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17th Judicial DA Brian Mason and 18th Judicial DA John Kellner Announce Addition of Aurora Police Department to Critical Incident Response Teams

(April 23, 2021) -- District Attorneys Brian Mason and John Kellner are pleased to announce that the Aurora Police Department will join the Critical Incident Response Teams for the 17th and 18th Judicial Districts, respectively. These two teams conduct independent, multi-agency investigations into officer-involved shootings and in-custody deaths. Until now, the Aurora Police Department has not participated in these teams.

C.R.S. § 16-2.5-301 mandates that law enforcement agencies in Colorado participate in a multi-agency team "in conducting any investigation, evaluation, and review of an incident involving the discharge of a firearm by a peace officer that resulted in injury or death."

The north part of Aurora is in Adams County, in Mason's 17th Judicial District; the south part is in Arapahoe County, Kellner's 18th Judicial District.

"The law enforcement agencies in the 18th Judicial District have agreed to bring the Aurora Police Department into our Critical Incident Response Team, understanding this was in the best interest of transparency and adherence to the spirit of the law. We welcome the expertise of APD investigators as they will now reciprocate when needed for our other agencies," Kellner said. "When I examine the facts of a shooting to determine whether charges should be brought, I need to know I am looking at an independent investigation. This move by APD is a step in the right direction."

"I welcome the Aurora Police Department to the Critical Incident Response Team for the 17th Judicial District," said District Attorney Brian Mason. "When a person dies or is injured during an encounter with police, the incident must be investigated thoroughly, independently and with integrity. That's precisely what the Critical Incident Response Team does. With today's announcement, I have much greater confidence that any such incident – whether it occurs in Aurora or another community in my jurisdiction – will be investigated properly."

“Our relationship with the two CIRT teams is another step towards my commitment to A New Way of serving our community, said Aurora Police Chief Vanessa Wilson. This partnership brings additional transparency into our critical incident investigations, and will promote trust with the community we serve.”

The Aurora Police Department has already begun its integration into these two teams and this announcement takes immediate effect. Any future qualifying incidents will be investigated by the Critical Incident Response Team for the respective Judicial District.

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