



# YAKIMA COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

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

## Media Release

### PFD/Life Jacket Requirements for Stand-Up Paddle Boats and Kayaks

**Date:** 6/1/21

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**Incident:**

After checking several individuals this Memorial Day weekend who were recreating on some of our local lakes, I found that most individuals who are using stand-up paddle boards and kayaks on the lake are not aware of the requirement that they need to be equipped with PFDs (life jackets/personal floatation devices) while on the water.

The stand-up paddle boards and kayaks are classified as water vessels. Washington laws require that they need to have a PFD. For the PFDs, they need to be worn or attached to the paddleboard while on the water. The PFDs can be the normal life jacket, a fanny pack type or one that is attached to the paddle. This requirement is by RCW 79A.60.170 and the fine is a civil infraction of \$99.00. This also applies to individuals while using a kayak.

It is also recommended that paddle-boarders use a tether cord so that if they are knocked off for some reason, they can pull the board back to them. We also asked that individuals somehow write their name and phone number on the boards and kayaks so that if they are separated from their vessel and it is located floating around, we have someplace to start to see if there is a missing person that needs to be search for.