



## It's time to end systemic misconduct: Pass HB 1445

This bill would create a way for the state to investigate local law enforcement departments through the Washington State Attorney General's office. In order to understand and change systemic failures in policing, we need HB 1445.

Currently, the primary way to bring an investigation into systemic issues at a department is to request one from the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), which serves the entire country and has limited capacity.

### What is in HB 1445?

HB 1445, The Attorney General (AG) Civil Rights and Investigations and Reform bill, **strengthens and clarifies our state AG's authority to investigate and sue agencies or departments and jails.**

- **Where and when to investigate:** When there are systemic failures that result in violations of the state constitution or laws.
- **Why we need investigations:** In order to uncover and stop patterns of misconduct and/or systemic failures within a department, which are hurting people and eroding trust in law enforcement.
- **What could change for the better:** Such investigations and suits could ensure that a given department's policies, practices, trainings, discipline, and outcomes are brought into compliance with the Washington constitution and state law, preventing future harm.

### Why we need HB 1445

This bill would help ensure a fundamental baseline for policing across the state.

When a department causes harm, we need a way to change it in order to save lives and keep people safe. This bill would give us a state-level way to investigate law enforcement departments.

### Is it a pattern or not?

In these 2023 incidents, was the misconduct part of a department-wide failure, or an isolated incident?

- The 2023 trial of three Tacoma police officers who killed Manny Ellis unearthed concerns by the medical examiner that police withheld vital information which would have aided his initial report.
- Footage released of an officer break room showed a tombstone mocking Damarius Butts, a 19-year-old Black man killed by the Seattle Police Department.
- Footage was released of two police leaders minimizing the life of 23-year-old Jaahnavi Kandula, who was killed by officers while lawfully walking across the street.

When an incident happens that makes us question a department's ability to keep community's safe, an investigation by the AG's civil rights department could help us understand why it happened and how to stop it.