



UPDATE

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Government and Media Relations

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FINAL UPDATE: WSP IIT investigation of TPD in-custody death

OLYMPIA, Wash. – The Washington State Patrol (WSP) Independent Investigation Team (IIT) is sending out this release as the required update regarding the independent investigation into the death of Mr. Manuel Ellis. Mr. Ellis died while in the custody of the Tacoma Police Department on March 3, 2020.

At the request of the Washington State Office of the Attorney General (AG), the WSP served a search warrant on a technology organization in September 2023. The response to the search warrant request has been received by the WSP and forwarded to the AG. The investigation is now closed.

This update is required in compliance with WAC 139-12, which mandates weekly updates be sent out by the lead investigative agency in investigations where a Washington State Peace Officer uses deadly force in the capacity of his or her law enforcement duties. These updates are required even if no new information is available at the time of the update.

Previous press releases can be found at <https://www.wsp.wa.gov/independent-investigation-team/>.

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.

Per WAC 139-12, the IIT is unable to release any criminal history related to the individual, which includes the circumstances surrounding the initial contact, which prompted the law enforcement response. This information can only be released if specifically requested by the media, and is able to be released consistent with the Public Records Act Chapter 42.56 RCW.

Weekly update will be provided as the investigation continues. The policies and operating procedures of the IIT are available to the public at: <https://www.wsp.wa.gov/independent-investigation-team/>.

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