



KEVIN BARTON
WASHINGTON COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY

150 North First Avenue, Suite 300, MS 40, Hillsboro, Oregon 97124-3002
(503) 846-8671 / (503) 846-3407 (fax)
www.WashingtonCountyDA.org

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CONTACT: STEPHEN MAYER

stephen_mayer@washingtoncountyor.gov
971-708-8219

WASHINGTON COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE HOSTS RETAIL THEFT SYMPOSIUM

HILLSBORO, Ore- The Washington County District Attorney's Office joined with the Columbia Sportswear Company and the [Organized Retail Crime Association of Oregon](#) (ORCAOR) to host the first-ever Washington County Retail Theft Symposium on June 10, 2024. More than 50 people attended the event on the Columbia Sportswear Company's campus, including loss prevention personnel, law enforcement officers, and prosecutors.

Presenters covered topics including the scope of retail theft in Oregon, how to form and run robust loss prevention teams, how to properly report these cases to law enforcement, and what type of evidence and investigation are necessary for a successful prosecution.

Washington County District Attorney Kevin Barton launched the inaugural event to bring loss prevention officials together and to alert potential criminals who target businesses in Washington County.

"Ensuring our community is safe for businesses, employees, and customers is a priority," said District Attorney Barton. "We want to send a strong message to businesses that we support them and to criminals that we will prosecute them."

The Columbia Sportswear Company hosted the symposium. This Oregon company is not immune to retail theft trends and welcomed the opportunity to increase training and facilitate networking opportunities between the various retailers in attendance.

"Organized retail theft hurts both large and small businesses, so we appreciate all of the help we receive from the Washington County DA's office and the Organized Retail Crime Association of Oregon," said Peter Bragdon, EVP, Chief Administrative Officer, and General Counsel at the Columbia Sportswear Company.

ORCAOR also played a pivotal role in ensuring the symposium was a success.

"The Organized Retail Crime Association of Oregon (ORCAOR) was honored to present at the inaugural Washington County Retail Theft Symposium. This event marked a significant step towards enhancing our collaborative efforts with law enforcement agencies and retailers to address organized retail crime (ORC) across our state," said Phillip Smith, Vice President at ORCAOR and Organized Retail Crime Investigator at Fred Meyer.

“We are committed to strengthening these partnerships, uniting law enforcement, retailers, and prosecutors in our collective mission to combat crime. By working together, we aim to make a positive impact on our communities, fostering a safer and more secure environment for all. ORCAOR looks forward to continued collaboration and the development of effective strategies to mitigate ORC and to protect our local businesses and residents.”

District Attorney Barton also works closely with the Oregon-based Organized Retail Crime Task Force in an effort to combat retail theft at the statewide level.

Attendees received shoplifting warning signs created by the district attorney’s office that they can display in their businesses. The district attorney’s office is making these signs available to all interested retailers and has received a high volume of requests. [For more information and to submit a request for a sign, visit our website.](#)

District Attorney Barton wishes to acknowledge the following organizations for their participation in this effort: the Columbia Sportswear Company, the Organized Retail Crime Association of Oregon, Fred Meyer, and the Beaverton Police Department.