

KING COUNTY REGIONAL AFIS



2022 Annual Report for King County's Regional
Automated Fingerprint Identification System

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 agencies throughout King County.

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Thank you to the individuals who contributed to this report, including program staff, the AFIS Advisory Committee, and those who shared their photos, experiences, and stories. A special thanks to 2021 Committee Chair Dawn Quaale, and outgoing members Seattle Police Lt. Scott Bachler, and King County Chief Jeff Flohr.

A MESSAGE FROM THE AFIS ADVISORY COMMITTEE CHAIR



Chief Shawn Ledford

As the AFIS Advisory Committee Chair, it is my pleasure to share with you the King County Regional AFIS Program's 2022 Annual Report.

Funded by a county-wide property tax levy, King County AFIS provides fingerprint identification services to agencies throughout King County. This report highlights the services provided by the AFIS Program and shares stories of the exceptional work performed by the skilled specialists that this enhanced service provides.

Identification services are a critical tool for law enforcement. By creating a regionally funded program, all of King County's Police and Sheriff's departments can call upon AFIS to support their identification and investigation needs.

As a 33-year law enforcement professional I have seen the benefits of this program firsthand. AFIS technicians processed over two thousand crime scenes last year, leading to the timely identification of subjects in a great number of investigations. In recent years, the technology improvements in the AFIS program have helped law enforcement identify more individuals and solve more crimes throughout King County.

I encourage you to learn more about this regional program by reviewing this 2022 report which can also be found online at: www.kingcounty.gov/afis.

AFIS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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PROGRAM OVERVIEW

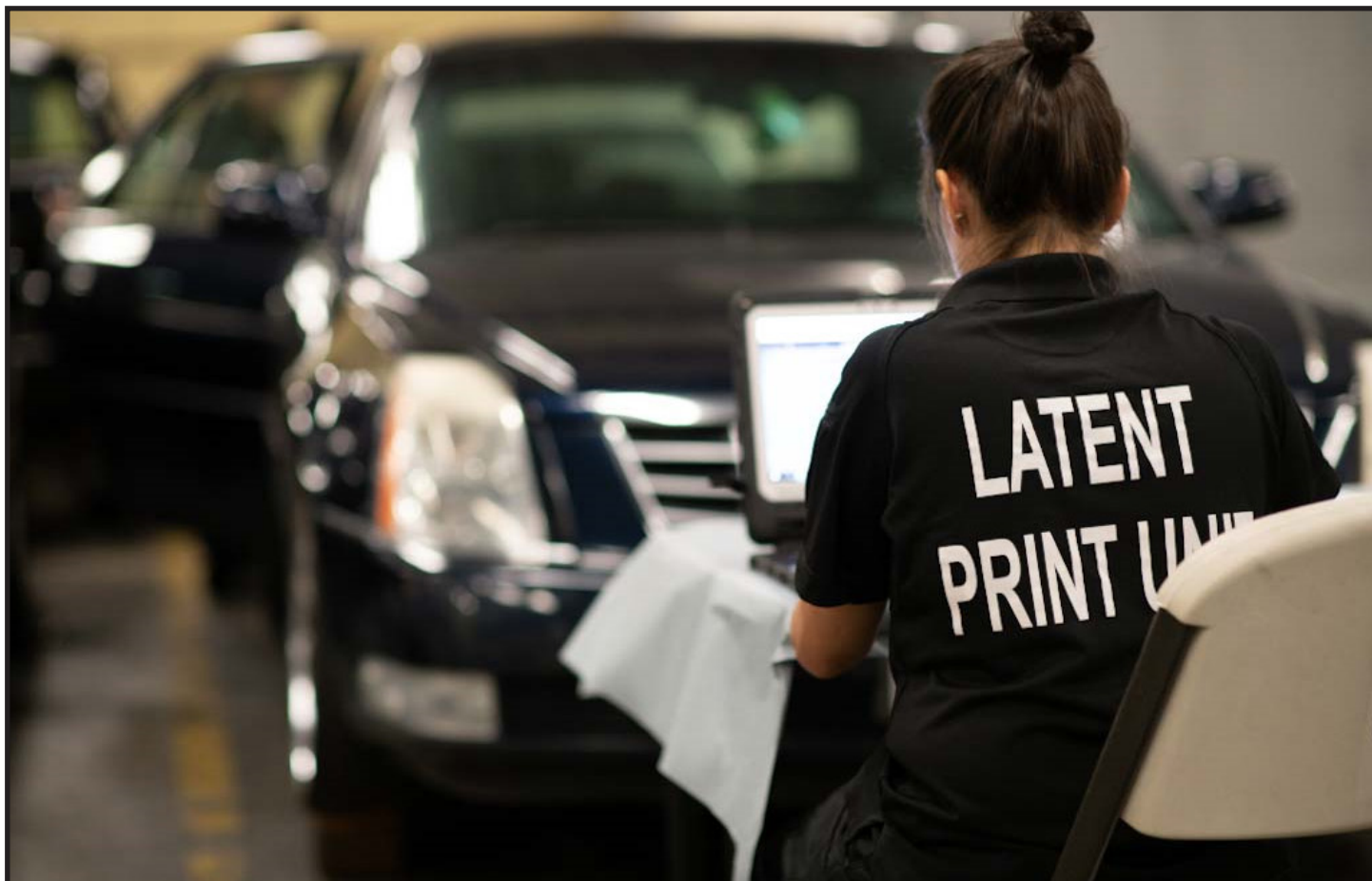
King County's Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS) is a county wide program that provides the staff and technology to support fingerprint identification services for all cities and unincorporated areas of King County. A regional approach allows for this enhanced service to be shared by 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 palm prints 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. The data collected is transmitted electronically 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.

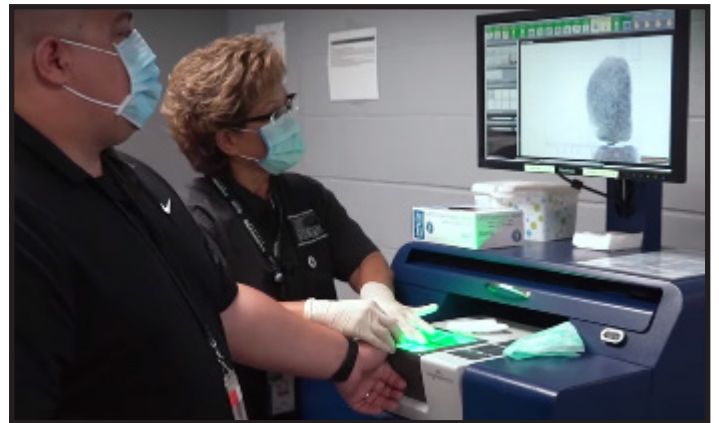
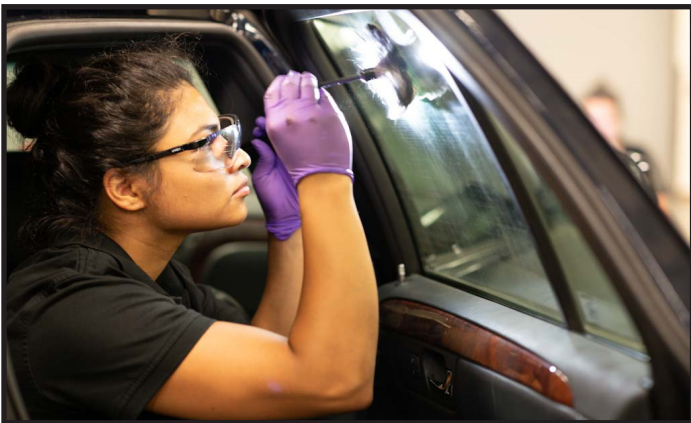


Strategic Benefits

- 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 and unknown individuals
- Technology management
- Customer support and training



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 the end of 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 2022, the AFIS levy rate was 3.187 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value. This was approximately \$22.30 for the owner of a home valued at \$700,000.

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 has been able to complete two significant capital projects. 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.

Recently, we have begun working to update our case management software which allows us to track evidence and examination work as a case moves through our office. We are also planning for a technology refresh of our livescan and mobile ID devices.

2022 Revenue and Expenditures

Revenue	
Property Taxes	\$22,911,452
Investment Interest	\$296,121
Other / Misc.	\$12,674
Total	\$23,220,247
Expenditures	
Salaries & Benefits	\$10,231,051
City of Seattle*	\$4,572,610
Intragovernmental Overhead	\$3,256,079
Supplies & Services	\$1,173,368
Capital Equipment	\$67,933
Total	\$19,301,041
*This number includes salaries, benefits, supplies, and training.	

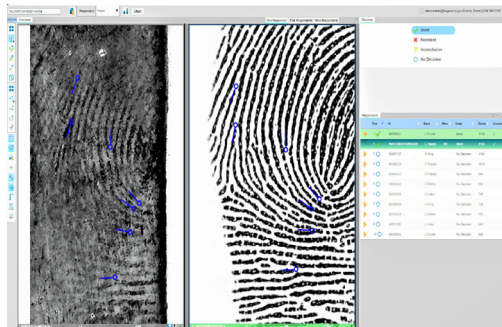


AFIS TECHNOLOGY



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 the 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 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, and the King County Youth and Family Services Center. Our Technicians also respond to area hospitals to print patients that are unable to identify themselves. By ensuring that the highest quality prints are taken we increase our ability to identify people and to potentially 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 information. These records are relied upon for criminal investigations, applicant backgrounding, and sentencing determinations.

Our identification section also assists with the identification of unknown deceased 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 after a surface is touched are known as *latent* prints because they are not typically visible without some form of physical or chemical processing.

King County AFIS Processing Technicians and Latent Print Examiners 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 a lab setting, examiners are able to utilize a wider range of processing techniques and equipment to develop and preserve the latent 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 (AK, ID, MT, NV, OR, UT, WY), and FBI.

Unsolved latents can be stored in the AFIS computer and searched against all future known prints that are submitted. This potentially 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.

2022 Statistics

- Criminal Bookings received: 27,401
- Tenprint Records Searched: 44,155
- Mobile ID Searches: 4,756
- Unknown Patient Identifications: 45
- Evidence Items Processed: 15,796
- Crime Scenes Processed: 2,238
- Latent Cases Worked: 4,614
- Unknown Deceased Identifications: 82

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 provides supplemental funding to these units 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 2023, the AFIS Program will continue to work towards upgrading their computerized case tracking system and evaluating proposals for new livescan fingerprint collection devices. We will also start preparing for a renewal of our levy in a future election.

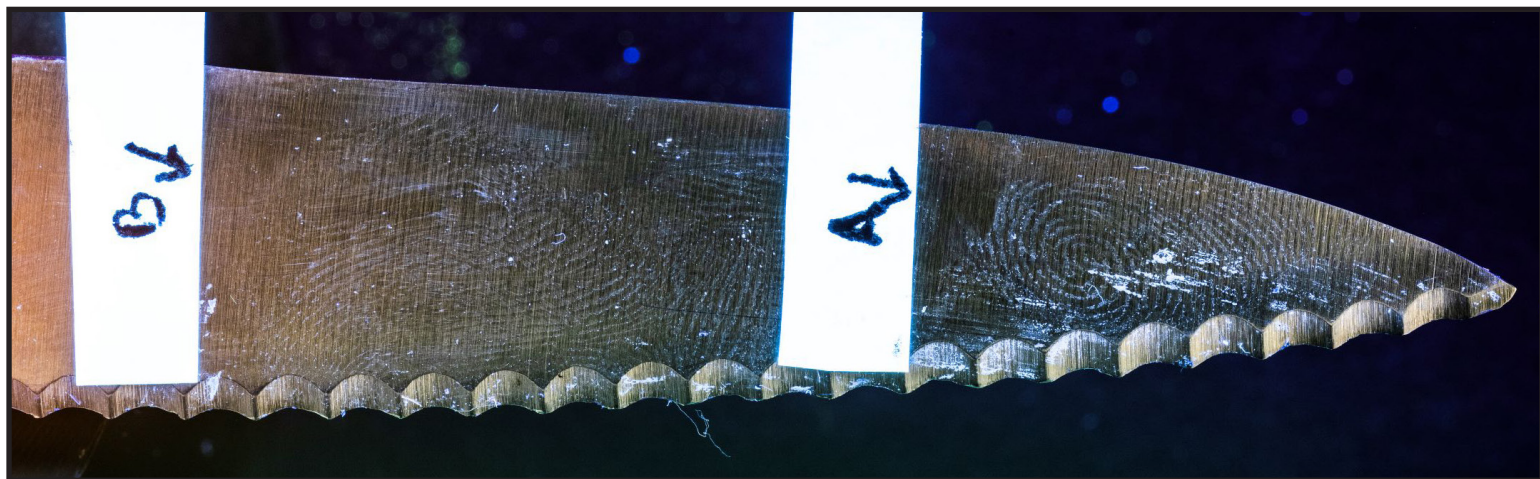
SUCCESS STORIES

Bank Robbery

A gloved man entered a Bellevue bank and presented a note to the teller demanding cash. The note, which was left behind, was processed for prints in the forensic lab. Prints were developed and identified to a man who was arrested and charged. He was subsequently linked to more than 15 other bank robberies in the Puget Sound area during the same time period.

Police Impersonation

A man's attempt to buy drugs turned violent when the purchase was interrupted by subjects impersonating police officers. The subjects bound the man's hands with zip ties before assaulting him and taking his keys, wallet and vehicle. The impersonators then burglarized the victim's home, stealing several thousand dollars worth of belongings. Two prints of value, located on a knife used in the assault were preserved and identified to a subject who was later arrested in the case.

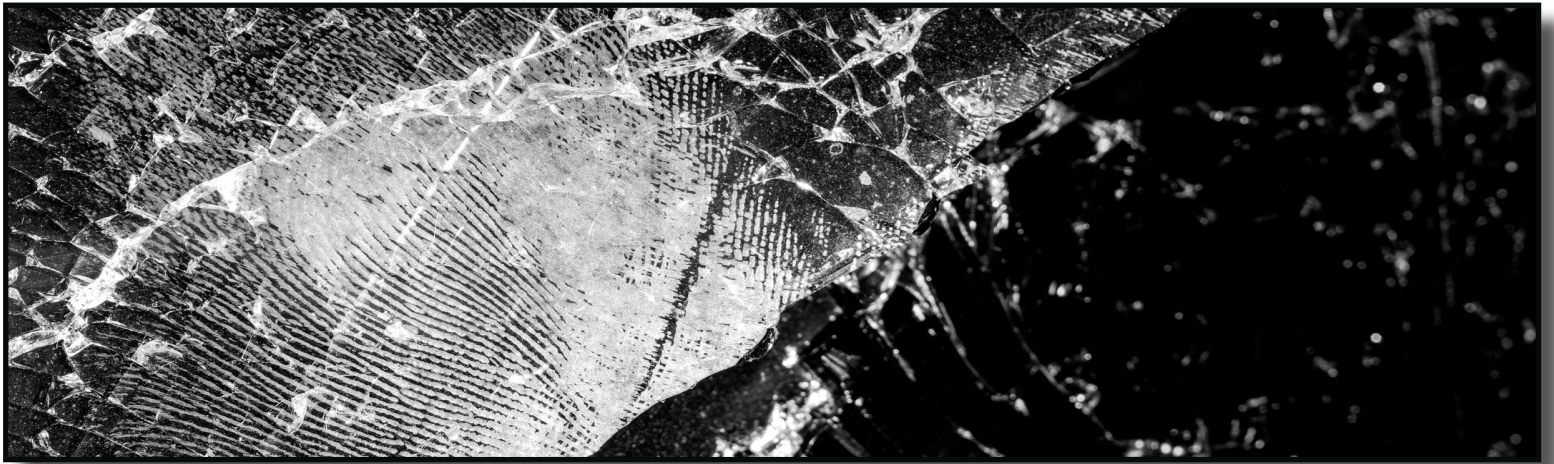


Quick Turnaround

Latent Examiners were requested to respond to a home in the south-sound as part of a death investigation. Details of what transpired at the scene were still uncertain, but investigators were able to identify a potential point-of-entry and a few specific areas within the scene that needed to be processed for latent prints. The AFIS response team was able to develop prints in those key areas and rush them back to their office for examination. Within 3 hours of having received the callout request, and while Detectives were still working at the scene, the case examiner was able to call the Detective with the name of an individual whose print had been recovered from an important surface at the home. The subject was apprehended the next day and has since been charged with several assaults and at least one other homicide.

Deceased Identification

Staff were called to the King County Medical Examiner's office to help identify a burned body found in rural King County. Investigators had no potential identification leads for the deceased individual, and feared that fingerprint identification would be impossible due to the condition of the body. AFIS staff carefully worked to open the individual's closed fists, and were able to find a small area of unburnt skin in the center of the hand. They photographed the skin and searched the print that afternoon, matching it to an individual in the local database. By that evening, investigators had a name and date of birth. A crucial part of this identification relied upon the clear and complete palm prints stored in the AFIS database which had been taken by AFIS Jail ID staff. The center of the palm is often difficult to capture and is often missing in a poor quality palm card. The thorough work of everyone involved ensured that the investigation was not delayed and family members could be promptly notified.



AirTag Stalking

A vehicle owner notified police when their mechanic found an AirTag tracker in the wheel well of their vehicle during routine servicing. The tape used to secure the device was processed by an SPD Latent Examiner and a usable print was developed. The print was identified to a person of interest in the case and investigators believe this case may be connected to other similar cases in the area.

Delicate Processing

A man was found deceased in his vehicle after being shot through the driver door window. The glass was shattered but remained precariously in place. Investigators feared that any movement of the vehicle would cause the glass to fall to pieces and take with it any fingerprint evidence. A Latent Print Examiner responded to the scene and was able to carefully process and preserve prints from the window and surrounding areas. The prints were searched through the AFIS database and identified to a witness in the case.

Providing False Information

During a vehicle stop for possible DUI, Kirkland Police began to suspect that the driver was not being truthful about his identity and may be using a fake ID. The officers utilized their MobileID device and within minutes they learned that the subject did have a different identity, a suspended license, and a DUI warrant out of Pierce County among others. A charge of providing false information was added to his charges when he was booked into jail that night.

Organized Crime Group

After a late-night carjacking, subjects brandished firearms and fired shots at the victim as they drove away in his vehicle. The car was eventually found abandoned and was processed for fingerprints. Those prints, as well as items found in the car, led Detectives to other stolen vehicles and burglaries in the area. Identified subjects were linked to a prolific organized retail theft group which is suspected of multiple drive by shootings, auto thefts and commercial burglaries.



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IDENTIFICATION PROGRAM



www.kingcounty.gov/AFIS

516 3rd Ave, Seattle, WA 98104
206.263.2700 - General Inquiries
afis@kingcounty.gov



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