives must complete a "conflict of interest" assessment tool regarding any connection to the officers being investigated that assesses work and social conflicts and biases.	No
The IIT commander will review the conflict-of interest-assessment within 72 hours of the start of the investigation.	Yes
The community representatives and the IIT commander will discuss the conflict-of-interest assessments.	Yes

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