OREGON SAFETY BELT OVERTIME BLITZ & RECENT OREGON CARSEAT LAW
FACT SHEET & TALKING POINTS
August 24 – September 6, 2020

• Beginning Monday, August 24 and extending through Sunday, September 6, law enforcement agencies throughout Oregon will use federally funded overtime to educate the public about safety belt and child seat laws including a law passed in 2017 increasing safety for children under age two.

• ODOT crash data for 2018 shows lack of safety belt or child restraint use was a factor in 28% or 86 of a total 311 motor vehicle occupant fatalities.

• Motor vehicle crashes are the leading nationwide cause of death for children ages one through twelve years old. In 2018, 1,832 children under twelve were injured in Oregon traffic crashes, 11 percent were reported not using a child restraint system. It is estimated that car seats may increase crash survival by 71% for infants under one year old and by up to 59% for toddlers aged one to four. Booster seats may reduce the chance of nonfatal injury among four to eight year olds by 45% compared to safety belts used alone.

• Safety belts used correctly can reduce the risk of major crash injury or death by up to sixty-five percent.

• In 2017 an Oregon law was passed requiring children to ride in a rear-facing safety seat until they are at least two years old. A child over age two must continue to ride in a car seat with harness or in a booster until they reach age eight or 4’ 9” in height and the adult belt fits them correctly.

• The recent law, which extends the rear-facing requirement from the previous age one to age two, will better protect the child’s head, neck, and spine from potential crash injuries. This is because a rear-facing seat spreads crash forces evenly across the seat and child’s body while also limiting forward or sideways motion of the head.

• For help selecting or installing child car seats, consult the seat manufacturer’s instructions, your vehicle owner’s manual, or visit a local child seat fitting station listed at: https://www.nhtsa.gov/equipment/car-seats-and-booster-seats#inspection-inspection or at http://oregonimpact.org/Child_Passenger_Safety.

• Many car seat fitting stations will host special events during National Child Passenger Safety Week September 20 through 26, with Certified Child Passenger Safety Technicians on-hand to assist families with selection and use of car seats and boosters.