Press Release

February 27th 2020

**Request for Volunteer Community Representatives to serve on an Independent Investigative Team**

In 2018 voters of the State of Washington passed Initiative 940. It has been codified in the Washington Administrative Code as WAC 139-11 **Law Enforcement Training and Community Safety Act** and WAC 139-12 **Law Enforcement Training and Community Safety Act- Independent Investigations Criteria.** These measures specify that when a Law enforcement officer uses deadly force that results in death, substantial bodily harm, or great bodily harm an independent investigation will occur conducted by an **Independent Investigative Team (IIT)**. The **ITT** is defined as - A team of qualified and certified peace officer investigators, civilian crime scene specialists, 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. An **IIT** is created when multiple law enforcement agencies enter into a written agreement to investigate police use of deadly force incidents in their geographical regions. A single law enforcement agency may fulfill the independent investigative function, provided it is not the involved agency.

According to the WAC, the non-law-enforcement representatives, “should have credibility with and ties to communities impacted by police use of deadly force.” It goes on to state, “Chiefs and Sheriffs of each regional team shall create a transparent process for soliciting names and creating a roster of individuals willing to serve in this capacity.” When the WAC protocol is implemented, selected members would assist the following ways:

* Participate in the vetting, interviewing, and/or selection of IIT investigators.
* Review conflict of interest statements by the investigators during each incident.
* Be present at briefings with the involved agency’s Chief or Sheriff.
* Have access to the investigation file upon its completion.
* Be provided a copy of all press releases/communication to media prior to release.
* Review notification of equipment use of involved agency.
* Sign a binding confidentiality agreement at the beginning of each investigation in which they are involved.

The members of the Cowlitz Association of Sheriff and Police Chiefs (CASPC) are seeking non-law enforcement Cowlitz County community members interested in being placed on a roster to serve in this role. We are seeking a diverse group of citizens from each city as well as unincorporated Cowlitz County. As required, selected representatives may be called upon to assist at various times throughout the year, to include weekends, holidays, and overnight hours. There is no compensation for serving in this capacity. Those who indicate interest in serving will be required to participate in an interview and if selected attend an orientation meeting. To apply, send a letter of interest by March 16, 2020 to:

**sheriff@co.cowlitz .wa.us** or to the Cowlitz County Sheriff’s Office 312 SW 1st Kelso, WA 98626.

For any questions please contact your local law enforcement agency:

Sheriff Brad Thurman – Cowlitz County Sheriff (360) 577-3092

Chief James Duscha – Longview Chief of Police (360) 442-5800

Chief James Kelly – Woodland Chief of Police (360) 225-6965

Chief Ralph Herrera – Kalama Chief of Police (360) 673-2165

Chief Scott Neves – Castle Rock Chief of Police (360) 274-4711

Chief Darr Kirk – Kelso Chief of Police (360) 423-1270