



# 2020 ANNUAL REPORT

Snohomish Police Department  
Chief Robert D. Palmer



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# SNOHOMISH POLICE DEPARTMENT

## ANNUAL REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

### Message from the Chief

The old Chinese curse *-May you live in interesting times-* has certainly been visited on many of us this past year, but the adventure known as “The Year 2020” has ended and we all look forward to a new year with far less turmoil, drama and uncertainty. Without a doubt, these have been interesting, and challenging, times.

I have had to remind myself many times recently that the word *challenge* is just another way to say *opportunity*. We have all learned to be flexible and adapt to rapidly changing circumstances. The people of Snohomish have done so better than almost anywhere else and I know that we will continue to do so as we face unseen challenges and changes ahead of us.



Speaking of change, policing has changed significantly during my career, as it should. Policing should reflect society’s values and beliefs and, as society’s values and beliefs change, so should policing. Policing is not an easy profession, nor is it perfect. None of us are perfect, yet imperfection is not easily forgiven in law enforcement. Paraphrasing Vince Lombardi - *We must always try to achieve perfection, even though we will fail. But in that effort, we will achieve excellence* – and this is my goal for the Snohomish Police Department as we move forward together.

However, it is also very important to remember that policing in a democratic society is one of the toughest jobs in this country. Conflict is inherent in a democratic system that bestows authority to one group and then, rightly, challenges that authority. This is necessary. Therefore, the police-community relationship must be strengthened and defined by our own local narrative and not by the national narrative. If we don’t work hard to define our own local narratives then the default is the national narrative – and that is not an accurate narrative of policing in our city, nor is it an acceptable one.

As your Police Chief I want to assure you that the men and women of the Snohomish Police Department will continue to provide the highest level of service to our community, every day and night, and do so with the *professionalism* you should expect of us. That is the foundation on which everything police do rests upon. We pledge to be open and caring about the needs and desires of our community, and to work cooperatively with you without bias.

I close by once again thanking those who provided me with this fantastic opportunity to serve as your Police Chief. I look forward to continuing to serve and unite our community.

My best wishes to all of you,  
Robert D. Palmer  
Chief of Police

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## POLICE OPERATIONS

The Snohomish Police Department is a contracted services provider through the Snohomish County Sheriff's Office, a WASPC Accredited law enforcement agency. We adhere to the Mission, Vision and Values of our parent agency.

### *VISION*

*The Snohomish County Sheriff's Office will prioritize public trust and community safety by reducing crime through professional policing and correctional services, founded on accountability and compassion*

### *MISSION*

*Do the right thing, at the right time, for the right reason*

### *VALUES*

*Integrity – Dignity – Commitment – Pride*

### *Motto*

*Lead the way!*

There are 20 staff assigned to the Police Department full time, with the School Resource Officer position currently vacant due to COVID-19 restrictions on school attendance.

The Snohomish Police Department has the following divisions:

**Administration** is responsible for the day-to-day operations of financials, staffing, training, community engagement and the overall efficiency of the department. This is comprised of the Chief and Administrative Sergeant

**Support Staff** is staffed by a Law Enforcement Secretary (LES) and a Lead Law Enforcement Technician (LLET). They are responsible for all report and ticket data entry, records management, fingerprinting and Concealed Pistol License processing for the city. They also handle procurement of supplies and customer service needs. There is also one Sheriff's Office Volunteer who primarily serves the PD. They are overseen by the Administrative Sergeant.

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**Patrol** is staffed by four sergeants and eight officers, providing 24-hour service 365 days of the year. They are responsible for the overall protection of lives and property, maintaining law and order and responding to requests for service, emergency and non-emergency as well as criminal and non-criminal incidents. Patrol enforces all criminal laws that are mandated by State or Municipal statute.

**Criminal Investigations** is comprised of two Detectives, overseen by the Administrative Sergeant. They are responsible for Criminal Investigations to include investigating all reports of violent crimes against persons and the investigations of all reports of property damage, theft, burglary and other non-violent crimes. In addition, the CID is also responsible for providing crime scene processing and investigative services 24 hours a day.

**Community Outreach Officer** provides a variety of services including liaison with community groups and organizations to promote safety and community partnership, homeless outreach and special projects such as public event management and security coordination. He is overseen by the Administrative Sergeant.

## 2020 POLICE DEPARTMENT STAFF

### **Chief of Police**

Lieutenant Keith Rogers    January – June 2020

Captain Rob Palmer            June 2020 - Present

### **Sergeants**

Nathan Alanis – Administrative Sergeant

Jason Tift – Dayshift Supervisor

Josh Pettibone – Dayshift Supervisor

Chris Veentjer – Nightshift Supervisor

Will Ter-Veen – Nightshift Supervisor

### **Deputies**

Tracie Lyons – Dayshift

Brad Dawes – Dayshift

Jason Sandt – Dayshift

Rob Robinson – Dayshift

Tyler Provenzo – Nightshift

Michael Drake – Nightshift

Kyle Farrell – Nightshift

Andrew Carson – Nightshift



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## Community Outreach Officer

Rich Niebusch

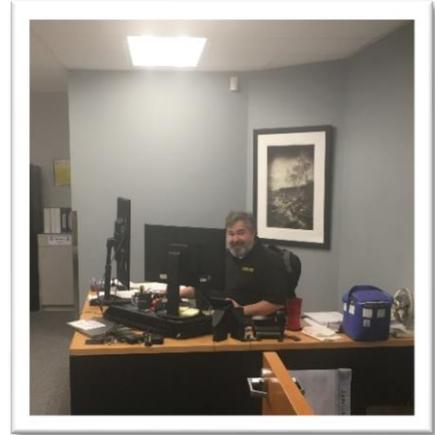
## Detectives

David Bennett

Brett Grieve

Judith Saarinen

Stuart Gort

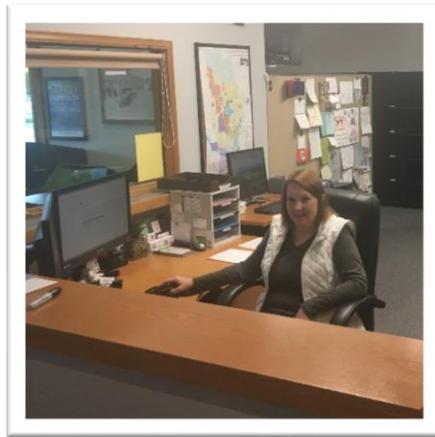


## Support Staff

LLET Heather Craig

LES Jon Stewart

Volunteer Bob Cathey



## STAFF CHANGES - OUTGOING

**Lieutenant Keith Rogers** served three years with distinction as the Snohomish PD Police Chief. He returned to duty with the Sheriff's Office in June where he was later promoted to Captain and serves as the Contracts Division Commander.

**School Resource Officer Andre Loranc** returned to duty with the Sheriff's Office, serving in the Gold Bar contract, after his position was not renewed by the School District due to Covid-19 restrictions eliminating on-campus classes.

**Sergeant Will Ter-Veen, Deputies Andrew Carson, Michael Drake, Tyler Provenzo, Kyle Farrell, and Jason Sandt** have returned to the Sheriff's Office Patrol Division. Deputy Sandt was the **2019 Sheriff's Office Deputy of the Year** and was promoted to **Master Patrol Deputy** upon his return to the Sheriff' Office.

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**Detective David Bennett** retired from law enforcement after a distinguished career with the Washington State Patrol, and Snohomish County Sheriff's Office as a patrol deputy and detective in the Special Investigations Unit, before joining the Snohomish PD.

**Detective Brett Grieve** transferred to the Property Crimes Investigation Unit at the Sheriff's Office.

**Their exemplary service to the City of Snohomish is deeply appreciated.**

## **STAFF CHANGES - INCOMING**

**Community Outreach Officer Rich Niebusch** returned to his position after a leave of absence while serving in the Middle East as a Liaison and Law Enforcement Instructor with the U.S. State Department.

**Sergeant Chris Marino** returned to the Snohomish PD, where he began his law enforcement career, after his recent promotion to sergeant.

**Deputies Borees Kargopolstev, Brandon Freistat, Steven Bond, Jose Perez, and Dan Uhrich** joined the Snohomish PD in February of 2021 at our annual shift rotation.

**Detective Judith Saarinen** joined the PD in October after serving several years with the Sheriff's Office Special Investigations Unit, replacing Detective Brett Grieve

**Detective Stuart Gort** Joined the PD in November and this is his first investigative assignment, replacing Retired Detective Dave Bennett.

**We welcome in, or welcome back, our newest Team Members to the Snohomish Police Department!**

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## COMMUNITY CONNECTION

The Snohomish Police Department is very proud of our strong police/community partnership. This partnership is sustained and strengthened through our many community programs, events & outreach, such as:



### **Coffee With A Cop**

Several times per year, the Police Chief and Snohomish PD officers host “Coffee with a Cop” in a local restaurant or café. This is an unscripted, casual opportunity for our community members to connect with officers over a cup of coffee and some conversation. Watch our Facebook page and website for upcoming "Coffee with a Cop" events.

### **National Night Out**

Normally each summer, on the first Tuesday in August, the Snohomish PD joins a huge national anti-crime community event called "National Night Out," which draws Snohomish residents downtown for food, fun, live music, and elsewhere in the city for family-friendly block parties. Unfortunately, our 2020 events had to be cancelled due to the pandemic restrictions and to ensure we were not unintentionally helping to fuel the spread of the COVID-19 virus.

For over 35 years, NNO has been America's annual *Night Out Against Crime*. It is a unique crime/drug prevention event sponsored by the National Association of Town Watch.

While we were truly disappointed that we could not spend that Tuesday evening meeting with neighbors and communities to partner against crime, we expect that in 2021 we will be able to do so and join 38 million people in more than 16,000 communities across America doing the exact same thing.

## Shop with A Cop

Over the past several years the officers of the Snohomish Police Department have partnered with deputies from the Sheriff's Office, Fred Meyer at Snohomish Station, and the Boys and Girls Club to provide a Christmas shopping opportunity for kids in need.



Donations from the Deputy Sheriff's

Association and local community members have given us the ability to take kids in need Christmas shopping at Fred Meyer, where they can buy gifts for themselves or for family members when they otherwise wouldn't have the money to do so. Each child is identified by the Boys and Girls Club and provided a \$100.00 gift card to use during the event – they can buy whatever they want.

The partnership with Fred Meyer is amazing and they generously donate coupon savings to the purchases, allowing the money to stretch even further. Santa Claus usually makes an appearance and cookies and snacks for the kids to enjoy are also donated.

2020's event was modified due to COVID concerns, and the face-to-face shopping with an officer or deputy was cancelled. Instead, we presented the Boys and Girls Club the gift cards to distribute to the children so that they could shop with their families in a safe way. A ceremonial check for \$1200.00 was presented to **Program Director Emma Titterness** by **Community Outreach Officer Rich Niebusch**, who helped coordinate this year's event, along with **Chief Rob Palmer** and **Mayor John Kartak**.



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## SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

### **COVID-19**

In January of 2020, the first confirmed case of COVID-19 in the U.S. was identified in Snohomish County. By mid-March, numerous cases had been identified in Washington State, in other parts of the nation, and in numerous other countries around the world prompting the World Health Organization to identify it as a pandemic. Washington was placed in a virtual shut-down and under a stay at home order.

Numerous businesses and all schools in Snohomish were shuttered, or significantly curtailed in their operation; our normal lives were dramatically altered.

As the year progressed, we saw other changes to our accustomed routines and normalcy. Mask wearing and “social-distancing” became a part of the new fabric of daily life. Working and educating from home became commonplace, and for many of us the changes will last far beyond the pandemic. The impacts to many of our community members were severe, not just economically, but included the loss of friends or loved ones to the disease.

Policing in Snohomish also had to adapt. While we still needed to provide full-service patrolling and response, we needed to do it differently. With the requirement to protect both the officers and the public from inadvertent transmission of the disease, we had to find innovative ways to conduct our investigations and interact with the public. Apart from the use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and the heavy use of sanitizing agents, we necessarily curtailed proactive contacts and meeting with victims or witnesses directly, whenever possible. The use of electronic technology to obtain statements, interview people and communicate became commonplace, whenever there was not a need to have personal contact.

We will continue to work safely until the pandemic has been fully abated but strive to remain accessible and proactive in patrolling and policing Snohomish.

### **Civil Protests**

On May 25<sup>th</sup>, 2020, George Floyd died by police action during his arrest in Minneapolis, Minnesota. This sparked outrage and protests across the nation, including the Puget Sound region, over justice inequalities and systemic racism in our society. Snohomish students and residents began holding peaceful vigils along streets in the historic district, to demonstrate their solidarity with others around the country who were calling to bring

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reforms to policing and end systemic racism in America. In other local areas, particularly Seattle and Bellevue, many of the protests became highly confrontational and riotous.

On Sunday May 31<sup>st</sup>, a social media report that agitators and demonstrators were going to arrive in Snohomish was forwarded to Police. The Snohomish Police Department, along with the Sheriff's Office and other Snohomish County police agencies began preparations and opened an Emergency Operations Center at the Fire District 4 Headquarters to develop response plans, but the protest itself never materialized and was later determined to have been a hoax.



The information about this protest spread rapidly over social media and prompted an armed response by numerous local citizens to the city, where they gathered on First Street, under the premise they would provide security for the businesses in that area. There were some minor verbal clashes between the armed citizens and local citizen protesters, but no reports of violence or assault. As the day continued, the mood became tense and many residents and citizens felt intimidated by this show of force from other members of

the community. By nightfall the event had taken on the character of an out-of-control block party, with some local bars selling alcohol to patrons in violation of state COVID restrictions in place at the time. There were some overt displays of flags and apparel that conveyed a racial undertone to the incident, and which created unnecessary additional tension between the armed responders, protesters, as well as area residents.

The SPD and members of the Sheriff's Office responded to the area and began shutting the incident down. One driver was arrested for Reckless Driving after doing a "burnout" and nearly striking some bystanders.

The following evening, June 1<sup>st</sup>, protesters and citizens again came to First Street in large numbers, but with far less open display of weapons but more racial symbology. Differing from the previous night, one confrontation did turn violent. A 19-year-old man got into a confrontation with another man on First Street and was punched and knocked to the ground, suffering minor injuries. This was not initially reported to the police department, but once made aware of it, we conducted a thorough investigation, identifying all the

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participants, and referred charges to the Snohomish County Prosecutor's Office once the investigation was completed.

By Tuesday, June 2<sup>nd</sup>, the events of Sunday night had been widely reported in the local media, with some national news outlets also reporting on it. This coverage spurred a large number of protesters to come to Snohomish from Seattle and elsewhere from around the Puget Sound region. While they initially planned only to gather at the intersection of Second Street and Avenue D, where local residents and students had been gathering for several evenings, the protest group eventually began marching south on Avenue D and turned onto First Street. The group's size was estimated at between 250-300 people.

We made the decision to facilitate this impromptu march, rather than attempt to stop it, which would have been futile and likely sparked further outrage against police and possibly violence. With assistance from a Sheriff's Office team, we used police vehicles to block side streets and roadways while the march progressed initially up First Street, then along Union Avenue and back along Second Street to Avenue D. This was done to prevent traffic and drivers from interacting with the march and to provide a safe environment for both the protesters and motorists. We used a leap-frog tactic that always kept our vehicles in a position to stop or divert traffic well ahead of the march, who made their circuit three times before quietly dispersing as darkness arrived.

There were no incidents of violence, vandalism, or car/pedestrian encounters and we continued to use this tactic over the next several weeks as additional protests and marches occurred along First Street.

The events that occurred through May 31<sup>st</sup> and June 2<sup>nd</sup> were unprecedented in Snohomish and have left lasting impacts on our community. While no property damage occurred, as it did in many other cities and towns, and violence was minimal, the incidents have created fear that continues to resonate with many in our community. Our sense of security has been shaken and racial tensions have been brought out into the open. It is hoped that this fear will dissipate as time goes on, and that the opening of a franker dialogue about race and inequality will lead to real and necessary changes for the better.



# STATISTICAL INFORMATION

## MOTOR VEHICLE CRASHES / CITATIONS

The following two tables detail vehicle collisions and traffic enforcement.

<u>Accident Type</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>
No Injury	130	114	97
Possible Injury	28	38	25
Non-Incapacitating Injury	3	7	7
Incapacitating Injury	6	2	1
Unknown	41	44	19
<b>Totals</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>149</b>

<u>Citation Type</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>
Parking	204	220	48
Infraction – Traffic	719	560	449
Criminal – Traffic	4	0	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>932</b>	<b>787</b>	<b>498</b>



For 2020, the data shows an approximate 30% drop in collisions and an approximate 35% drop in infraction totals from 2019 – this is predominantly a result of the reduction in vehicle traffic due to COVID-19 restrictions and fewer commuters travelling to and from work. The reduction in infractions is also a result of social distancing mandates given to the officers to restrict unnecessary public contacts.

The data also shows an approximate 15% drop in infractions from 2018 to 2019, so this is an area the Snohomish Police Department will be refocused to promote public and driver safety.

DUI Enforcement is, and always will be, a priority!

<u>DUI</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>
	25	49	38



# CRIME IN SNOHOMISH

## Non-Violent Crimes

<u>Crime Type</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>
Residential Burglary	18	26	22
Commercial Burglary	23	33	48
Vehicle Theft	32	14	34
Vehicle Prowl	53	43	71
Theft (All Types)	176	193	238

2020 did see a general increase in certain non-violent crimes, particularly Commercial Burglaries and Vehicle Prowls. Analyzing the reports and data will be a priority for our Investigations Unit to determine if there are particular businesses being targeted and what preventative measures could be used to bring about reductions in these crime types.

## Violent Crimes

<u>Robbery</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>
Robbery 1 (Armed)	1	3	6
Robbery 2 (Unarmed)	3	3	6

As with some non-violent crimes, we have seen a statistically significant increase in Robberies, even though the actual number is still very low. It should be pointed out that “Armed” Robbery includes the use or threatened use of any kind of weapon, or a significant assault during the taking of property from the person of another; not just firearms. The actual use, or implied use, of a firearm in the 2020 Robbery 1° cases was two, but in neither instance was a firearm actually displayed.

<u>Assaults</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>
Felony Assault 1, 2, 3	9	9	8
Felony Assault 1,2,3 DV	5	4	5
Misdemeanor Assault 4	23	18	12
Misdemeanor Assault 4 DV	61	43	43

Assault totals for the City of Snohomish remain generally consistent or show a declining trend. There is little that police can do as a preventative, except to continue with education and outreach whenever possible.

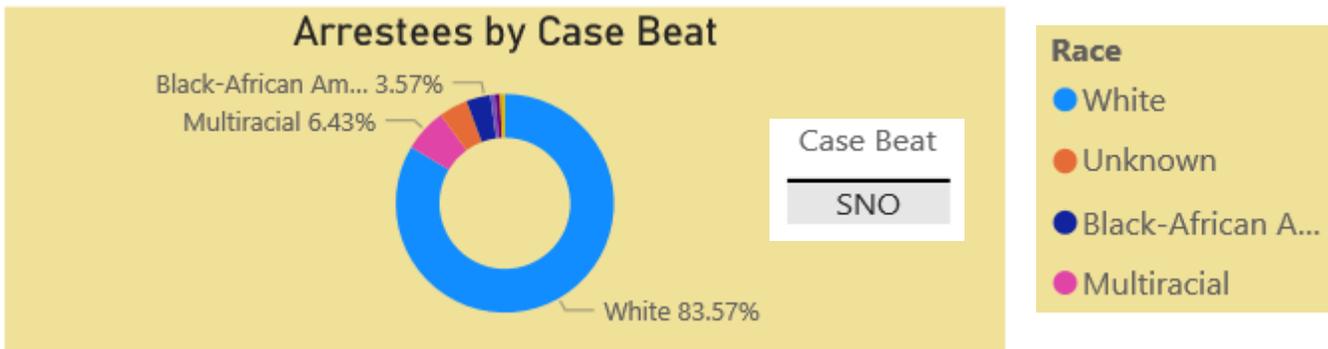
<u>Crime Type</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>
Arson	0	0	4
Rape	1	0	2
Homicide	0	0	0

Snohomish saw a significant Arson increase due to several vandalism fires at city parks in 2020. Investigations into those fires are open and active.

Both Rape cases reported in 2020 fall under the unofficial heading of “Date Rape”. There were no reported stranger-suspect sexual assaults.

There were no Homicides or Attempted Homicides in Snohomish during 2020.

## ANNUAL ARREST DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS



Data capture on demographics is a new tool available to us through analytical software used by the Sheriff’s Office Crime Analysts based on police reports and how those arrested identified themselves by race.

The graphic above is included this year as a representation of arrests by the Snohomish PD and how they relate to our populations of color. The arrest percentages by identified race are closely in line with the actual population demographics of Snohomish County and/or the City of Snohomish (datausa.io), demonstrating equity in the application of arrest as an enforcement option.

## Crisis Calls

Crisis Aid Calls	2018	2019	2020
Mental Health	11	8	44
Suicide or Attempt	3	2	2

Crisis Calls also include contacts for homelessness and addiction outreach. With the return of the Community Outreach Officer, those contacts did increase for 2020.

It is impossible to fully account for these types of contacts because they may be dispatched or coded as another call type (such as a trespassing or nuisance call) and change during the contact into an outreach call. That may or may not be changed to a mental aid contact depending on the outcome. It is probable that this call type is under-reported.

## PROSECUTIONS

Count of CaseID	Column Labels	2020
<input type="checkbox"/> Active		311
<input type="checkbox"/> Active		311
<input type="checkbox"/> Filed		57
<input type="checkbox"/> Referred		254
<input type="checkbox"/> Closed		115
<input type="checkbox"/> Closed		115
<input type="checkbox"/> Declined		79
<input type="checkbox"/> Deferred		2
<input type="checkbox"/> Misdemeanor		19
<input type="checkbox"/> Merged File		1
<input type="checkbox"/> Probable Cause		2
<input type="checkbox"/> Felony		12
<input type="checkbox"/> Inactive		2
<input type="checkbox"/> Inactive		2
<input type="checkbox"/> Bench Warrant		2
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>428</b>

There are a variety of factors that affect prosecution outcomes, including plea negotiations and agreements as well as victim and witness cooperation, particularly in the Closed category. Courtroom closures and other restrictions during the pandemic dramatically affected prosecutions in 2020.

We will continue to monitor the ratio of our arrests and referrals to actual case acceptance and prosecution to ensure that our efforts in holding violators accountable is high, and fiscally responsible.

Jail and prosecution costs must merit the expenditure of enforcement and investigation time and effort. Snohomish is fortunate that we have the staffing, time, and resources to fully and thoroughly investigate crimes and send the Prosecutor's Office high quality and complete cases for review. This

should result in higher acceptance rates and more successful prosecutions. We seek to perform the highest quality investigations and prioritize training, not just for our detectives, but for the patrol staff as well to help ensure that is the result.

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## 2021 GOALS

The Sheriff's Office goals for 2021 are:

### **Prioritize Public Trust**

Examples:

1. Act with Integrity – Do the right thing at the right time, for the right reason. *“The supreme quality for leadership is unquestionable integrity. Without it, no real success is possible, no matter whether it is on a section gang, a football field, in an army, or in an office”* – Dwight D. Eisenhower
2. Demonstrate Respect – Behave in ways that show fundamental respect for others.
3. Practice Accountability – This comes in two forms; holding yourself accountable and holding others accountable. If we hold ourselves and those around us to the highest standards and take ownership of our actions, we will build trust with our coworkers as well as the public.
4. Responsible Stewardship of Public Funds – Budgetary responsibility and accountability.
5. Practice Servant Leadership – *“Nobody cares how much you know, until they know how much you care”* – Theodore Roosevelt.

### **Increase Public and Employee Safety**

Examples:

1. Reduce collisions and injuries through training, incident debriefs and focus on proper vehicle maintenance and performance.
2. Demonstrate the tenets of Below 100 –
  - a. Wear your seatbelt
  - b. Wear your vest-both ballistic and high-visibility (traffic control)
  - c. Watch your speed
  - d. WIN – What's Important Now?
3. Provide health and wellness resources and training.
  - a. Healthy Habits Worksheet
  - b. Partners for Health
4. Focus on crime reduction efforts utilizing data driven approaches and specific outcomes.
5. Proactively seek out criminal activity and conditions that lead to crime.

### **Dedication to Professional Service**

Examples:

1. Recruit and hire high quality candidates and promote employees who display leadership within our organization and provide professional law enforcement and correctional services to our community.
2. Prioritize employee training and certifications to maintain knowledgeable, highly trained and safe workforce.
3. Identify systems and processes that can be made more efficient and help our organization better serve the residents of Snohomish County.
4. Emphasis on doing the little things well. Back to basics. Giving 100 percent effort to any task, assignment or investigation and making it right the first time.

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The goals for the Snohomish Police Department will be aligned with those goals in the same way that we adhere to the Mission, Vision and Values of our parent organization, but they will be specifically tailored to focus on the city of Snohomish and its residents. Your police department already follows or practices the principles listed above and we commit to improving wherever we can in every area of our business. We also commit to openness and transparency, and to remaining flexible so that we can realign our goals and efforts to changing issues and conditions.

In addition to those goals above, other specific goals for the Snohomish Police Department are:

- To outfit all of our patrol vehicles with modern radar or LIDAR systems for traffic speed enforcement. Public desire for safe streets for drivers and pedestrians is a common theme and we will be making this a priority in line with the move towards a city-wide 20 mph speed limit.
- To better utilize our data systems to provide predictive analysis of crime so that we are more preventative than reactive.
- To reengage community outreach and community partnership opportunities safely, but steadily, within pandemic protocols.

## CONNECT WITH THE SNOHOMISH PD

**JOIN OUR TEAM!** Make a difference in our community and join one of the best law enforcement agencies in Washington. <https://snohomishcountywa.gov/238/Careers---Join-Our-Team>

**Connect with us on Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/SnohomishPD/>

**Visit our website:** <https://www.snohomishwa.gov/186/Police-Department>

**Follow us on Twitter:** [twitter.com/@SnohomishPD](https://twitter.com/@SnohomishPD)

**Register your valuables and belongings for free.** In case of theft, you will have important details for police: [www.reportit.leadsonline.com](http://www.reportit.leadsonline.com)