



# PORT ORCHARD POLICE DEPARTMENT

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## PRESS RELEASE

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November 30<sup>th</sup>, 2021

### PORT ORCHARD POLICE ACHIEVE ACCREDITATION

On November 17<sup>th</sup>, 2021, the Port Orchard Police Department successfully completed a rigorous accreditation program that certifies it is operating under the best practices and standards for law enforcement in the State of Washington. The program is administered by the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs (WASPC) and involves a multi-phase process over several months.

“We have been working on accreditation since I arrived in 2019. The men and women of this department worked incredibly hard to demonstrate that we serve amongst the best in our profession. All credit belongs to them,” Police Chief Matt Brown stated. “We are committed to being open and transparent to our community. Accreditation is one of several steps we have taken to strengthen the public trust.”

Benefits of accreditation include administrative and operational effectiveness, equitable recruitment and employment practices, better records management, improved use of technology, health and safety, increased training, and professional codes of conduct.

“The Port Orchard Police Department has worked hard to obtain this achievement,” said Steve Strachan, WASPC executive director. “The community should be proud of local law enforcement for taking direct and tangible steps to earn the public’s confidence in their operations.”

The certification is awarded for a four-year period after initial accreditation has been achieved. This is the first time in the agency’s eighty-year history that it has been accredited. The Port Orchard Police Department joins all other Kitsap municipal law enforcement agencies, plus the sheriff’s office, with this professional accomplishment.

The Washington Legislature originally called for the development of standards and goals for law enforcement in 1976. The current WASPC program is continually updated and strives to guide law enforcement with best practices, accountability measures and serves to heighten organizational discipline. The Port Orchard Police Department is one of sixty-three law enforcement agencies, which make up approximately 25% of all Washington law enforcement, that is currently accredited.

WASPC was founded in 1963 and represents executive and top management personnel from law enforcement agencies statewide. With more than 900 members, it includes 39 elected county sheriffs and 240 police chiefs, as well as the Washington State Patrol, the Washington Department of Corrections, and representatives of several federal agencies.

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**For Immediate Release 1:00 pm 11/30/2021**