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**Council Bill Number:** 113332

**Ordinance Number:** 120096

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AN ORDINANCE requiring that certain uniformed peace officers wear a name tag or similar identification device, and orally identify themselves under certain circumstances.

**Status:** Passed

**Note:** Fourth Quarter 1999 Salary Ordinance

**Vote:** 9-0

**Date filed with the City Clerk:** 2000/10/02

**Date of Mayor's signature:** 2000/09/26 ([about the signature date](#))

**Date introduced/referred to committee:** 2000/08/14

**Committee:** Public Safety and Technology

**Sponsor:** STEINBRUECK

**Committee Recommendation:** Pass

**Index Terms:** POLICE, CITIZEN-COMPLAINTS

**Electronic Copy:** [PDF scan of Ordinance No. 120096](#)

**Reference:** Amending: Ord 113545, 115671, 118396, 118441

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**Text:**

AN ORDINANCE requiring that certain uniformed peace officers wear a name tag or similar identification device, and orally identify themselves under certain circumstances.

WHEREAS, the City of Seattle has a history of promoting trust and cooperation in the interactions of its citizens with the police; and

WHEREAS, anonymous actions by individual uniformed peace officers interfere with and damage this trust and cooperation and harm the integrity of the City's police department; and

WHEREAS, the Report to the Seattle City Council World Trade Organization Accountability Committee by the Citizen's Panel on WTO Operations recommended that the City should provide police officers with equipment, such as rain and protective gear, that properly identifies them as Seattle officers and also provides for individual officer identification; and

WHEREAS, the City Council and Executive, as part of the biennial budget process, have consulted with the Chief of Police, and the Chief of Police fully supports the commitment to implement a comprehensive policy of police identification;

NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF SEATTLE AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. There is added to Chapter 3.28 of the Seattle Municipal Code a new Section 3.28.130, as follows:

3.28.130. Certain uniformed Seattle Police Department peace officers required to wear identification and orally identify themselves.

A. Every Seattle Police Department peace officer shall, when wearing a Seattle Police Department uniform, also wear a Seattle Police Department authorized and issued name tag or similar identification device bearing that officer's first initial and last name in legible block print of at least 24-point typeface. This requirement shall apply whether or not such officer is on duty.

B. No Seattle Police Department peace officer required to wear a name tag or similar identification device pursuant to Subsection A herein shall alter or obscure such name tag or device.

C. All name tags or similar identification devices required pursuant to Subsection A herein shall be worn on the outermost layer of the Seattle Police Department peace officer's uniform, in the upper-front torso area. The outermost layer of such officer's uniform must also identify the name of the officer's law-enforcement agency.

D. In situations where it is reasonably foreseeable that a Seattle Police Department peace officer required to wear a name tag or similar identification device pursuant to Subsection A herein may remove the outermost layer of the officer's uniform, then that officer also shall wear such a name tag or device in the required location on any underlying layer of his or her uniform that may become the outermost layer.

E. When required to wear a name tag or similar identification device pursuant to Subsection A herein and , upon request for identification by a member of the public, a Seattle Police Department peace officer shall clearly and audibly state his or her name to the requesting person. The requirements of this Subsection E shall not apply when the officer reasonably believes that such identification would endanger the life or physical safety of the officer or another person, jeopardize a law-enforcement investigation, or hinder a law- enforcement function.

F. For purposes of this Section, "uniform" is defined to include, in addition to its normal meaning, any law-enforcement agency issued or approved coat, jacket, sweater, jumpsuit, or protective suit that may be worn as an outer layer of clothing or in conjunction with a uniform, but shall not include civilian attire worn by plain-clothes or undercover officers.

G. For purposes of this Section, "peace officer" includes a general authority Washington peace officer as defined in RCW 10.93.020, or a specially-commissioned Washington peace officer as defined in RCW 10.93.020.

H. This Section shall not be construed to prohibit the Seattle Police Department from implementing or enforcing any policy, procedure or rule that is not inconsistent herewith.

I. Nothing in this Section or elsewhere in CB 113332 shall be construed to affect the authority of any peace officer to enforce the traffic, criminal or other laws in the City of Seattle, pursuant to RCW Ch. 10.93 or otherwise, or to affect the lawfulness of an otherwise lawful act by any such peace officer.

Section 2. The Seattle Police Department shall implement the requirements of Section 1 of this ordinance immediately.

Section 3. The Seattle City Council requests the Seattle Police Department to work with all other law enforcement agencies whose peace officers reasonably may be anticipated to enforce traffic or criminal laws in the City of Seattle pursuant to RCW Ch. 10.93 to develop a policy that would require those peace officers to conform with requirements concerning identification devices, departmental identification on uniforms and oral identification that are consistent with Section 1 of this ordinance when so enforcing such. The Seattle Police Department will report back to the Seattle City Council with a proposal concerning such a policy by January 2001.

Section 4. The Seattle City Council requests the Seattle Police Department to work with the City of Seattle's Office of Intergovernmental Relations to develop a state legislative proposal, for inclusion in or possible addition to the Executive's proposed State legislative agenda, that would make it a requirement for all uniformed law-enforcement officers to wear identification bearing the name of the officer and the name of the law enforcement agency on the

outermost layer of the officer's uniform.

Section 5. This ordinance shall take effect and be in force thirty (30) days from and after its approval by the Mayor, but if not approved and returned by the Mayor within ten (10) days after presentation, it shall take effect as provided by Municipal Code Section 1.04.020.

Passed by the City Council the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2000, and signed by me in open session in authentication of its passage this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2000. \_\_\_\_\_ President \_\_\_\_\_ of the City Council

Approved by me this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2000. \_\_\_\_\_ Mayor

Filed by me this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2000. \_\_\_\_\_ City Clerk

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