

Non-Law Enforcement Community Representatives: FAQs

Q: How are the non-law enforcement community representatives (Community Representatives) selected for the IIT?

A: The City Manager will solicit names and work with the King County Sheriff's Office (KCSO) to create a roster of up to ten individuals willing to serve as non-law enforcement community representatives (Community Representatives) on an Independent Investigation Team (IIT). Community Representatives will be selected from the roster to serve on an IIT should the need arise.

Q: How can I become a Community Representative?

A: Fill out the application from the City of Covington.

Q: What is the role of the Community Representatives?

A: The appointed Community Representatives are a vital link between the IIT, the community, and the investigation. They will eventually participate in the vetting, interviewing, and selection of IIT investigators, and review conflict of interest statements. They are present at briefings for the involved agency's chief or sheriff; have access to the completed investigation file; review all proposed media press releases; and review any notification of specialized equipment use [WAC 139-12-030(2)(b)].

Q: Do the Community Representatives have to sign any sort of confidentiality agreement?

A: Yes, Community Representatives appointed to an IIT must sign a binding confidentiality agreement at the beginning of each investigation. The confidentiality agreement remains in effect until the prosecutor either declines to file charges or the criminal case is concluded.

Q: Will the Community Representatives be subject to a background check?

Yes. Community Representatives appointed to be on an IIT will be subject to background and conflict-of-interest checks.

Q: When will Community Representatives be notified of an incident?

A: The IIT Commander will notify the appointed Community Representatives at the first opportunity they are able to. The first few hours of a critical incident are very hectic. Assembling and deploying the independent investigation team takes priority. It is recommended that the Community Representatives be notified after the incident scene is stable.

Q: What is the Community Representative's authority in selecting IIT members?

A: WAC 139-12 states that the Community Representative will "participate directly in the vetting, interviewing, and/or selection of IIT investigators", but regulations for this process are not yet developed. IIT Commanders are encouraged to include them in the process (oral board, application review, etc.). At the conclusion of the panel the IIT commander shall consider the recommendations of the panel and select those best suited for the needs of the IIT.

Q: What is the Community Representative's authority regarding press releases?

A: A copy of all press releases and communication to the media should be provided to the Community Representatives prior to release, so that they can provide an independent review of the content of the press release.

Q: How long will Community Representatives remain on the roster?

A: The length of commitment is 4 years.

Q: If selected to serve on an IIT, what is my time commitment?

A: The hours will vary depending on the incident. Community Representatives may be called at various and unpredictable hours, including on weekends and holidays. Because Community Representatives will be involved in an active investigation, events are dynamic. Community Representatives will need to respond quickly and, at times, with little warning.

Q: Will I receive training?

A: Community Representative may be required to attend relevant orientation and training related to the position, which will be provided at no expense. Training opportunities will be coordinated between the City of Covington and the King County Sheriff's Office.