



May 8, 2020

**STATEMENT OF WASHINGTON ASSOCIATION OF SHERIFFS AND POLICE CHIEFS
LAW ENFORCEMENT'S CONTINUED ROLE DURING STAY AT HOME ORDERS**

(Olympia) --- Washington law enforcement agencies continue to focus on education and engagement during the Stay at Home statewide order and into the next phases. For more than two months, law enforcement officers have worked diligently with their communities. The need to cite or detain anyone has been exceedingly rare.

Law enforcement has always had discretion on enforcement based on individual situations and resources. Sheriffs and Chiefs will continue to communicate and make those tough discretionary decisions in the interest of public safety within our counties and cities. Some Washingtonians will be frustrated they cannot restart their business as soon as they want. Others will be frustrated that violators do not face more severe consequences. Enforcement might be necessary in some situations, while leaving it alone might be a better call for others.

Each community across this state is diverse, experiencing the health and economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic in different ways. We continue to observe all the protocols to address this very real public health threat, as parts of our economy works to safely reopen.

We understand the serious nature of this public health crisis. We must trust our residents, our businesses, and each other and allow local elected officials, in consultation with local public health departments, to assist in managing our gradual return to open more of the economy. Washington's law enforcement community is a ready partner as we move into Washington's phased reopening.

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Attribution can be made to Steven D. Strachan, executive director of WASPC