



May 13, 2020

Greetings from Your Executive Director:

First, you received a GTWO earlier this week on the **expiration of the proclamation for service of OFPs** and other court orders. I am [attaching](#) the letter we had sent to the legislative leaders previously about this issue. I wish I could tell you one side or the other was clearly wrong here- but the fact is, both make valid points and we are caught in the middle. Service of Orders are very important at this time with increased domestic violence calls, and at the same time, ensuring due process and firearms rights are also important. As the letter points out, we fully acknowledge those concerns. The bottom line is that we would encourage a narrower proclamation that involves order service specifically. I have attached a [letter](#) just today asking for that narrower proclamation. We will keep you advised as this progresses, and we are actively working on finding solutions this week.

Second, there have been Public Disclosure Requests for the **state regulatory line for violations of the Governor's Order**. Some requesters will then post the information on social media. The media has reported there are threats being made to those who have called in complaints to the state. This is just an FYI as those individuals who have received threats may be contacting law enforcement. The FBI Office in Seattle also is willing to assist if there is a federal nexus.

Third, I wanted to clarify what the media is presenting as an "arrest" for a violation of the Governor's Order. In fact, it is not, and is another example of people trying to use law enforcement as a political football. Here is a [link](#) to that story- rather than characterize it I will let you read about the circumstances.

It did get lots of media attention. I spoke with the Chief and he said the woman was given a citation for a trespass violation (not a violation of the Governor's Order), and that she clearly wanted to go to jail and demanded she be arrested. She spent most of the time on a swing sending messages on Facebook. There are others on social media trying to say officers and deputies are out there violating everyone's rights. There is a great deal of attention being paid right now to context-free messages during this very anxious time. I believe law enforcement has been going to amazing lengths to work with their communities and to continue to be respectful of rights during this challenging time- but that does not get attention. There will be plenty of media, social media, and other out there saying either "not enough enforcement" or "too much enforcement". Just a reminder- from last week's newsletter:

Right now, there are a lot of people and groups who want to leverage this crisis... we have explored the issue of "wedge politics" before. Fear sells. Fear motivates voters, increases fundraising, and gets attention. Fear gets "clicks" and advertising revenue. At a time when people are already anxious about their health, the future, their jobs, and unusual orders

limiting their lives, fear is even more effective. And we are in the middle - trying to keep the peace, and increase stability. The vast majority of people think this is a serious health threat, we need to be very careful, and there is still much we do not know. And, we cannot leave the economy at a standstill forever, and both Democrats and Republicans agree on that. No one wants to do this all over again.

As we move forward, let's focus on that vast group that is ready to do the right thing. As Sheriffs and Chiefs, we lead, communicate, and make those tough discretionary decisions for both the health and economic well-being of our counties and cities. People will be frustrated that they can't start their business as soon as they want. People will be frustrated that others who violate the orders don't have enough of a consequence. Enforcement might be necessary in some cases - and leaving it alone might be the better call for others. It's what we do, and have always done. We will continue to be dedicated to helping our communities get through this challenging time in history.

Also here is the statement we put out last week:

***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.

We all know that when a law enforcement officer is killed in the line of duty, we say "never forget". Especially in a time like this, we need to make sure we never forget. This week is Police Week. On Friday, May 15, please take time to remember the men and women who have

been lost while serving their community. Remember their families and loved ones who have carried on after their sacrifice.

Finally, we just posted a new podcast featuring Kirkland Chief Cherie Harris on her department's experiences and "lessons learned" from the outbreak at the nursing home in that community starting in late February. The link is [here](#).

Keep taking the high road- *stay safe!*

Steve