



CITY OF LAKE FOREST PARK

CITY COUNCIL

AGENDA COVER SHEET

Meeting Date January 22, 2026

Originating Department Police Department

Contact Person Mike Harden, Police Chief

Title Resolution 26-2059/Independent Force Investigation Team King County (IFIT-KC) Second Modification to the Independent Force Investigation Team – King County (IFIT-KC) Interlocal Cooperative Agreement adding Seattle Police Department as a member agency.

Legislative History

- First Presentation January 22, 2026, Regular Meeting

Attachments:

1. Resolution 26-2059
2. Proposed Second Modification To The Interlocal Cooperative Agreement To Provide Law Enforcement Mutual Aid Between The Washington State Patrol, King County Sheriff's Office, University Of Washington, And The Cities Of Bellevue, Clyde Hill, Duvall, Lake Forest Park, Issaquah, Lake Forest Park, Medina, Mercer Island, Redmond, And Snoqualmie For The Creation Of The Independent Force Investigation Team – King County (IFIT-KC)
3. Resolution 1811, July 22, 2021 (First Modification ILA)
4. Resolution 1799, January 28, 2021 (Council authorize IFIT-KC ILA)

Executive Summary

The Independent Force Investigation Team of King County (IFIT-KC) operates to provide independent investigation services in the event of an officer-involved use of deadly force in north King County that results in death or substantial physical injury. King County also falls within region 3 of the newly established Washington State Office of Independent Investigations; once set up, this independent state agency will operate to investigate such officer-involved use of force cases statewide.

State law requires all uses of deadly force by a peace officer that results in death, substantial bodily harm, or great bodily harm be investigated completely independent of the agency that used the deadly

force. Law enforcement agencies under a federal consent decree, federal settlement agreement, or federal court order are exempt from this legal requirement.

Seattle Police Department (SPD) was under a federal consent decree when IFIT-KC was first established in 2021 and utilized its own investigative processes as part of its consent decree. In September 2025, the City of Seattle and its police department were released from its federal consent decree; it must now have its deadly uses of force investigated by an independent investigation team. Seattle now seeks to join IFIT-KC as a member agency so that IFIT-KC will be the independent investigative body to investigate SPD if it is involved in a use of deadly force that results in death or substantial physical injury. By adding the SPD as a member agency, IFIT-KC will gain additional investigative resources, investigators, and equipment from Seattle.

Background

The Lake Forest Park Police Department has always recognized the gravity of an officer-involved shooting as a serious use of force incident. LFPPD supports the importance of utilizing an outside agency to conduct investigation into a critical incident of this nature to maintain independence and objectivity.

In November 2018, Initiative-940 was passed by Washington State voters, and, in 2019, the Washington Legislature amended portions of I-940 through SHB 1064, with both now referred to together as the Law Enforcement Training and Community Safety Act (LETSCA). Through stakeholder input, the Washington State Criminal Justice Training Commission (WSCJTC) was tasked with creating and adopting rules for new training requirements for police officers (Chapter 139-12 WAC) and rules for Independent Investigative Teams to conduct investigations into officer-involved uses of deadly force (Chapter 139-11 WAC).

An independent investigation team is created when multiple law enforcement agencies enter into a written agreement to investigate police use of deadly force incidents in their geographical regions. Since January 5, 2020, chapter 139-12 of the Washington Administrative Code applies to the investigation of all officer-involved uses of deadly force incidents that result in death, substantial bodily harm, or great bodily harm.

To summarize the requirements of the state regulations: An IFIT is made up of qualified and certified peace officer investigators, crime scene and evidence specialists, and at least two non-law enforcement community representatives, operating completely independent of the agency whose officers were involved in the use of force. The IFIT investigation is a criminal investigation into the officer(s) involved actions, separate from a department administrative investigation into policy or procedure violations. Certified IFIT investigators must be able to prove they have attended applicable training and have the appropriate investigative experience.

The IFIT Commander, public information officer or another member of the IFIT will provide public updates about the investigation at a minimum of once per week. The IFIT will provide a family liaison to keep the family of the person against whom deadly force has been used apprised of all significant developments in the independent investigation. The Department can assist in securing the scene of a critical incident but may not participate in the investigation.

Team members must be experienced Detectives who have demonstrated a history of honorable behavior and have received specialized training in the investigation of fatal or otherwise serious injury incidents to include, but not limited to, officer-involved shootings, basic homicide investigation, LETSCA de-escalation, and mental health training. To be assigned to the IFIT, the Detectives must receive WSCJTC approval.

In 2021, the Lake Forest Park City Council adopted Resolution 1799 approving an interlocal agreement creating IFIT-KC and, as a result, the Lake Forest Park Police Department joined IFIT-KC as an active member. Currently, the IFIT-KC team is made up of 12 participating agencies:

- Washington State Patrol
- King County Sheriff's Office
- Bellevue Police Department
- Clyde Hill Police Department
- Duvall Police Department
- Issaquah Police Department
- Kirkland Department
- Lake Forest Park Police Department
- Medina Police Department
- Redmond Police Department
- Snoqualmie Police Department
- University of Washington Police Department

For IFIT-KC, the Chief of Police is a member of the executive board of directors, with voting authority over any changes to policy, procedure or protocol. The IFIT has a command structure similar to other multi-agency endeavors to include a commander, assistant-commander and a number of lead investigators who are responsible for directing participating detectives.

The Department has utilized a Commander to be one of the assistant commanders on IFIT-KC. The Department also has three officers who are assigned as detectives with one of them working to be certified by WACJTC as a Lead Investigator. We also have two additional recent lateral hires that were prior detectives in IFIT-KC from their respective agencies that would be approved to be part of the team.

If a critical incident occurred in Lake Forest Park, the investigation would occur completely independent of the Department and our Lake Forest Park Detectives would not be utilized in or informed about the ongoing investigation.

Recently, the Seattle Police Department (SPD) requested to become a member agency of IFITKC. SPD has not previously been a member of an independent force investigation team because, in 2012, the City of Seattle entered a federal consent decree, following DOJ findings of excessive force and biased policing. For more than a decade, SPD operated under federal oversight, conducting its own investigations of force incidents, and was exempt from state requirements to be a member of an independent investigation team.

On September 3, 2025, a U.S. District Judge determined SPD had satisfied the decree's requirements and ended federal oversight and returning full local control to the Mayor's Office. With the conclusion of federal oversight, Washington State law requires SPD to join an independent investigation team. To meet this requirement in the short-term, SPD entered into a temporary memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the King County Sheriff's Office to investigate officer-involved deadly force encounters until SPD formally integrates into an established IFIT-KC.

Recognizing the need for a permanent solution, IFIT-KC executive members developed a proposed modification to the existing ILA to formally admit SPD into the team. This modification to the ILA ensures SPD's compliance with Initiative 940, expands IFIT-KC's investigative capacity, and reinforces regional collaboration in line with national standards for independent oversight. Independent investigations are critical to maintaining community trust. SPD's move to join IFIT-KC signals a shift toward greater accountability. By joining IFIT-KC, SPD will align with statewide standards for independent investigations, reinforcing transparency and public trust.

Collaboration across jurisdictions strengthens investigative independence and resource capacity. The addition of SPD to IFIT-KC would bring additional resources to the team in the form of commanders, assistant-commanders, supervisors, lead detectives, and evidence technicians. Certified evidence technicians are an especially helpful addition, as only the King County Sheriff's Office and the Washington State Patrol currently have specially trained personnel to process a scene.

Incorporating SPD into IFIT-KC would spread the workload amongst the member agencies and could lessen the impact on Lake Forest Park's staff.

Proposed Resolution 26-2059 would authorize the Mayor to execute the second modification to the existing ILA. The second modification would add the Seattle Police Department as a member agency of IFIT-KC and would also clarify the scope and conditions of independent investigative services in compliance with Washington Law.

Additional proposed changes are summarized below:

Section II, 4(f): IFIT-KC may investigate deadly force incidents involving in-custody individuals in member-operated jails. The cities of Kirkland and Issaquah are the only member agencies with member-operated jails.

Section II, 4(b): Services are limited to those required under RCW 10.114.011, and investigations must follow IFIT-KC Protocol and Chapter 139-12 WAC.

This modification is made to ensure that IFIT-KC is not requested to perform investigations for any officer-involved uses of force that are not required to be investigated under state law, which are those officer-involved uses of deadly force incidents that result in death, substantial bodily harm, or great bodily harm.

Section II, 4(d): Member agencies may allow limited oversight access outside immediate crime scenes; once IFIT-KC assumes control, scene security and access follow IFIT-KC protocols.

This modification is made to ensure that member agencies' internal policies and protocols do not interfere with the work of the IFIT-KC investigation team.

Policy Impact:

Chapter 39.34 RCW and the Washington Mutual Peace Officers Powers Act, as codified in Chapter 10.93 RCW, authorizes the city to establish the terms and conditions pursuant to which the city will provide and receive mutual aid law enforcement services.

RCW 10.114.011 requires a completely independent investigation into the deadly use of force by a peace officer that results in death, great bodily harm, or substantial bodily harm to inform any determination of whether the use of deadly force met the good faith standard established in RCW 9A.16.040 and satisfied other applicable laws and policies.

Funding Source:

There is no fiscal source associated with implementing these changes.

Staff Recommendation:

Staff recommends approval of the Second Modification to the ILA for creation of the Independent Force Investigation Team. Staff recommend waving the three-touch rule as most (if not all) IFIT-KC agencies have approved this Second Modification to the ILA this month.