

MEDIA RELEASE

Custodial Interference Suspect Tracked Down Using GPS Ankle Bracelet

December 18, 2020

On December 18, 2020, just before 12:30 p.m., Washington County Sheriff's Office deputies responded to a custodial interference call in the 21000 block of NW Rock Creek Blvd. in the community of Rock Creek.

37-year-old Stephen L. Johnston, of North Plains, was with two children during a DHS-supervised custody visit when he got in his Jeep with the kids and left, in violation of a judge's order. When the DHS employee attempted to follow Mr. Johnston while also calling 911, he discovered Mr. Johnston had flattened one of the tires on the DHS vehicle.

Multiple deputies responded to the area to start looking for Mr. Johnston. They learned he had been previously arrested in Multnomah County and was wearing a GPS ankle bracelet. Mr. Johnston was arrested in Multnomah County in May 2020 based on a child sex abuse warrant issued in Texas. In June, a Multnomah County judge approved Mr. Johnston's release with several conditions, including a GPS ankle monitor.

During this incident, a deputy at the Washington County Jail was able to give real-time GPS updates on Mr. Johnston's location as he drove into Portland.

Washington County deputies requested help from the Portland Police Bureau, and their officers detained Mr. Johnston just after 1 p.m. near SE 82nd Av. and SE Johnson Creek Blvd. Both children were unharmed and were returned to DHS custody.

WCSO deputies went to that scene and arrested Mr. Johnston. He was booked into the Washington County Jail on two counts of custodial interference in the second degree, unlawful possession of heroin, and criminal mischief in the third degree. His bail for those charges is set at \$100,000. Mr. Johnston is also on felony probation in Washington County for theft and is being held without bail for violating his probation.

The Sheriff's Office wishes to thank the Portland Police Bureau officers for their quick help to find Mr. Johnston and ensure the safety of the children. Expecting it would go unnoticed, the officers also took it on themselves to buy Christmas presents for the children. We appreciate their generosity toward both kids!



SHERIFF
WASHINGTON COUNTY

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