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\*\*\*For Immediate Release\*\*\*

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## **Work Zone Speed Cameras Detect Significant Speeding Issues in First 90 Days of Operation**

Olympia, Washington - Since 2020, Washington has averaged 1,345 crashes in highway work zones each year. Those crashes have led to deaths and injuries to roadway workers and the traveling public alike, as well as significant property damage and travel delays impacting millions of travelers on our highways. Excessive speed, which reduces reaction time for drivers in changing roadway environments, is a primary factor in work zone crashes and collisions.

In April, the Washington State Patrol (WSP) and the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), in collaboration with other state agencies and Legislature, launched Washington's Work Zone Speed Camera Program. The program aims to improve safety by encouraging drivers to follow speed limits in highway work zones and reduce speed-related crashes.

In its first 90 days, the program identified thousands of speeding motorists. Since enforcement began in mid-April, WSP has issued 7,599 infractions statewide, with another 3,968 currently being processed. There is no fine for the first work zone speed camera infraction. However, the second and any subsequent infractions carry a \$248 penalty. The 262 of infractions issued in the first 90 days were second time offenses connected to the same vehicle and thus qualify for a fine.

"The first few months of the program confirm what statistics show and what our workers have been saying - too many people speed through work zones," said Secretary of Transportation Julie Meredith. "We hope this changes driver behavior – that people slow down, and everyone comes home safe at the end of the day."

Drivers receive ample warning when entering work zones. When work zone speed cameras may be present, signs are posted, and in many cases, radar feedback signs remind drivers to slow down. Cameras only issue an infraction when workers are present, which could be at any time—day or night. Drivers should always assume workers may be on-site if signs are posted.



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Once a speeding vehicle is detected, the information is sent to WSP. Photos do not show the driver. Troopers review each case, and if a violation is confirmed, an infraction is mailed to the vehicle's registered owner. They may contest the infraction, request a reduction, or set up a payment plan with the Office of Administrative Hearings.

As noted, there is no fine for the first work zone speed camera infraction. However, the second and any subsequent infractions carry a \$248 penalty. (Note: Starting July 1, 2026, first infractions will bring a \$125 penalty; while second and all other infractions will remain at \$248.)

The vehicle's registered owner must respond to the notice of infraction online or by mail, even if there is no financial penalty. These infractions are classified as non-moving violations and do not impact driving records or insurance rates. Unpaid fines may result in a hold on vehicle registration renewal. The state Office of Administrative Hearings manages appeals. Depending on the case, individuals may submit documents for a brief hearing or testify by phone in a formal hearing.

Revenue from fines funds program operations. Any remaining funds support WSP's DUI and safety efforts. The program is currently authorized by 2030 unless extended by the Legislature.

"While the number of infractions has been high during the first 90 days of operation, we hope to see a reduction of speeding through work zones as the word gets out about this new safety tool," said WSP Chief John R. Batiste. "This isn't about writing tickets and fining motorists; this is about slowing inattentive drivers down and saving lives."

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