



LAW AND JUSTICE DAY: JANUARY 29, 2020 • 9:00 AM • COLUMBIA ROOM

BASIC LAW ENFORCEMENT ACADEMY

One of the cornerstones of Washington’s world class law enforcement system is a centralized training academy where all law enforcement officers learn the basics of policing, including crisis intervention, and de-escalation techniques.

Washington’s law enforcement agencies have struggled, for more than a decade, with excessive wait times getting newly hired officers into the academy, causing a multitude of preventable public safety challenges.

Addressing the capacity needs of the Basic Law Enforcement Academy requires 4 distinct actions:

1. Amend RCW 43.101.200 to require basic training to begin within two months of employment;
2. Increase the maintenance-level number of BLEA classes each state fiscal year to no less than 15;
3. Fund at least 2 additional BLEA classes for FY 21; and
4. Fund a separate, special appropriation to the Governor to fund additional BLEA classes as caseloads require.

QUALIFICATIONS FOR SHERIFF

The County Sheriff is the chief executive officer and the conservator of the peace of the county. The Sheriff hires, fires, and supervises law enforcement officers, and sets policy on their pursuits, use of force, among many other life-impacting decisions. Sheriffs deputies are required to be certified peace officers. The Sheriff, however, is not.

Under current law, a person need only be a registered voter in the county to run for the Office of Sheriff.

A Sheriff should, at the very least, possess the minimum qualifications required of those whom the Sheriff oversees.

CERTIFICATION OF CORRECTIONS OFFICERS

All general authority Washington law enforcement officers must hold a valid peace officer certification “as a condition of continuing employment.” Certification establishes certain pre-hire screening and evaluation measures, ensures that officers have received the required training, and that their license to be a peace officer can be revoked for failure to maintain their training or for disqualifying misconduct.

Corrections officers do not have similar requirements.

In fact, a corrections officer who resigns prior to being terminated can, and sometimes does, get hired by another corrections agency despite the corrections officer’s lack of training or prior misconduct.

Requiring all corrections officers to receive and maintain certification, and establishing a process for de-certification, enables a standard level of minimum training and conduct for those who have unprecedented authority over incarcerated persons.

PHOTO ENFORCEMENT EVIDENCE

Current law specifically prohibits photo enforcement information (red light cameras, toll enforcement, etc) as evidence in a criminal investigation or court proceeding. This prohibition has inhibited the investigation of crimes where information regarding the suspect is believed to have been captured with photo enforcement.

This prohibition will ultimately also obstruct efforts to locate children subject to an AMBER Alert and vulnerable adults subject to a SILVER Alert.

Law enforcement officers should be authorized to access this information with a search warrant. Furthermore the information obtained should be admissible to convict the guilty and exonerate the innocent.

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Washington Association of **SHERIFFS & POLICE CHIEFS**

Principles for Community Trust

Overall: WASPC advocates for public safety improvements that make everyone safer, including law enforcement.

Perceptions of Law Enforcement: Law enforcement remains one of the most respected professions in Washington. Retaining and improving public trust is top priority for WASPC. We take seriously concerns about police interactions with the community and continuously work to improve our policies, training, culture and transparency. There is a lack of understanding that the men and women who swear an oath to uphold public safety are required to face violent and chaotic situations. We accept that responsibility while we also ask individuals to take responsibility for their own actions, for policy makers and elected officials to bring our communities together and for all of us to work together for common solutions.

Rule of Law: WASPC strongly urges elected policy makers to create laws that are clear, supported, and can be consistently enforced. Disagreements or different applications of laws based on political expediency or policy makers' unwillingness to make difficult decisions leads to reduced trust in the rule of law and is harmful to public safety and public trust.

Deadly Force: WASPC has worked with advocates and community groups to remove "malice" from the legal standard, to come together and build trust. We will continue to work to improve training, focus on de-escalation, and provide transparency. We also expect the community to take responsibility for supporting law enforcement in the split-second decisions required, and to reinforce that reducing officer-involved deadly force incidents will be enhanced by not attacking or fighting with law enforcement. De-escalation is for everyone. We strongly support the following "Tips for Safety" from the Washington State American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU):

STAY CALM AND STAY PUT. Don't run or suddenly move.

KEEP YOUR HANDS where the officer can see them and free of any objects if possible.

NEVER TOUCH any police officer.

FOLLOW INSTRUCTIONS. You can always make a complaint later if you feel your rights were violated.

Criminal Justice Reform: WASPC acknowledges that implicit and institutional bias and discrimination exist in all aspects of society: criminal justice, education, housing, health care, finance, and more. We will work in concert with policy makers and others to make systemic improvements to understand, reduce and control the implicit and institutional biases and barriers that inhibit every person's success. Reform in the criminal justice system should be based on public safety outcomes and should not ignore concern for law enforcement, victims of crime, and justice. Assisting offenders with re-entry and reducing recidivism is good for public safety. Achievement of these goals are worth our state's investment of time, money, and resources.

Behavioral Health: WASPC strongly urges our policy makers to fund and support a robust, "wrap-around" system for those with serious and untreated mental and behavioral health problems. WASPC does not believe that further placement into the community and overall reductions of institutions for those with most serious illnesses is good policy. Placing people with serious health issues out onto the street is not compassionate and can result in increased calls for service, and potential violent interactions with the public and law enforcement.

Homelessness: WASPC supports a comprehensive approach to homelessness. There are many complex dynamics that contribute to the issue. Criminal transients and those who willingly commit crimes should be prosecuted within the law. They are not in the same category as homeless persons, including those with behavioral health problems and addictions, who need and will accept help. We urge policy makers to delineate between these two groups and solutions should recognize their differences.

Basic Law Enforcement Training: Washington should fully fund the basic law enforcement academy. The surcharge on traffic tickets, which formerly funded all basic training, was redirected by the legislature into the general fund many years ago and led to long delays between when officers are hired and can be properly trained. Funding of basic training is a state responsibility.

Public Safety Funding: Public safety is a core function of government and should be funded that way. The criminal justice system should not be reliant on revenue from citations, arrest warrants, or special funds related to sales of marijuana or gambling.

Marijuana: WASPC acknowledges that the voters of our state made a specific decision to decriminalize marijuana. We urge policy makers to support necessary enforcement to reduce "gray market" sales, illicit juvenile consumption, and impacts on neighborhoods from illicit grows and organized crime. Regulation of marijuana should be based on public safety, not cannabis sales revenue.

About WASPC

The Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs (WASPC) was founded in 1963 and consists of executive and top management personnel from law enforcement agencies statewide. Our membership includes sheriffs, police chiefs, the Washington State Patrol, the Washington Department of Corrections, and representatives of other number of state and federal agencies. WASPC is the only association of its kind in the nation combining representatives from local, state, tribal, university and federal law enforcement into a single body, working toward a common goal of public safety.

In 1975, the Washington State Legislature recognized WASPC as a “combination of units of local government.” Soon thereafter, the Legislature began providing funding to WASPC to conduct certain state government functions related to public safety, beginning with crime statistics and reporting. Having proven time and again that WASPC can operate certain state public safety programs more efficiently and effectively than state agencies, the Legislature has continued to ask WASPC to operate a growing programs on behalf of the state. These programs include:

Crime Statistics & Reporting—WASPC collects crime data and publishes an annual ‘**Crime in Washington**’ report, which also serves as **Washington’s depository for reporting to the FBI’s** National Incident Based Reporting System and the FBI’s annual ‘Crime in the United States’ report.

Sex Offender Management—WASPC administers **Washington’s statewide sex offender website**, administers funding for the **sex offender address verification** program, and permanent electronic retention and retrieval of **archived sex offender records**.

Auto Theft Prevention Authority—WASPC manages Washington’s Auto Theft Prevention Authority, which provides coordination and funding for auto theft education, prevention, enforcement, prosecution, and confinement.

Critical Incident Planning and Mapping (aka “school mapping”)—WASPC operates Washington’s first responder database of floor plans, evacuation routes, tactical response plans and other **critical information for Washington’s schools and other critical infrastructure**.

Jail Booking and Reporting—WASPC runs Washington’s statewide jail booking and reporting system. This system is valued as an essential law enforcement database and also provides critical caseload forecasting data.

Crime Victim Notification—WASPC manages Washington’s statewide automated **victim information and notification** system, where victims of crime can register to be notified when their offender is released from incarceration, escapes, is transferred to another facility, or is given a different security classification or custody status.

24/7 Sobriety Monitoring—WASPC operates Washington’s 24/7 Sobriety Program, where DUI offenders submit to at least **twice daily testing for the presence of alcohol** in their system.

Unlawful Attempts to Purchase Firearms—WASPC built Washington’s system of receiving reports of unlawful attempts to purchase a firearm, transmits that data to state and local law enforcement agencies, and administers a grant program to assist in the investigation of these crimes.

Mental Health Field Response—WASPC administers a grant program for law enforcement agencies to partner with a mental health professional to professionally, humanely, and safely respond to encounters involving persons with mental health issues.

Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion—WASPC funds local programs to divert individuals with substance use disorders and other behavioral health needs away from the criminal justice system and into services designed to assist their recovery

Other Essential Programs/Services—WASPC plays a significant role in a number of other public safety programs, including, but not limited to, firearms certification for retired law enforcement officers, administration of the statewide missing persons website, victim notification when a protection order is served, reimbursement of extraordinary criminal justice costs, and creating a number of model policies on topics such as access to private property during wildfires, sex offender management, vehicle pursuits, and more.

WASPC prides itself in the efficiency and effectiveness by which it operates its \$28.6 million biennial funding. WASPC continues to maintain an overall administrative/overhead expense rate of less than 5%. A 2012 analysis showed that a state agency’s operation of these same programs would cost in excess of \$30 million more per year than the amount provided to WASPC.