

## Criteria and Guidelines for Roadside Memorials

Since 1994, the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) has developed a State Roadside Memorial Program to honor individuals who have lost their lives on Washington State Highways. This program allows families and friends to honor their loved ones safely while also providing messaging to encourage safe driving.

### Definitions

**Applicant** – Applicants for a memorial sign can either be an immediate family member of the deceased or a sponsor with written consent from an immediate family member of the deceased.

**State Highway System** – As defined in [WAC 468-51-020](#)

**Memorial Sign** – Signs erected by WSDOT to honor a person who lost their life due to a vehicle collision on the State Highway System.

**Private Memorial** – Any decoration(s) on a State or Federal Highway intended to honor or memorialize a person who lost their life due to a vehicle collision on the State Highway System. Private Memorials include, but are not limited to, markers, flowers, balloons, religious or other symbols, wreaths, or non-approved signage. Official signs placed by WSDOT under this document are not Private Memorials.

### Eligibility

Any person who lost their life as the result of a motor vehicle collision on the State Highway System will be eligible to have a Memorial Sign erected in their honor, except in cases of two or more deaths where at the discretion of the Department:

- Such person was the operator of a motor vehicle and was driving under the influence as set forth in [RCW 46.61.502](#)
- Such person was the operator of a motor vehicle and was driving recklessly as set forth in [RCW 46.61.500](#)

### Application

Applicants may request a Memorial Sign by first filling out the Roadside Memorial Application Form either electronically on the Department's website at <https://wsdot.wa.gov/business-wsdot/highway-signs/get-roadside-memorial-sign> or by printing and submitting a form (See Appendix A) to the following address:

Washington State Department of Transportation  
Roadside Memorial Program  
PO Box 37344  
Olympia, WA 98504-7344

Each application is limited to one name and if multiple names are requested, each name will be submitted on separate applications as a package.

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An application will be accepted by the Department when submitted by an immediate family member of the deceased. If the Applicant is not an immediate family member, the application must include written permission from an immediate family member of the deceased. If any member of deceased's immediate family requests that a sign application not be granted, the application will be denied without prejudice.

Applications must be submitted to the Department no more than six years from the date of the collision.

Upon review and approval of the application, applicants will pay \$1,500, payable to the Department by money order or check, for the costs related to design, materials, fabrication, installation and removal of the signs.

## **Sign Specifications**

All memorial signs will have a blue background with white lettering (See Appendix B). Each memorial sign assembly will consist of one Safety Message Sign (I20-201 through I20-201L) and one supplemental Memorial Message Plaque (I20-203). No other words, depictions, or symbols will be allowed on the memorial sign.

### **Safety Message Sign (I20-201 through I20-201L)**

Each safety message sign will measure 36" x 48" and include one of the following safety messages which will be chosen by the applicant:

I20-201	Please Don't Drink and Drive
I20-201A	Please Don't Drug and Drive
I20-201B	Please Don't Speed
I20-201C	Please Drive Safely
I20-201D	Please Drive Sober
I20-201E	Please Ride Safely
I20-201F	Please Watch for Bicycles
I20-201G	Please Watch for Pedestrians
I20-201H	Reckless Driving Costs Lives
I20-201J	Please Watch for Motorcycles
I20-201K	Seat Belts Save Lives
I20-201L	Stay Alert Drive Safe

Headquarters administration will review additional requests of different sign messages periodically and may revise this list.

### **Memorial Message Plaque (I20-203)**

Each memorial message plaque will be placed directly below the safety message sign and will measure a minimum of 36" x 12", with varying height pending the number of names. If multiple applications for separate fatalities are seeking placement at the same location, the names will be placed together on a single plaque and listed in alphabetical order by last name.

## **Sign Placement**

Placement location of the memorial sign will be at the sole discretion of the Department. The memorial sign will be placed as close to the collision location as possible, in the direction of travel

that the collision occurred. Locations may be adjusted to address conflicts with existing signing and roadways configurations. For interstates and freeways, the sign will be placed on the closest ramp to and in the same direction of travel of the collision. Memorial signs will not be placed on mainline of the National System of Interstates and Defense Highways.

Memorial signs including I20-201F and I20-201G will not be placed at locations where bicyclists and/or pedestrians are not permitted.

## **Sign Duration and Removal**

Each memorial sign will remain in place and maintained for six years from the date of installation. If the sign is stolen, vandalized, or damaged by vehicular impact, the Department will replace the memorial signs one time at no cost to the applicant. Should a subsequent incident occur, the applicant may choose to pay an additional \$1,500 to replace the sign for the remaining agreement timeframe.

At the end of the six-year period, the signs will be removed and stored for thirty (30) days at the nearest maintenance facility. The applicant will be contacted by the Department and may retrieve the signs during that time. After thirty days, the signs will be recycled.

After the deceased has been memorialized for the full agreement duration, no further applications will be accepted to memorialize said person(s).

## **Unveiling Ceremonies**

Sign unveiling ceremonies or in-person memorials are not permitted due to safety concerns for the travelling public and family members. Upon installation of the signs, the applicant will receive notification from the Region Coordinator with a picture indicating that the installation has been completed.

## **Private Memorials**

Due to safety concerns, private memorials are not allowed on any State Highway. All private memorials, whether placed alone or in addition to the official Memorial Sign will be removed without notice. The contents of private memorials will be removed with care and stored for thirty (30) days at the nearest maintenance facility where they can be retrieved. After thirty days, the contents will be discarded.

## **Administration**

The Roadside Memorial Signing Program is managed statewide by the Headquarters Transportation Operations Department. The Memorial Sign Program Specialist will be responsible for:

- Receiving all inquiries from the public
- Document, review, approve and process requests for purchasing a sign
- Updating any policy updates deemed necessary
- Updating any Roadside Memorial Website updates deemed necessary

## **Region Coordinator**

The Region Coordinator will be responsible for:

- Collaboration and coordination with Memorial Sign Program Specialist and Headquarters Transportation
- Coordinating sign locations for all local municipalities
- Coordination of sign installation with local maintenance personnel
- Notifying applicant of sign installation

# Appendix A



## Application for Roadside Memorial Sign

The following items must be submitted with this completed form:

- Written consent from immediate family member of victim
- Copy of Washington State Patrol's Collision Report or a Collision Report Number if full report is not available

Each name added to the sign will require its own application.

Section I: Applicant Information				
Applicant Name		Applicant Email		Applicant Phone Number
Address		City	State	Zip Code
Relationship to Deceased		Do you have written consent if not an immediate family member? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		

Section II: Collision Information			
Name of Deceased		Date of Collision	WSP Report Number
State Highway of Collision	Approximate Milepost or Other Location Details		
Nearest Intersection	County	Nearest City/Town	

Section III: Sign Information		
Please Choose from the Following Safety Messages:		
<input type="checkbox"/> Please Don't Drink and Drive	<input type="checkbox"/> Please Don't Drug and Drive	<input type="checkbox"/> Please Drive Sober
<input type="checkbox"/> Please Drive Safely	<input type="checkbox"/> Please Ride Safely	<input type="checkbox"/> Please Watch for Motorcycles
<input type="checkbox"/> Please Watch for Pedestrians	<input type="checkbox"/> Please Watch for Bicycles	<input type="checkbox"/> Seat Belts Saves Lives
<input type="checkbox"/> Stay Alert Drive Safe	<input type="checkbox"/> Please Don't Speed	<input type="checkbox"/> Reckless Driving Costs Lives
Please write the name as it will be seen on the Supplemental Sign Message:		
In Memory Of:		

# Appendix B

I20-201



I20-201A



I20-201B



I20-201C



I20-201D



I20-201E



I20-201F



I20-201G



I20-201H



I20-201J



I20-201K



I20-201L



I20-203

