

2024-2025 Strategic Intentions

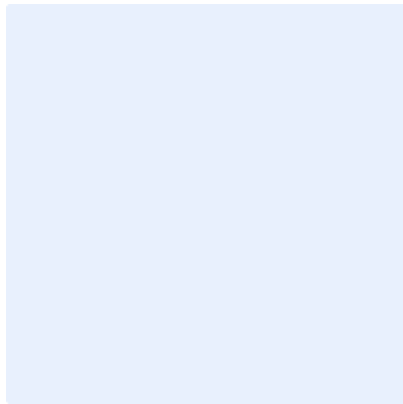


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Executive Summary

This document serves to provide a long-term overview of what we do and where we are going.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs is to lead collaboration among law enforcement professionals to enhance public safety.

Identity Statement

The Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs advances its mission by serving law enforcement professionals, primarily in the State of Washington, by providing sustainable programs, projects and services.

Values

The Washington Association of Sheriffs & Police Chiefs value:

- A mission-driven association
- Honesty and integrity
- Diversity and inclusivity
- Accountability and responsibility to our members and our communities
- Quality services to our members
- Membership involvement
- Public/private partnerships
- Competent, professional staff
- Innovative law enforcement leadership

Organizational

The association 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 a number of federal agencies. WASPC is governed by its executive board.

WASPC is the only association of its kind in the nation combining representatives from local, state, tribal, and federal law enforcement into a single body, working toward a common goal.

WASPC's function is to provide specific materials and services to all law enforcement agencies in the state, members and non-members alike.

The 1975 legislature designated the association as "combination of units of local government." (RCW 36.28A.010)

Principles for Community Trust

WASPC advocates for policies and systems to promote trustworthy, credible, well-resourced systems to uphold the rule of law, which should be consistently and fairly applied by supported professionals doing the job the right way. Communities and businesses cannot thrive without public safety and the knowledge that criminals will be held accountable, by professionals doing the job the right way.

- **Perceptions of Law Enforcement:** Law enforcement remains one of the most respected professions in Washington. Ensuring that law enforcement is worthy of the public's trust is top priority for WASPC. We take concerns about police interactions with the community seriously 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:** 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 individuals with re-entry, providing necessary resources to break the cycle of offending, behavioral health and substance use disorder, and reducing recidivism is good for public safety. Achievement of these goals are worth our state’s investment of time, money, and resources.
- Accountability: *We advocate for ensuring that public safety and victims of crime are front and center when considering changes to policy. According to the WA Department of Corrections, the number of persons incarcerated in the state’s prisons has been reduced by 25% in the last six years, while the capacity of the system has been reduced 8% while the population has grown 7%. 85% of persons in our state prisons have been sentenced for violent crimes¹. WASPC believes that releasing offenders without first establishing alternative infrastructure and ensuring public safety provides the worst of both worlds; less public safety, more repeat offenders, and fewer resources to break the cycle. Increased accountability including incarceration is an important part of public safety.*
- Justice for Victims: WASPC supports public safety policy that provides justice to victims of crime. We believe public safety is a core function of government, and the men and women of law enforcement need to have the tools to provide justice for victims.
- Behavioral Health & Substance Use Disorder: WASPC strongly urges our policy makers to fund and support a robust, “wrap-around’ system for those with unmet behavioral health needs. This system is underfunded, understaffed and does not have the capacity to effectively replace criminal justice responses at this time, and the system should be in place before removing law enforcement responses. 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

¹ <https://doc.wa.gov/information/data/default.htm>

and can result in increased calls for service, and potential violent interactions with the public and law enforcement. WASPC believes there is a positive role for incentivized treatment through potential criminal sanctions.

- 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 those experiencing homelessness, 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.
- Law Enforcement and Corrections Training: Washington should fully fund the law enforcement and corrections officer academies and mandated continuing training. Funding of law enforcement training is a state responsibility.
- Public Safety Funding and Staffing: Public safety is a core function of government and should be funded that way. According to the FBI data, *Washington ranks last in the nation in law enforcement officers per capita². More officers prevents crime, promotes de-escalation, enhances accountability through proper supervision and training, and serves victims by providing the response and follow up they deserve.*
- Illicit Drug Trafficking Enforcement: The harm and violence related to illicit drug trafficking is both a public health and public safety crisis. WASPC supports responses that include criminal accountability, reducing supply, and aggressive enforcement against organized criminal enterprises.
- Use of Data: WASPC supports making policy decisions based on data that is comprehensive, objective, and credible. Policy decisions should not use selective data which is misleading or serves a political narrative.

Membership

WASPC membership includes Active, Associate, Affiliate and Life categories. Applications are reviewed by the **WASPC Membership Committee** and **WASPC Executive Board**, with final approval made by the **WASPC Executive Board**.

Members may represent the association by chairing a WASPC committee, as a WASPC representative on a task force or work groups, and/or as an elected member of the **WASPC Executive Board**.

WASPC intends to:

- Contact newly appointed/elected chiefs, sheriffs, and agency heads upon their appointment to encourage their participation in WASPC

² Table 77 in the “Law Enforcement Employees Data” collection

<https://cde.ucr.cjis.gov/LATEST/webapp/#/pages/home>

2024-2025 STRATEGIC INTENTIONS – PRESENTED TO WASPC EXECUTIVE BOARD FOR APPROVAL ON SEPTEMBER 18, 2024
APPROVED BY WASPC MEMBERSHIP ON NOVEMBER 20, 2024

- Encourage new members to participate in LEMAP, accreditation and professional development opportunities
- Invite all new members to attend WASPC conferences

Committees

Committees are the mechanism by which the members come together in smaller groups to conduct the business of the Association. Committees are formed by the **WASPC Executive Board**. Any member can serve on any committee by simply requesting inclusion.

The WASPC Executive Assistant will communicate with the WASPC Committee Chairs to collect and disseminate meeting agendas, reports, and other committee information updates.

The **WASPC Vice President** serves as the board liaison to WASPC committees.

WASPC intends to:

- Maintain the following standing committees:
 - Boating Safety;
 - Corrections;
 - Financial and Personnel;
 - Homeland Security/Intelligence;
 - Indian Country Law Enforcement;
 - Law Enforcement Training;
 - Legislative;
 - Membership;
 - Past Presidents;
 - Professional Services;
 - Public Trust;
 - Small Agency;
 - Traffic Safety;
 - University Policing;
 - Wellness & Resiliency
- Require each committee to maintain a charter outlining the committee's purpose, membership, chairperson(s) and duties, to be reviewed and approved by the **WASPC Executive Board**.
- Encourage members to join committees.
- Encourage all committees to meet at least semi-annually.
- Assign a WASPC staff member to serve as a staff liaison/convener for each committee.
- Annually conduct a review of all committees. The review will be conducted at the annual Board Retreat. Inactive committees may be removed. New chairs/co-chairs for the committee may be appointed by the President.

- Create Ad-Hoc committees and taskforces that are single-issue driven. Taskforces and Ad-Hoc committees are created by the President and shall continue only during the term of that President.

Partnerships

WASPC is recognized in statute as a ‘combination of units of local government.’ As such, WASPC relies on partnerships and positive working relationships to provide services to our members.

WASPC intends to:

- Maintain a partnership with the Washington Chapter of the FBI—NAA.
- Maintain liaison relationships with the following groups:

Behind the Badge;
 Blue Bridge Alliance;
 Explorers;
 Legal Advisors;
 Law Enforcement Torch Run;
 LEIRA;
 NIBRS;
 Sex Offender Notification and Registration; and
 WA Crime Prevention Association

Programmatic/Operational

The Association offers various programs, projects and services which support WASPC’s mission to enhance collaboration among law enforcement executives.

Conferences

Conferences are a key service that WASPC provides its members. The conferences provide for training, networking, contact with vendors and the conduct of Association business. Conferences are held semi-annually in various locations around the state.

WASPC intends to:

- Continue “Critical Issues Forums” for panels on topics of interest to our members
- Provide time at conferences for awards and recognition
- Control presentations and agendas to avoid redundancy
- Provide scholarship opportunities for members at each conference

- Continue to facilitate relationships and opportunities among conference attendees to engage in networking
- Invite retirees/life members to conferences
- Sponsor a tradeshow at each Spring Conference
- Provide sponsorship opportunities for exhibitors at each conference
- Implement virtual conference platform when necessary due to emergency or global pandemic
- Implement training tracks for Corrections and Executive Development

Executive Training

Maintain an executive development training program.

WASPC intends to:

- Manage, in collaboration with Washington risk management organizations and others, chief/sheriff and command level development training, and provide support for our members to access training to increase professionalism and reduce risk
- Evaluate a structured mentorship initiative to support training and ongoing success for development of emerging leaders
- Maintain a training platform to offer a suite of professional development courses for WASPC members

Management Support Services

Accreditation provides for the professionalism of the law enforcement industry by providing a review process for agencies. In 1976 the Association was directed by the Washington State Legislature to develop standards and goals for Washington State Law Enforcement. The Association has maintained an operational accreditation program since that time.

The LEMAP program provides law enforcement administrators an opportunity to have a critical review of their organization through the eyes of peer professionals. The resulting report should serve as a guide to identify areas in need of strengthening and highlight positive or innovative programs existing within the agency. A LEMAP assessment also provides interested agencies with a roadmap of information that will greatly assist them should they decide to pursue WASPC accreditation.

Peer review and outside audits are central to agency performance and continuous improvement.

WASPC intends to:

- Encourage the use of the Loaned Executive Management Assistance (LEMAP) program to members
- Remove cost as an impediment to LEMAPs and Accreditation, to encourage our members' use of these resources, through grants and partnerships with risk management pools
- Continue to inform members of the benefits of the WASPC Accreditation program
- Encourage implementation of preferred practices, model policies and procedures to further the professionalism of law enforcement and corrections
- Ensure management services programs are available to all members
- Pursue WASPC's accreditation program to be considered an Authorized Independent Credentialing Body with the Department of Justice
- Provide executive search services as requested

Legislation

WASPC serves as the centralized point for the monitoring and influencing of law enforcement related legislation both at the state and federal level. The most effective lobbying effort utilizes the efforts of WASPC's members; however, it is recognized that there must be a coordinated effort that is accomplished by staff, both full-time and contract.

WASPC intends to:

- Conduct regional visits to Legislative Leadership in home districts
- Maintain active liaison with partner associations
- Continue the creation of an annual Legislative Agenda
- Utilize "Big Themes" that includes communications, policy and legislative outcomes
- Continue an educational lobbying presence
- Provide real-time legislative information to all members, to include weekly webinars during the legislative session
- Improve legislator's knowledge of the programs and services WASPC provides on behalf of the State of Washington

Corrections

WASPC identify local jails, including Tribal, Regional, City and County Correctional Facilities, regardless of size, as essential partners in community safety. Community safety extends further than necessary incarceration of dangerous individuals victimizing our neighborhoods. Local jails have evolved into pivotal partners in community physical health, mental health, basic education,

life skills and addiction intervention. Recognizing and leveraging partnerships for the betterment of individuals and provide positive impacts on our families, towns, cities and state. **WASPC intends to:**

- Provide expert assistance to members, local governments and the state legislature when considering policy decisions for the complex operations of local jails
- Continue to work with the State Department of Corrections to review changes to the current corrections system in the state
- Assist in developing best practice methodologies in the areas of diversion, jail operations and reentry that serve as operational models. These models should provide for long term cost saving on the part of local jails, the state and federal bureau of prisons. An emphasis should be on collaborative methods to fund essential and preventative medical and mental health care, and evidence-based programs that enhance opportunities to break the cycle of recidivism
- Provide a conduit of communication and exchange of ideas, between government and organization, with local jail officials

Communications

Provide communications and outreach support for WASPC itself and as a resource for our members.

WASPC intends to:

- Regularly send Executive Director newsletters to members with pertinent and timely information
- Contract with a communications partner to provide member services and community outreach support. The communications partner will liaison with WASPC staff about WASPC's social media strategy. The communications partner will collaborate with the WASPC Executive Director to facilitate media inquiries, press releases, etc.

Research and Planning

WASPC recognizes that there are many issues facing law enforcement executives in their respective communities. In addition to those issues that are readily apparent, there are other emerging issues that will present themselves in the future. WASPC will research these issues with its strategic partners to provide a forum for in-depth discussions and work to provide its members a response framework.

WASPC intends to:

- Schedule presentations from subject matter experts on current and emerging issues

- Continue to work with universities and institutions of higher learning to conduct research into contemporary law enforcement public safety issues
- Develop law enforcement executive peer support program

WASPC Programs and Infrastructure

WASPC provides law enforcement programs funded by the Washington State Legislature, federal grants and through the WASPC general fund operations. The programs and enterprises are often the result of legislative mandates and WASPC's unique status as a 'combination of units of local government.'

State & Federal Funded Programs

As directed by the Washington State Legislature and/or Federal Agencies, and in support of the Association mission statement.

WASPC intends to:

- Responsibly operate the following State programs:
 - 24/7 Sobriety Monitoring;
 - Arrest and Jail Alternatives Grants;
 - Automated Victim Information and Notification System (VINE);
 - Body Worn Camera Grants;
 - Denied Firearms Transaction Program;
 - Internet Crimes Against Children Grants;
 - Jail Booking and Reporting System (JBRS);
 - Law Enforcement Officer Wellness App;
 - Medications for Opioid Use Disorder (MOUD);
 - Mental Health Field Response Team Grants;
 - Missing Persons Website;
 - National Incident Based Reporting (NIBRS);
 - Project Safe Neighborhoods;
 - Protective Order Notification (VPO);
 - Sex Offender Address Verification Grants;
 - Sex Offender Case File Imaging;
 - Sex Offender Website;
 - Traffic Safety Grants; and
 - Washington Auto Theft Prevention Authority (WATPA)

Correctional Options Services

WASPC engages in business enterprises that are expected to be consistent with the overall mission of the Association and are to general revenue to support that mission.

The Correctional Options Services department was established by WASPC in 1991. WASPC Correctional Options Services offers electronic monitoring equipment (EHM) and services for alternatives to incarceration.

WASPC intends to:

- Provide excellent customer service in all areas of operations
- Maintain the average daily population (ADP) in the Correctional Options Services Program

WASPC Infrastructure

WASPC's membership, programs, and services are supported by the WASPC staff. WASPC values competent and professional staff. Additionally, WASPC recognizes the importance of investment in infrastructure to further our mission and values.

WASPC intends to:

- Annually review WASPC's Investment Policy
- Maintain a website with up-to-date information about the organization and the programs and services WASPC provides
- Hire employees who demonstrate honesty and integrity
- Review the employee salary schedule at least every five years
- Maintain a full functioning IT department to support WASPC members, programs, and staff