

KING COUNTY REGIONAL



IDENTIFICATION PROGRAM

# Automated Fingerprint Identification System

**2021** Annual Report



# KING COUNTY REGIONAL



## IDENTIFICATION PROGRAM

## MISSION

The Regional AFIS Program promotes public safety and contributes to crime reduction by providing fingerprint identification services and technology to criminal justice agencies throughout King County.

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The AFIS Program would like to thank the individuals who contributed to this report, including program staff, the AFIS Advisory Committee, and those who shared their experiences and success stories. A special thanks to our outgoing members Rob Wyman, Bryan Howard, and Kara Main-Hester.

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**Photography:** King County Sheriff's Office and Seattle Police Department Photography Units

## A MESSAGE FROM THE AFIS ADVISORY COMMITTEE CHAIR



**Dawn Quaale**  
Committee Chair

On behalf of the AFIS Advisory Committee, I am honored to share with you the King County Regional AFIS program's 2021 annual report.

Since the first Levy in 1986, the King County Regional AFIS program has been dedicated to its mission to promote public safety by providing identification services and support to regional

law enforcement. This report details the various services and successes of the King County AFIS program and its highly skilled team members.

I would like to begin by congratulating Mike Leahy on his first full year as the King County Regional AFIS Manager. Mike was promoted into this role after working in the King County Latent Print Unit as the Processing Unit Supervisor and prior to that as a Latent Print Examiner. He has truly made the transition flawlessly. Thank you for your leadership and support during this demanding year!

2021 has been a transformational year for the AFIS program. The King County AFIS staff have fully transitioned to their new regional laboratory. The AFIS database went through an exciting and highly technical upgrade which will continue to benefit the program. The Mobile Processing Unit and Latent Print Units have been in high demand supporting law enforcement with their expert knowledge in the field and in the Lab. Thank you to the dedicated AFIS employees and the Law Enforcement agencies in King County that make this possible; you have proven that despite an ongoing global pandemic, we can accomplish so much.

I encourage you to learn more about the program's goals and accomplishments by reviewing this report, which is also available online at [www.kingcounty.gov/afis](http://www.kingcounty.gov/afis).

## AFIS ADVISORY COMMITTEE CHAIR

**Dawn Quaale**

Forensic Support Services Manager  
Seattle Police Department

## VICE CHAIR

**Chief Jeff Flohr**

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**Chief Ken Thomas**

Des Moines Police Department

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Normandy Park Police Department

# PROGRAM OVERVIEW

King County's Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS) is a countywide program that provides the staff and technology to support fingerprint identification services for all cities and unincorporated areas of King County. This regional approach allows for this enhanced service to be shared by all agencies.

## Program Objectives

- To quickly identify individuals, resolve identity related issues and ensure criminal history records are accurately attributed and reported.
- To collect and identify crime scene related finger and palmprints to aid investigations and provide evidence in court.

## Technology

- The AFIS database stores nearly 3 million records for matching to incoming and unidentified prints.
- 56 Livescan devices deployed throughout the region capture prints, photos and demographics and electronically transmit that data to the local, state, and federal identification systems.
- 295 Mobile ID devices allow officers in the field to quickly identify people without the need to transport them to a secondary location.

## Strategic Benefits

- Provides expert staff and up to date technology at an overall lower expense than if agencies funded their own units.
- Creates a high quality, local database of fingerprint information against which all local agency prints can be searched.
- Leads to faster completion time for cases and arrest identifications.

## Services Provided

- Collection of booking fingerprints, mug shots and DNA
- Arrest and applicant identification
- Criminal history reporting
- Crime scene and evidence processing
- Latent print examination
- Assistance with identity theft issues
- Identification of deceased individuals
- Technology management
- Customer support and training



## 2021 Year In Review

**March:** King County AFIS offices relocated to new Renton Facility.

**July:** Final acceptance of the new MBIS AFIS computer system.

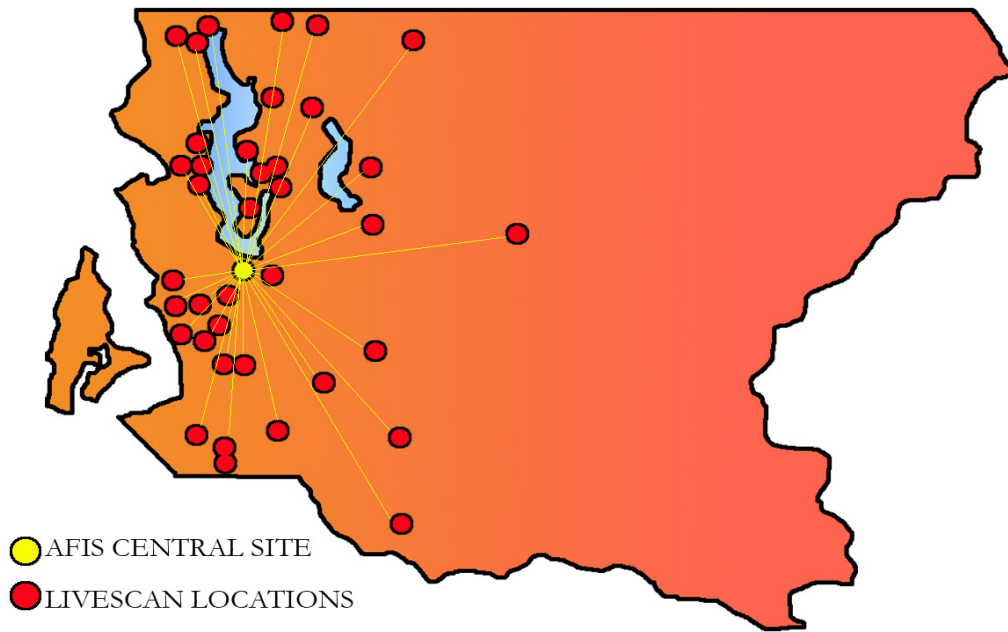
**October:** Seattle Police Latent Unit successfully passed accreditation assessment for the 7th year.

**November:** King County Latent Unit successfully passed accreditation assessment for the 9th year.





### KING COUNTY



# FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

Since 1986, the King County AFIS program has been funded by a voter-approved property tax levy. The current levy was approved in August 2018 and runs through 2024.

Although law enforcement agencies are typically responsible for the costs associated with performing their own criminal identification functions, the investment in technology, staff, equipment, and other resources would be costly for any single jurisdiction to finance independently. This regional approach provides agencies throughout King County with core fingerprint services and technology, leaving local resources for other priorities.

In 2021, the AFIS levy rate was 3.406 cents per \$1000 of assessed value. This was approximately \$28 for the owner of a median priced home in King County.

The 2019-2024 levy was a status quo financial plan that assumed no major new investments. However, through conscientious financial management and cost reductions,

the AFIS program was able to complete two capital projects in 2021. Staff were moved from the King County Courthouse to a more centralized location in Renton, and the AFIS computer was converted to a modern cloud-based system with improved matching capability.

In 2022, we will be updating our case management software which allows us to track evidence and examination work as a case moves through our office. We will also begin to plan for a technology refresh of our livescan and mobile ID devices.



## 2021 Revenue and Expenditures

Revenue	
Property (Levy) Taxes	\$22,300,837
Investment Interest	\$176,136
Other / Misc.	\$64,863
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$22,541,836</b>
Expenditures	
Salaries & Benefits	\$9,987,520
City of Seattle*	\$4,353,611
Intragovernmental Overhead	\$3,212,044
Supplies & Services	\$780,490
Capital Equipment	\$803,174
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$19,136,838</b>
*This number includes salaries, benefits, supplies, and training.	

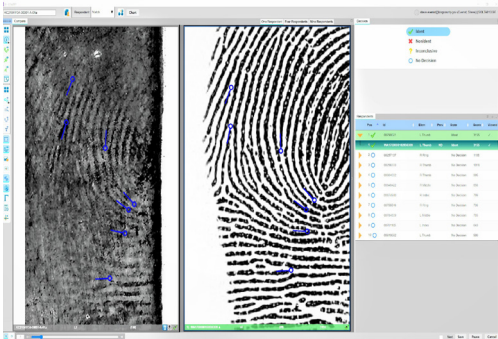


# AFIS TECHNOLOGY



## AFIS Database

The AFIS database contains nearly 3 million searchable records and is used to store and match prints collected from devices connected to our network. King County AFIS also maintains a connection to the fingerprint databases of Washington State Patrol, Western Identification Network, and the FBI. Prints not identified in our local database may be searched through these external databases. Prints recovered at crime scenes or on evidence can be searched through the database to determine who may have come into contact with a surface related to a criminal investigation. Unsolved crime scene prints are retained in the database and are continually searched against incoming records in hopes of providing resolution to older cases.



## Mobile Identification

Mobile Identification devices are handheld fingerprint scanners that allow officers in the field to quickly identify individuals without the need to transport them to a secondary location. Field identification enables officers to make critical decisions on whether to detain subjects. The prints are automatically searched through the King County AFIS database as well as the Washington State Patrol database and FBI's Repository for Individuals of Special Concern (RISC), with results returned directly to the officer in field. In keeping with privacy laws, prints taken on the Mobile ID are not saved on the device or in the databases through which they are searched.



## Livescan

56 livescan terminals are deployed throughout the county in police, correctional, and government facilities. These terminals electronically capture and transmit fingerprint and palmprint images directly to the King County AFIS system. The prints are searched through the database and compared by our Tenprint Examiners to prints on file. Records are then transmitted along with any criminal or applicant information to the Washington State Patrol. This process can now be completed in a matter of minutes compared to the days or weeks it used to take when using ink and paper. Levy funds supply the livescan terminals at no cost to the agencies.



# PROGRAM SERVICES

## Identification Section

Livescan terminals throughout the county transmit finger and palm print images to the AFIS database for identification 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Prints may be taken for criminal bookings, license applications, or background checks.

King County AFIS provides Identification Technicians to take prints at the King County Correctional Facility, Maeleng Regional Justice Center, Youth and Family Services Center, and South Correctional Entity (SCORE). By ensuring that the highest quality prints are taken at the time of booking, we increase our ability to later match them to prints recovered at crime scenes.

Our Tenprint Examiners compare incoming submissions to those in our existing database, and any discrepancies between the information being used and the information in the database is immediately reported to the agency submitting the prints. This process ensures that identity is quickly determined, and criminal history and warrants are properly associated with the correct individuals.

Information Specialists research arrest information for inclusion on state and federal rap sheets, ensuring that the courts, law enforcement, and licensing agencies have access to up-to-date criminal history record information. These records are relied upon for criminal investigations, applicant backgrounding, and sentencing determinations.

Our identification section also assists the medical community with the identification of unknown deceased or incapacitated individuals and works with victims of identity theft to clear up criminal history that may have incorrectly become associated with them.

## Forensic Section

Prints left on surfaces when they are touched are referred to as latent prints because they are not typically visible without some form of physical or chemical processing.

King County AFIS employs a team of Processing Technicians and Latent Print Examiners who respond to crime scenes throughout King County to recover latent prints from items that may have been touched during the commission of a crime.

We also have a state-of-the-art processing lab where agencies can send their evidence to be processed. In the lab environment, we are able to utilize a wider range of processing techniques to develop the unseen prints on an item.

Once developed, latent prints are preserved and compared to the prints of known subjects. Depending on the circumstances of the case, they may be manually compared to specific individuals or searched through the entire AFIS database. They may also be searched through the databases of Washington State Patrol, Western Identification Network, and FBI.

Unsolved latents can be stored in the AFIS computer and searched against all future known prints that are submitted. This creates new leads in investigations that may have previously gone cold.

Upon conclusion of any work, comprehensive case reports are prepared by our Latent Administrative Unit and supplied to investigators.

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## 2021 Statistics

- Jail Bookings: 22,735
- Evidence Items Processed: 12,073
- Tenprint Records Searched: 41,482
- Crime Scenes: 2,290
- Mobile ID Searches: 5,231
- Latent Cases: 4,873



## Support, Training, and Community Involvement

The AFIS Program provides technical and helpdesk support for all users of the AFIS, livescan, and mobile ID services. Staff also coordinate fingerprint related training for officers, facilitate service-related communication among stakeholders, and organize participation in community events.

As a regional and levy-based program, it's vital that information about the program is shared with the public. This is done through school science programs, festivals, community events, career conferences and the National Night Out events. AFIS staff share information about their job functions and why fingerprint identification is so important.



## Photography

The KCSO and SPD Photography Units provide specialized photo services for forensic and public relations purposes. The AFIS levy does not fund these units but provides supplemental funding in light of the volume of forensic photography work performed for the program.



## Management & Technology

AFIS program management oversees daily operations, acquisitions, budget, and the use and maintenance of fingerprint technology throughout the county. The management team ensures compliance with state and national security standards, administers program initiatives, and responds to issues in the ever-changing biometric and forensic disciplines.

### Looking Ahead:

In 2022, the AFIS Program will be exploring ways in which we can enhance our evidence collection at crime scenes. King County will be upgrading their computerized case tracking system and begin the process of evaluating new technology for fingerprint collection

# SUCCESS STORIES

## Asleep at the Wheel

A man was found slumped behind the wheel of his stopped vehicle in Shoreline. Deputies said the man gave them several false names before he was identified using a portable mobile ID fingerprint scanner. Once identified, they found he was wanted on a felony warrant. Police said the driver admitted to smoking fentanyl and was arrested on the warrant as well as suspicion of DUI.

## Violent Carjacking

A man eating lunch in his car was shot three times and carjacked in a Federal Way parking lot. After pulling the man from his car, the subject ran over him as he fled the scene. The car was recovered but there were no leads in the case until the King County Latent Print Unit was able to ID a subject to prints found on a license plate inside the car. The man has been arrested and is awaiting trial.



## Serial Bank Robber

Processors responded to a bank which had just been robbed. Detectives believed that the subject seen in video of the robbery had also committed a string of bank robberies in the surrounding area. Processing of the teller window yielded no latent prints, but a pen and demand letter used by the subject were submitted to the Latent Print Laboratory for processing. A latent print on the demand note was identified to a man who was subsequently charged with four counts of robbery.

## Fleeing Subject

Deputies attempted to pull over a vehicle with stolen license plates, but were forced to terminate a pursuit when the subject began driving erratically. The vehicle was later found dumped, and security footage captured images of a subject running from the area. King County AFIS processed the vehicle, and prints found in and on the car were identified to a subject whose physical appearance matched the security footage of the fleeing subject.





### Roadside Robbery

A driver in north Seattle was forced off the road by another vehicle whose occupants proceeded to beat and rob him at gunpoint. The subjects took the man's wallet and cellphone before driving away. The victim's vehicle was processed, and several latent prints of value were recovered. Two subjects were identified through an AFIS search and they were subsequently taken into custody by Seattle SWAT.



### Fast and Furious

More than 100 cars and 200 people gathered in north Seattle for an illegal street takeover. While performing donuts in an intersection, a vehicle struck a pedestrian and fled the area. Using video of the event, Detectives were able to gather a good description of the vehicle which was later found abandoned. The Seattle Latent Print Unit recovered prints from the driver door that were identified to a man seen driving in the video.

### Rude Awakening

A south Seattle homeowner was awoken by the sound of their vehicle being started in their driveway. Further investigation showed that burglars had entered their home while they slept and stole a purse and car keys. The vehicle was later found abandoned and the Seattle Latent Print Unit responded to process for fingerprints. Prints on an interior door handle were identified to a man who was subsequently arrested for burglary and theft.

### Delivery Interrupted

A delivery driver was assaulted by a subject who fled the scene in the loaded delivery van. Police recovered the van and the Latent Print Unit processed it, along with several opened packages, for fingerprint evidence. Latent impressions from the rear-view mirror were searched through the local AFIS database and were identified to a subject matching the description from the victim.



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**IDENTIFICATION PROGRAM**

**King County Regional AFIS**

**[www.kingcounty.gov/AFIS](http://www.kingcounty.gov/AFIS)**

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**King County**