



**SPOKANE COUNTY**  
**SHERIFF**  
**SHERIFF OZZIE D. KNEZOVICH**

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"In partnership with the community -  
Dedicated to your safety"

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**MEMORANDUM**

**TO: All Commissioned Personnel**

**FROM: Sheriff's Training**

**CC:**

**DATE: 01/20/2015**

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Recently, law enforcement personnel have been approached while in the middle of a call-for-service or traffic stop. Based upon these events, coupled with other societal events (protests) throughout the United States, the training unit offers the following information. If any Sheriff's Office commissioned Personnel is approached by a person(s) who wish to discuss the legality of the vehicle being used for "official purposes," or, what "rights" they wish to exercise in order to enter a secure premises (PSB, U-City, etc.), please consider the following:

Per our mission, we will treat all people with dignity and respect. Additionally, if any person hinders, delays, or obstructs you in the discharge of your duties, you have the authority to make an arrest for obstructing a law enforcement officer. (See RCW below).

If possible, give the person(s) a warning that they are "obstructing" and that they are subject to arrest if they continue. A call for back-up is highly recommended, and if appropriate, make an arrest.

Remember, the safety of deputies and law abiding citizens is our number one concern.

**RCW 9A.76.020**

**Obstructing a law enforcement officer.**

**(1) A person is guilty of obstructing a law enforcement officer if the person willfully hinders, delays, or obstructs any law enforcement officer in the discharge of his or her official powers or duties.**

**(2) "Law enforcement officer" means any general authority, limited authority, or specially commissioned Washington peace officer or federal peace officer as those terms are defined in RCW 10.93.020, and other public officers who are responsible for enforcement of fire, building, zoning, and life and safety codes.**

**(3) Obstructing a law enforcement officer is a gross misdemeanor.**

I have also attached subsection 1 of RCW 46.08.065 as it pertains to our use of non-traditionally marked and un- marked cars just for your information. Please remember when confronted with someone who wants to argue about this, let them know that we have been informed by our legal department that we are not breaking the law and that they can contact our PIO or make an appointment to speak to our Division Commander, or Undersheriff if they want to discuss it with someone, and that you will not be discussing it any further with them.

## **RCW 46.08.065**

### **Publicly owned vehicles to be marked — Exceptions.**

- (1) **It is unlawful for any public officer having charge of any vehicle owned or controlled by any county, city, town, or public body in this state other than the state of Washington and used in public business to operate the same upon the public highways of this state unless and until there shall be displayed upon such automobile or other motor vehicle in letters of contrasting color not less than one and one-quarter inches in height in a conspicuous place on the right and left sides thereof, the name of such county, city, town, or other public body, together with the name of the department or office upon the business of which the said vehicle is used.** This section shall not apply to vehicles of a sheriff's office, local police department, or any vehicles used by local peace officers under public authority for special undercover or confidential investigative purposes.