



**King County**

Department of Executive Services

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**INQUEST INTO THE DEATH OF JASON S. SEAVERS  
# 18IQ61954**

**INSTRUCTIONS TO THE INQUEST PANEL**

DATED 28 day of April 2023

  
Julia Garratt  
Inquest Administrator

No. 1

It is your duty to determine the facts in this matter from the evidence admitted and to report your findings to the Inquest Administrator in writing, by answering the Interrogatories, which will be submitted to you.

The evidence that you are to consider during your deliberations consists of the testimony that you have heard from witnesses, stipulations, and the exhibits that I have admitted, during the inquest. If evidence was not admitted or was stricken from the record, then you are not to consider it in answering the Interrogatories. In addition, you must not consider or draw any inferences from the fact that an inquest is being held in this matter.

One of my duties has been to rule on the admissibility of evidence. Do not be concerned during your deliberations about the reasons for my rulings on the evidence. If I have ruled that any evidence is inadmissible or where I have redacted portions of any exhibits, or if I have asked you to disregard any evidence, then you must not discuss that evidence during your deliberations or consider it in answering the Interrogatories. On the other hand, to answer the Interrogatories, you must consider all of the evidence that I have admitted that relates to each Interrogatory.

As jurors, you have been allowed to request that additional questions be asked of the witnesses and to request that other persons testify. Any such request has been reviewed by me and by the parties' lawyers. If a requested question was not asked, or a requested witness was not called you may not speculate about the reasons for that decision or discuss the fact that the question was not asked or that the witness was not called.

No. 2

You are the sole judges of the credibility of each witness. You are also the sole judges of the value or weight to be given to the testimony of each witness. In considering a witness's testimony, you may consider these things: the opportunity of the witness to observe or know the things he or she testifies about; the ability of the witness to observe accurately; the quality of a witness's memory while testifying; the manner of the witness while testifying; any personal interest that the witness might have in the outcome or the issues; any bias or prejudice that the witness may have shown; the reasonableness of the witness's statements in the context of all of the other evidence; and any other factors that affect your evaluation or belief of a witness or your evaluation of his or her testimony.

No. 3

The lawyers' questions are intended to help you understand the evidence. It is important, however, for you to remember that the lawyers' questions are not evidence. The evidence is the testimony and the exhibits. You must disregard any question or answer thereto which has been stricken.

You may have heard objections made by the lawyers during this inquest. The lawyers have the right to object to questions asked by another lawyer and may have a duty to do so. These objections should not influence you. Do not make any assumptions or draw any conclusions based on a lawyer's objections.

Because it is your role as jurors to evaluate the evidence, it would be improper for me to express, by words or conduct, my personal opinion about the value of testimony or other evidence. If it appeared to you that I have indicated my personal opinion in any way, either during this inquest or in giving these instructions, you must disregard this entirely.

As jurors, it is your duty to answer each Interrogatory fairly and properly. You must act impartially with an earnest desire to determine and declare the truth. You must answer the Interrogatories based on the evidence, and not on sympathy, prejudice, or personal preference.

No. 4

Evidence may be either direct or circumstantial. Direct evidence is that given by a witness who testifies concerning facts that he or she has directly observed or perceived through the senses. Circumstantial evidence is evidence of facts or circumstances from which the existence or nonexistence of other facts may be reasonably inferred from common experience. The law makes no distinction between the weight to be given to either direct or circumstantial evidence. One is not necessarily more or less valuable than the other.

No. 5

A witness who has special training, education or experience may be allowed to express an opinion in addition to giving testimony as to facts. You are not, however, required to accept his or her opinion. To determine the credibility and weight to be given such opinion evidence, you may consider, among other things, the education, training, experience, knowledge, and ability of the witness. You may also consider the reasons given for the opinion and the sources of his or her information, as well as considering the factors already given to you for evaluating the testimony of any other witness.

No. 6

When you begin deliberating, you should first select a presiding juror. The presiding juror's duty is to see that you discuss the issues in this inquest in an orderly and reasonable manner, that you fully and fairly discuss each issue submitted for your decision, and that each one of you has a chance to be heard on every question before you. It will be the duty of each of you to discuss this case fully with your fellow jurors, to express your own views, and to fully consider the views of the other jurors.

It is also the duty of each of you to evaluate the evidence with an open mind free of bias or prejudice. If during your deliberations, you become concerned that the discussions are being influenced by preconceived bias or prejudice, you must bring this to the attention of the other jurors so that the issue may be fairly discussed among all members of the jury.

During your deliberations, you may discuss any notes that you have taken during the inquest, if you wish. You have been allowed to take notes to assist you in remembering clearly, not to substitute for your memory or the memories or notes of other jurors. Do not assume, however, that your notes are more or less accurate than your memory.

You will need to rely on your notes, if you took them, and your memory as to the testimony presented in this inquest. Testimony will not be repeated for you during your deliberations.

If, after carefully reviewing the evidence and instructions, you feel a need to ask me a legal or procedural question that you have been unable to answer, write the question out simply and clearly. For this purpose, use the form provided in the jury room. In your question, do not state how the jury has answered any Interrogatory. The presiding juror should sign and date the question and give it to an Inquest Program Coordinator. I will consider your question and determine what response, if any, can be given.

You will be given all the exhibits admitted in evidence, these instructions, and the written Interrogatories to be answered by you. If an exhibit was admitted for illustrative purposes only, the exhibit may not be brought into the jury room.

No. 7

It is the duty of the presiding juror to complete the written Interrogatories. After fully and fairly discussing each issue and exchanging their interpretations of the evidence, on each Interrogatory, the presiding juror must set out in the blanks provided the number of jurors who answer “YES”, the number of jurors who answer “NO”, the number of jurors who answer “UNKNOWN” to each question and, when asked, the number of jurors who answer “DID NOT ANSWER.”

After every Interrogatory, the presiding juror must allow each juror to have the opportunity to provide a written explanation of the juror’s answer if the juror believes that a written explanation will provide information will be helpful. No juror is required to provide an explanation to any answer, but the jurors are encouraged to consider doing so. While a simple “YES,” “NO,” “UNKNOWN,” or “DID NOT ANSWER” may answer the question, it may not fully explain the reasons for the answer. We are truly interested in those reasons. Any explanations you choose to offer will be helpful to the community to understand what happened during this incident and to understand the reasons for your decisions. You will be provided with forms for you to write any explanation that you wish to provide.

A juror may not need to answer a specific Interrogatory if the juror’s answer to a previous question makes it unnecessary. For example, if a juror concludes that a specific policy did not apply, then that juror must not answer an Interrogatory asking whether a particular officer complied with that policy. But, if another juror concludes that the policy did apply, then that juror must answer the question about whether a particular officer did or did not comply with that policy. The Interrogatories will indicate when a situation such as this is applicable.



No. 8

When answering each Interrogatory, you should respond “YES” when you believe a preponderance of the evidence supports responding to the question in the affirmative. You should respond “NO” when you believe a preponderance of the evidence supports responding to the question in the negative. You should respond “UNKNOWN” if either (1) the weight of the evidence equally supports responding to the question in the affirmative and the negative or (2) not enough evidence was presented to allow the juror to answer the question in the affirmative or the negative. You should answer “DID NOT ANSWER” if, because of the contingent nature of the Interrogatory, you were not required to answer the Interrogatory. The jury does not need to be unanimous in the answers to each Interrogatory.

A “preponderance of the evidence” means that you must be persuaded, considering all the evidence bearing on the question, that your answer to a given question is more probably true than not true.

No. 9

Compliance with SPD Policies 8.200 (Sections 6), regarding the duty to request or render medical aid following a use of force, may be accomplished by any officer and need not be accomplished by the officer or officers who used force.

No. 10

A death caused by an officer's use of deadly force is justifiable when necessarily used by the officer to overcome actual resistance to the order of an officer, or in the discharge of a legal duty.

No. 11

A death caused by an officer's use of deadly force is justifiable when necessarily used by the officer to arrest or apprehend a person who the officer reasonably believes has committed, or attempted to commit, a felony.

In considering whether to use deadly force to arrest or apprehend any person for the commission of any crime, an officer must have probable cause to believe that the person, if not apprehended, poses a threat of serious physical harm to the officer or a threat of serious physical harm to others.

Among the circumstances which may be considered by an officer as a "threat of serious physical harm" are the following:

(a) The person threatened the officer with a weapon or displayed a weapon in a manner that could reasonably be construed as threatening; or

(b) There is probable cause to believe that the person committed any crime involving the infliction or threatened infliction of serious physical harm.

No. 12

“Deadly force” means the intentional application of force through the use of a firearm.

No. 13

“Necessary” or “necessarily” means that, under the circumstances as they appeared to the actor at the time, (1) no reasonably effective alternative to the use of force appeared to exist and (2) the amount of force used was reasonable to effect the lawful purpose intended.

No. 14

An assault is an act, with unlawful force, done with intent to inflict bodily injury upon another, tending but failing to accomplish it and accompanied with the apparent present ability to inflict the bodily injury if not prevented. It is not necessary that bodily injury be inflicted.

An assault is also an act, with unlawful force, done with the intent to create in another apprehension and fear of bodily injury, and which in fact creates in another a reasonable apprehension and imminent fear of bodily injury even though the actor did not actually intend to inflict bodily injury.

No. 15

The crime of assault with a deadly weapon is a felony.



No. 16

A firearm is a deadly weapon.

No. 17

“Probable cause” means facts known to the officer at the time, that would cause a reasonably cautious officer to believe the proposition at issue, that is, whether Jason Seavers posed a threat of serious physical harm to the officer or to others or committed any crime involving the infliction or threatened infliction of serious physical harm. In determining whether the facts known to the officer justified this belief, you may take into account the officer’s experience and expertise.

No. 18

If you find that an officer's use of force was not justifiable, then you must decide whether the officer acted without malice and with a good faith belief that the act was justifiable.

No. 19

“Malice” means an evil intent or design to injure another person. Malice may be, but is not required to be, inferred from an act done in willful disregard of the rights of another.

No. 20

“Good faith” means that the officer honestly believed his or her action was justifiable as that term is defined in Instruction No. 11.

No. 21

In determining whether an officer acted without malice and in good faith you may consider, among other things, whether the officer's actions complied with applicable Seattle Police Department policies and/or trainings. However, you may not rely solely on an officer's failure to comply with Seattle Police Department policies and/or trainings to find that the officer acted with malice or not in good faith.

No. 22

**Step 1 – you must determine if it was justified.**

If you find by a preponderance of the evidence that a death caused by an officer's use of deadly force was justifiable as defined in Instruction No. 10 or No. 11, then you must find that the death was not caused by criminal means.

**Step 2 – if not justified, you must determine if a defense applies.**

If you find by a preponderance of the evidence that a death caused by an officer's use of deadly force was not justifiable as defined in Instruction No. 10 or No. 11 and you find by a preponderance of the evidence that the officer's use of deadly force was without malice and with a good faith belief that such force was justifiable, then you must find that the death was not caused by criminal means.

If you find by a preponderance of the evidence that a death caused by an officer's use of deadly force was not justifiable as defined in Instruction No. 10 or No. 11 and you find that the use of deadly force was with malice OR was without a good faith belief that the force was justifiable, then you must find that the death was caused by criminal means.

No. 23

After you have answered the Interrogatories, all members of the jury will then sign the form and the presiding juror will notify the program manager. After the program manager has received your answers, the hearing will reconvene, and you will be conducted into the hearing room. Please leave any notes you have taken in the jury room. I will review your answers to confirm that they are in proper order and if so, they shall be made public.

The program manager will then collect and destroy your notes. No one will be allowed to read your notes.

You have now heard all the testimony in this proceeding and my instructions. Each juror has a copy of my instructions and of the Interrogatories to take with you to the jury room. You may refer to any notes you have taken. So, at this time, please recess to the jury room. Once the program manager has delivered all the admitted exhibits, and each of you is present, you may begin your deliberations.