



# WASHINGTON TRAFFIC SAFETY COMMISSION

## For Immediate Release

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## Law Enforcement Launch Holiday Patrols for Impaired Drivers

**Olympia** – Washington law enforcement will launch DUI emphasis patrols beginning December 11. More than 145 law enforcement agencies statewide will add patrols through January 2, searching for drivers who are impaired from alcohol, cannabis or other substances.

“Most people believe driving impaired is unacceptable and will make plans for a sober ride when celebrating this holiday season,” said Mark Medalen, program manager at the Washington Traffic Safety Commission (WTSC). “We encourage everyone to make a plan before they party, so they can return home safely.”

Traffic safety officials and officers from the Washington Liquor and Cannabis Board are also distributing 1,000 Lyft discount codes through in-person bar visits and online distribution through the holidays. The discount is limited to the first 1,000 people who add the code to their Lyft app. Claimed codes are valid through the holidays until Superbowl Sunday on February 3, 2020. Each code downloaded is worth \$10 off a Lyft ride within the Lyft service area in Bellingham, Seattle, Spokane and the Tri-Cities area.

## Friends Let Friends **Crash** on the Couch



**81% of Washingtonians act to prevent drunk and drugged driving.**

According to 2018 survey of Washington adults conducted by the Traffic Safety Commission.

Said Todd Kelsay, Regional Director for Lyft Pacific Northwest, “There are so many great things to get out and explore during the holidays, from watching sports with friends, going to the office holiday party, to personal celebrations with family and friends. It’s our goal to make sure everyone enjoys the festivities stress-free and arrives home with a sober ride.”



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Nearly half of all traffic deaths in Washington involved an impaired driver. Drivers who are impaired from more than one substance (called poly-drug drivers), are the most common type of impaired driver involved in fatal crashes. The number of poly-drug drivers has increased an average of 15 percent every year since 2012. By 2016, poly-drug drivers were more than double the number of alcohol-only drivers and five times higher than the number of THC (cannabis)-only drivers involved in fatal crashes.

Said Medalen, “Eighty-one percent of Washingtonians don’t let friends drive impaired. Instead, they report that they let friends crash on their couch, call them a cab, arrange rideshare, or provide a designated driver. Giving the gift of a sober ride home means a safer and brighter holiday for everyone.”

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*The Washington Traffic Safety Commission (WTSC) is our state’s designated highway safety office. We share a vision with numerous other state and local public agencies. That vision is to reduce traffic fatalities and serious injuries to zero by 2030. The WTSC Director is the Governor’s Highway Safety Representative, which is a designated position each state is required to have in order to qualify for federal traffic safety funding.*