



PUBLIC STATEMENT

Tacoma Police Department

Tacoma, Washington

cityoftacoma.org/police

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 21, 2023

Tacoma Police Department Statement on the Verdicts in State of Washington v. TPD Officers Burbank, Collins & Rankine

The Tacoma Police Department acknowledges today's not guilty verdicts in the State of Washington vs. Police Officers Burbank, Collins, and Rankine may exacerbate the pain caused by the death of Mr. Ellis. The past nearly four years have been filled with wide-spread anger, mistrust, and apprehension and have severely divided the people of this city. Even though this criminal process has concluded, TPD's leadership and the entire department understand there are many questions about where we all go from here, as a city and as a community.

First and foremost, the Tacoma Police Department will continue its commitment to creating a just and transparent model of public safety that builds trust between TPD employees and all community members. This dedication to accountability did not end with today's verdicts, and the following processes have already begun:

- Because the not guilty verdicts do not impact the Tacoma Police Department's internal investigation, it is important for that process to be finalized, independent of the criminal trial.
- As courthouse testimony concluded December 6, Tacoma Police Department Internal Affairs immediately resumed its internal investigation into the three officers' conduct on March 3, 2020, to include the officers' own testimony on the witness stand.
- Although the criminal trial ultimately resulted in not guilty verdicts, TPD is committed to finalizing its own investigation for administrative completeness regarding potential use of force and courtesy violations.
- TPD expects to complete its internal investigation within the next 24 hours.
- Once complete, the results of that internal investigation will be reviewed by Chief Avery Moore.
- Within 10 business days of the jury announcing its verdict, Chief Moore will make his decision on potential discipline, up to and including termination.

- If any discipline may include financial impacts to the officers, Chief Moore is bound by law to hold pre-disciplinary (Loudermill) hearings, which he will schedule with the required 72-hour notice.
- Chief Moore will make any final disciplinary decisions within 14 business days of the verdict.
- Those decisions will be shared with the public.

No criminal trial will bring Mr. Ellis back to his loved ones. The Tacoma Police Department acknowledges this and the widespread pain this incident caused. Moving forward, TPD will continue its commitment to creating a just and transparent model of public safety that builds trust in TPD's employees and the City overall.

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