

WADEPS



Washington State Data Exchange for Public Safety

January 2025



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WADEPS

Executive Summary

The Washington State Data Exchange for Public Safety (WADEPS) is poised to become the nation's first statewide incident-level use-of-force reporting system.

Authorized by RCW 10.118 and supported by a financial investment from the State of Washington, WADEPS created a standardized and centralized data management system which provides meaningful insights on police and community interaction and contributes to improving public safety operations and public trust.

WADEPS is more than just a data collection and reporting system: it is an investment in workforce development, applied scholarship, and community safety.

Standardizing, centralizing, and providing context for police use-of-force incidents provides the public, law enforcement, and policymakers with practical analytical tools to identify trends, assess the effectiveness of police practices, determine whether training is effective, and encourage civic participation and dialog.

Phase I of the WADEPS implementation is nearing completion. Elements include an efficient web-based interface for reporting use-of-force incident data by officers and agency administrators, a modern, secure, cloud-based data storage solution, an interactive, publicly available dashboard, and statistical educational resources for all stakeholders.

A unique distinction of the WADEPS platform is the incorporation of contextual data, particularly computer-aided dispatch (CAD) data for all calls for service. Incident-level CAD data provides critical perspective for analyzing the rate of incidents involving police use of force. Additional data from the U.S. census and other surveys will enable relevant agency and community comparisons.

WADEPS will be ready for launch in early 2025.

The WADEPS Dashboard

Empowering communities to engage in informed discussions about law enforcement practices.

The Washington State Data Exchange for Public Safety online dashboard, currently in the final stages of development, offers powerful analytical tools that law enforcement agencies, legislators, and members of the public can use to foster understanding, identify trends, and promote accountability.

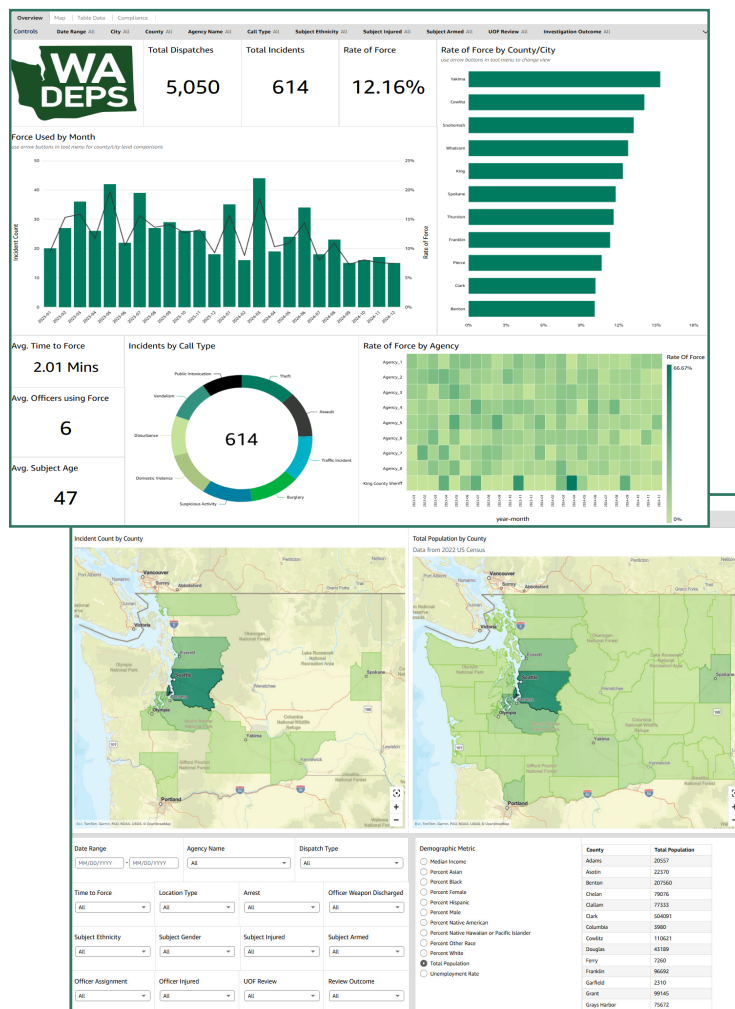
Powered by industry-leading technology, the WADEPS dashboard will draw information from a secure data lake to create interactive visualizations centered on police officers' use of force. These visualizations will be contextualized with related information about community and agency characteristics and total police incidents.

Ongoing testing and development are focused on verifying data integrity and enhancing the interactive user experience, including the ability to download data or export user-generated visualizations.

Examples of Data Stories

For individual agencies, selected agencies, or all agencies:

- Rate of force for specific time periods
- Rate of force by community characteristics (i.e., population, economic)
- Rate of force by call type
- Time to use of force
- Subject demographics, if known (i.e., age, gender, ethnicity, residency)
- Officer demographics (i.e., age, years of service, ethnicity)
- Community demographics
- All incidents by call types
- Agency compliance with WADEPS



Sample images using test data.

Dashboards powered by
Amazon QuickSight

Cloud-scale business intelligence service that connects and combines data from different sources to deliver easy-to-understand visualizations and insights.

The WADEPS Data Lake

A secure, scalable repository for unstructured data from multiple and diverse sources.

Use of Force (UOF)

70	data elements per UOF incident
301	agency profiles with 17 data elements each
11,074	officer profiles with 6 data elements each*

Contextualization

88	agency characteristics data elements x 301 agencies**
14	agency compliance data elements x 301 agencies
223	U.S. census socio-economic data elements for all of Washington state
6	data elements for each participating emergency response software vendor
5	incident-based CAD data elements for 100,000s of calls for service without the use of force for all agencies statewide***

* As of 1/6/25. Officer profile data will be updated by CJTC biweekly.

** Washington-specific Law Enforcement Management and Administrative Statistics survey

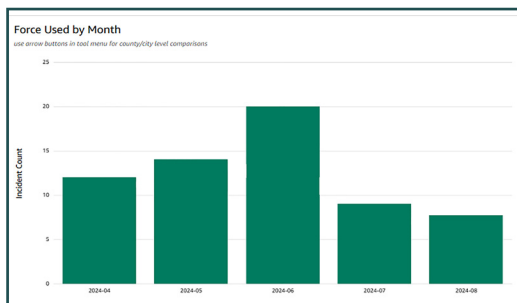
*** Including up to five years of historical data for each agency.

Use-Case Scenario

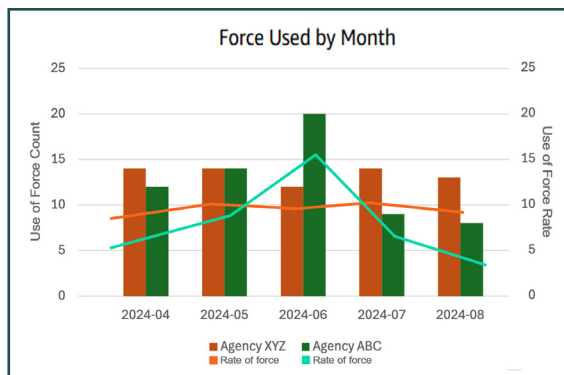
Easily understandable data visualizations will showcase key insights for the public and agencies, foster a greater understanding of use-of-force incidents and police interactions, promote accountability, and empower stakeholders to participate in meaningful, informed conversations about law enforcement practices and police reforms.

A Sample Data Story

Agency ABC implements a new de-escalation technique for mental health calls for service in June.



The required use-of-force data will reflect whether **the count of reportable incidents** for that agency changed in the following months (overall and for mental health calls), and help identify other common factors, such as the time of day or whether the incident occurred inside or outside.



The contextual data can show whether the **rate of the use of force** (overall and for mental health calls) for that agency changed in the months after the training—as well as enable comparison of Agency ABC’s rate with that of similar agencies around the state, and identify additional common or distinguishing factors such as a community’s socio-economic status, officer experience, or agency type.

Definitions

Count

A simple tally of reportable uses of force during a given period of time.
Example: How many times was force used in May, June, and July?

Rate

The count of use-of-force incidents divided by the total number of police interactions during a given period of time. Stated as a percentage or a ratio.
Example: How many of the total calls for service resulted in a reportable use of force?

WADEPS Achievements

July 2024–January 2025

Finding Common Ground

More than 300 agencies with general law enforcement authority operate within the State of Washington. Most already collect basic information about use-of force incidents, calls for service, and other officer engagements, however, there are variations in methods and/or definitions and not all the data is easily accessible by the public.

Built on the foundation of well-established human-subject research protocols, WADEPS data management standardizes use-of-force data definitions and aligns data from disparate sources while also meeting stringent standards for protecting individual privacy.

Due to the lack of an official statewide directory of law enforcement agencies leaders and contact information, WADEPS continues work toward identifying a designated point-of-contact for as many agencies as possible. At present, contacts have been verified for 276 of 301 agencies (92%).

Agency Types

208 Local / 39 County / 13 State / 27 Tribal / 14 Other

Setting Legal Boundaries

WADEPS developed a general data use agreement (DUA) to govern how data provided to the system is shared, used, and made available to the public and ensure submitted data mirrors data held independently by participating agencies and their respective dispatch centers.

A draft of the DUA was provided for review to more than 252 law enforcement agency leaders representing 283 agencies. A 60-day open comment period generated valuable dialogue and critical improvements for efficient data transfer and maintaining parity.

The final DUA will be distributed to agency points of contact following the review and approval of the WADEPS platform by the Washington Office of the Attorney General (AGO), expected in early 2025.

Advocating for the Data

The WADEPS data governance advisory committee includes regional and national experts in data analytics, criminal justice operations and research, public policy, and law. Their charge is to advocate for the data—its accuracy, integrity, efficiency, expandability, completeness, useability, accessibility, accountability, and security.

The committee is comprised of two divisions:



**Community and
Law Enforcement**



**Subject-Matter
Experts**

In the second half of 2024, the committee focused on updating, refining, and reviewing the WADEPS required use-of-force data dictionary and the WADEPS smart CSV templates developed to improve efficiency and accuracy when agencies submit their use-of-force data.



The committee also investigated creating a new division focused on the use of force by correctional officers in Washington. Although stakeholders are interested in adding a correctional dimension to the state’s use-of-force database, it is out of scope for the current legislation.

All members support future enhancements to the data dictionary that would add data associated with assaults on officers, prosecutorial decision-making, and use-of-force incidents in correctional settings to the WADEPS data collection.



In preparation for when legislative authority to make updates might be granted, the committee drafted a formal data change policy. As part of this process, the new policy was tested by applying it to actual requests for changes received from officers and agency leaders. The committee also drafted justifications for enhanced data elements and the need for ongoing review of the required use-of-force data elements.

In advance of the WADEPS launch, the committee is compiling “frequently asked questions” about how Washington’s use-of-force data approach is unique and why the data may look different from data reported directly by agencies.

Establishing Partnerships

Developing a successful, first-of-its-kind data repository for police activity analysis and criminal justice research is an interdisciplinary endeavor requiring a range of partnerships and collaborations.

One measure of success for WADEPS is creating an efficient process that minimizes the administrative burden and reduces or eliminates duplicative data entry.

For example, officers will need to have unique accounts for submitting data and the required use-of-force data includes identifiers for responding agencies and demographic details for officers involved. Rather than duplicating and having to maintain a secondary database for more than 11,000 officers with general law enforcement authority, WADEPS has established an ongoing data-mirroring partnership with the **Washington State Criminal Justice Training Commission (CJTC)**, the state organization responsible for establishing standards and training for criminal justice professionals, including peace officers and local corrections officers.

Training for WADEPS is hosted within the CJTC online training environment.

The online WADEPS modules will be available to sworn officers alongside required coursework. Officers who complete the first two modules can receive 1.5 hours toward their annual in-service requirement.

Officers maintain their student profile in CJTC, which is mirrored in the WADEPS data lake.

When reporting a use-of-force incident, the officer's up-to-date demographic data and agency information will be prepopulated in the WADEPS submission form, ensuring compliance with reporting requirements.

Another valuable partnership is reflected in the evolution of the **general data use agreement (DUA)**. Several use-of-force incident-based data points, such as the incident number, call type, and location, are automatically stored in computer-aided dispatch (CAD) data held by public safety answering points (PSAPs) or dispatch centers.

The final DUA is being drafted to include a rider enabling agencies to authorize their respective dispatch center to share the agency's required data with WADEPS. This will improve data integrity and reduce duplicative data entry efforts for incident reporting.

WADEPS is also beginning a new partnership with **Washington Technology Solutions** (WaTech) to develop a solution for anonymizing incident location to better protect subject privacy. WaTech provides enterprise IT service and support, including geocoding, for state agencies.

Rather than building a bespoke solution, WADEPS seeks to integrate WaTech’s existing grid system, which would allow WaTech to seamlessly align WADEPS data with other statewide data resources.

Adding Constructive Context

A unique feature of the Washington State Data Exchange for Public Safety is the integration of contextual data.



Use-of-force incident data by itself provides limited actionable information.



WADEPS integrates additional data elements to better understand when and how force is used in relation to other policing activity and the community where it occurs.



Contextual information includes census data and community demographics, agency size and type, and, most significantly, incident-based CAD data points for all calls for service.

How CAD improves use-of-force analysis

Understanding the frequency (or rate) and the nature of incidents resulting in the use of force versus incidents and calls for service that *did not* result in the use of force provides useful information to identify trends and visualize the impact of policy or training changes.

The PSAP rider in the final DUA enables agencies to easily and quickly provide limited incident-level computer-aided dispatch (CAD) data for all calls for service to WADEPS thus ensuring a more accurate and trustworthy record of police-public interactions.

Limited incident-level data collected for all calls:

- CAD incident number
- Agency unique identifier
- Record creation
- Original call type
- Location city

Why context is important

The Washington State Data Exchange for Public Safety is committed to providing a comprehensive and transparent view of use-of-force incidents across the state. Incorporating supplementary data enables fair comparisons along shared characteristics and unique operational and organizational factors.

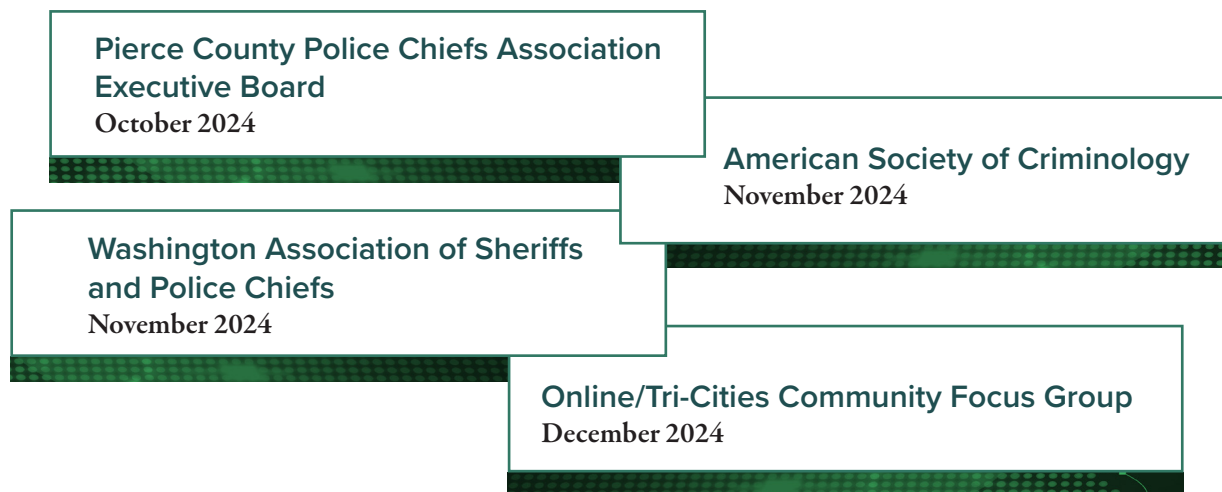
In addition to incident data for calls with and without the use of force, WADEPS is integrating contextual data sets from:

- ✓ 2020 U.S. Census (socio-economic factors for Washington communities)
- ✓ Washington-specific version of the annual Law Enforcement Management and Administrative Statistics (WA-LEMAS) survey distributed by the Bureau of Justice Statistics (includes size and type of agency, specialty tools such as body-worn cameras, etc.)
- ✓ WADEPS agency visibility index (includes the availability of use-of-force policies, policy similarities, WADEPS participation, takedown protocols, etc.)

Viewed together, use-of-force and contextual data improves understanding of factors that may contribute to the use of force by identifying trends and improving accountability, and supporting informed policy decisions regarding de-escalation training and resource allocation.

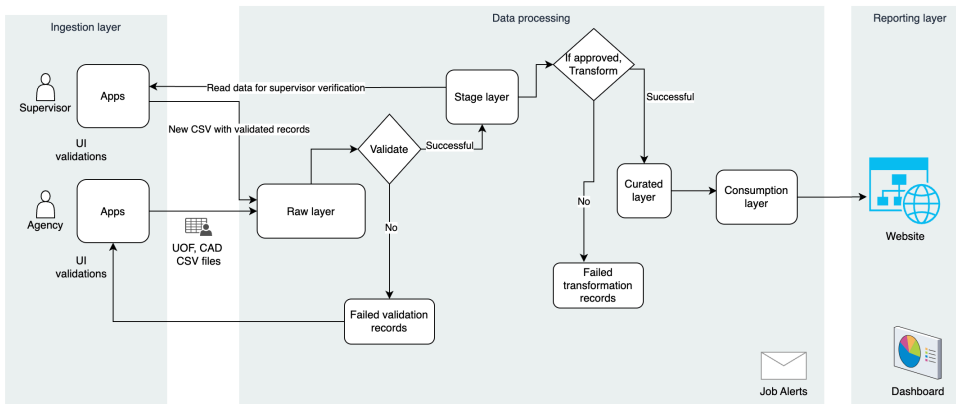
Engaging Stakeholders

In the second half of 2024, WADEPS continued its outreach with public safety agencies, community members, and academic researchers.



Building the Infrastructure

Working in collaboration with industry-leading technology subcontractor Amazon Web Services (AWS), significant progress has been made in building, testing, and securing the WADEPS data ingestion and management infrastructure.

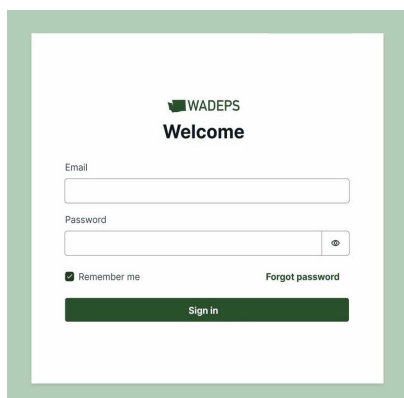


Data lake highlights:

- Storage structure and partitions
- Security controls
- Smart templates for agency data
- Data validation
- ETL processes (extract, transform, load)
- Runbooks and documentation

A web-based data submission portal for officers and agency administrators provides an efficient solution to meet state reporting requirements.

Key to this time-saving tool is the linking of confidential WADEPS ID numbers for all active officers in the state based on their CJTC student number (see previous section on “Establishing Data Partnerships”).



Developing the Website

Welcome to WADEPS

The public-facing website will host the dashboard, information about WADEPS, educational resources for all stakeholders, and access to the secure data submission web application for officers and agencies.

- WADEPS Home
 - Dashboard
- How it Works
 - Contextual Data
 - Agency Compliance
 - Learn About Stats
- The Data
 - Data Dictionary
 - Data Governance
- About WADEPS
 - Legislative Mandate
 - Presentations & Focus Groups
 - Reports
 - Organizations & People
- Frequently Asked Questions
- Contact Us
- For Agencies
 - Login to WADEPS
 - Roles & Responsibilities
 - FAQs for Agencies
 - Request Support

Creating Customer Service Tools

To meet the responsibility of support stakeholders with technical and statistical assistance, WADEPS is implementing an email-based ticketing system, hosted on the WADEPS website, which enables individual requests to be automatically routed to the appropriate internal team.

We're here to help

- Select a topic in the form to request assistance:
- » Statistical education
 - » Technical support (website/dashboard issues)
 - » Agency administrative support
 - » Officer technical support
 - » Research data inquiry
 - » General inquiry

Ensuring Education for All

To ensure everyone can effectively use the system and understand the visualizations, WADEPS is developing a series of video tutorials and user guides covering everything from basic dashboard navigation to advanced data analysis techniques.

A WADEPS-dedicated research staff member affiliated with the WSU Center for Interdisciplinary Statistical Education and Research was hired in the fall of 2024 and a WADEPS-specific GitHub account has been established for publicly sharing algorithms and analytical processes for the data exchange as they are developed.

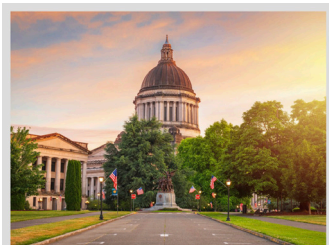
Beta Testing

In September 2024, WADEPS began beta testing. Fifty individuals from 12 agencies volunteered to represent the public safety industry and provide valuable real-world insights into the data collection process and the online training modules.

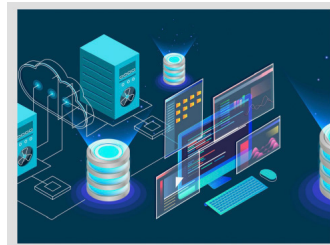
- 3 urban police departments (population > 50K)
- 6 small/rural police departments (population < 50K)
- 2 sheriff's offices
- 1 university police department

In early January 2025, a beta test agency released five years of CAD incident data to WADEPS to test bulk data uploads and dashboard interfaces.

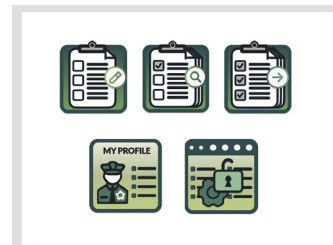
All 50 participants are engaged in reviewing the WADEPS online training modules and contributing to improvements.



Legislative Requirements



WADEPS Data Collection



WADEPS Reporting Tool

The vast majority of beta testers rated the overall training as *good* or *very good*.

A second beta test group made up of representatives from agencies, PSAPs, and emergency response software vendors is helping WADEPS develop automated tools that would enable agencies to regularly and consistently share CAD data with minimal impact to agency or vendor workload.

Preparing for Launch

The WADEPS data lake, collection protocols, officer training, and public-facing website and dashboard are in the final stages of development. Metrics have been identified to ensure all elements are secure, verified, and ready for use.

Data Quality

- Validation rules implemented for UOF data fields
- Contextual data set integration successfully tested
- Monitoring processes successfully tested
- Reporting processes successfully tested
- Cleaning and reconciliation successfully tested

System Security and Compliance

- WA CIO 141.10 achieved
- Internal audit successful
- External audit scheduled
- Documentation and knowledge base created

User Accounts Prepared

- Mirrored data from CJTC successfully tested
- Multifactor authentication enabled
- Activation process successfully tested

Data Ingestion

- Secure online submission form successfully tested
- Smart CSV templates successfully tested
- PSAP data transfer successfully tested

User Training

- Learning modules in CJTC and user tested
- Training manual reviewed and available

User Support

- Help desk, web-based request form and email ticket tracking established
- Comprehensive audit tracking enabled
- Staff trained and prepared to meet one-hour initial response and target resolution goal of 48 hours

Public Website

- Content reviewed and approved
- QuickSight embedding successfully tested
- Web-based request form successfully tested
- Load balancing integration complete
- 99.9% uptime achieved during testing

Agency Onboarding

- Agency points of contact collected and verified
- DUA finalized and ready for distribution
- Handouts reviewed and ready for distribution
- Agency-specific FAQs available on website
- Communications plan reviewed and approved

A demonstration for the AGO is scheduled for mid-January. Following AGO review and approval, WADEPS will begin the agency onboarding process. Per RCW 10.118, agencies have 90 days from the AGO's approval to begin complying with the law.

WADEPS

Conclusion

The power of partnership and innovation

WADEPS is more than just a data collection and reporting system. It is an active investment by the legislature in public safety, workforce development, applied scholarship, and community safety.

Public safety and community health

Built on the foundation of evidence-based practices, reliable data collection, public-facing visibility, WADEPS is poised to play an important role in creating transparency surrounding reportable use of force and police interactions with the public.

Workforce development

WADEPS is building a pipeline of future data analysts and law enforcement professionals. Through a robust internship program, undergraduate and graduate students are gaining hands-on experience working with real-world tools to develop valuable data analysis, visualization, and interpretation skills.

Innovative research and scholarship

WADEPS is managed by respected criminal justice researchers and scholars at Washington State University. The legislature's decision to place responsibility for developing a first-of-its-kind policing data system with professionals who are themselves dedicated to public service will continue to bear fruit for many years.

As the system matures and expands, WADEPS will continue to serve as a vital tool for enhancing public safety and fostering trust between law enforcement and the communities they serve.

Our goal is for WADEPS to become a national model for use-of-force data collection and analysis, informing best practices for the industry and driving positive change across the country.

Washington State Data Exchange for Public Safety



WASHINGTON STATE
UNIVERSITY

