



Washington Association of
**SHERIFFS &
POLICE CHIEFS**

2025

LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

CRIMINAL JUSTICE FUNDING SYSTEM

Washington needs additional law enforcement officers to help victims of crimes and ensure public safety. Too few officers has direct impacts on justice for victims, preventing crime, limits de-escalation, increases the likelihood of the use of force, inhibits capacity to investigate and solve crimes, and prevents community policing efforts. In addition, Public Defenders, Prosecutors, Court Staff, Diversion Programs, Treatment Programs, Jails, etc. all require new, dedicated funding.

WASPC seeks state funding to keep current officers and recruit and retain additional law enforcement officers, and to support and expand capacity for other critical elements of the criminal justice system such as jails, prosecutors, public defenders, judges, clerks, etc.

JUVENILE ACCESS TO ATTORNEY

Since 2021 a state law requires law enforcement officers to connect a juvenile with an attorney before asking them to waive their rights (e.g., be interviewed by police). The law fails to recognize the constitutional rights of juveniles, the role of parents/guardians, and has prevented juveniles from providing information to law enforcement officers that may help them clear themselves of guilt. The law has also led to fewer opportunities to divert juveniles from arrest. Data comparing adult and juvenile arrests for 2021 and 2022 shows that juveniles arrests increased 35%, compared to only 6% for adult arrests.

WASPC seeks to modify RCW 13.40.740 to:

- 1. Allow juveniles to provide an exculpatory statement;**
- 2. Clarify that juvenile victims and witnesses are not required to consult an attorney before cooperating with law enforcement; and**
- 3. Prohibit telephonic attorneys from asserting or waiving a juvenile's rights without the juvenile's consent.**

AVIATION SUPPORT/ SEARCH AND RESCUE

Law enforcement aviation support services are provided to every jurisdiction in the state—free of charge—by four counties (King, Snohomish, Chelan, and Spokane). Air support units are invaluable resources in many search and rescue missions, missing persons, and other community-caretaking functions of law enforcement agencies. Air support units can also be used as a vehicular pursuit alternative in some instances and provide crucial officer safety and public safety functions during certain high-risk incidents.

WASPC seeks to establish an ongoing state funded grant program to provide \$10 million per year to:

- 1. Provide a base amount of funding to local law enforcement air support units that agree to assist any law enforcement agency in Washington when available; and**
- 2. Provide a per-mission reimbursement when a local law enforcement air support unit is deployed on a search and rescue mission.**

LAW & JUSTICE DAY

FEBRUARY 4, 2025

9 AM | COLUMBIA ROOM

JAMES MCMAHAN

Policy Director

Leading collaboration among law enforcement executives to enhance public safety since 1963.