



KING COUNTY AUDITOR'S OFFICE

Law Enforcement Audit Program: 2024 Biennial Report

ADVANCING LAW ENFORCEMENT PERFORMANCE, ACCOUNTABILITY, TRANSPARENCY, AND EQUITY

The King County Auditor's Office performs independent oversight of county departments and offices for King County residents and policy-makers, improving the equity, efficiency, and effectiveness of county services through impactful audit recommendations. The King County Council established the Law Enforcement Audit Program (LEAP) within the Auditor's Office in 2006 to specifically focus on oversight of the County's criminal legal system. This biennial report addresses the Program's work over the last two years.

High impact oversight

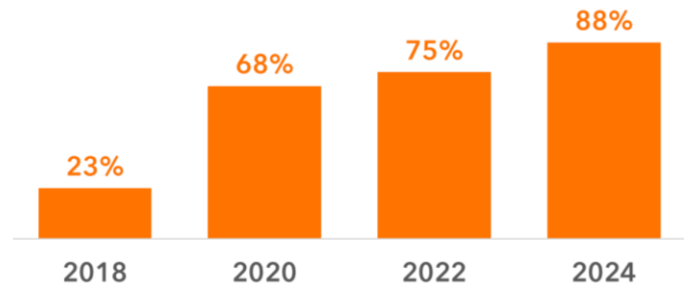
Between 2022 and 2024 we provided oversight to all county functions whose missions relate to the criminal legal system in King County. During this period we:

- **published two audits** featuring issues and operations related to the Department of Adult and Juvenile Detention (DAJD), the Prosecuting Attorney's Office (PAO), the Department of Public Defense, King County Superior Court, King County District Court, the Department of Judicial Administration (DJA), and the County Executive
- **followed up on recommendations from nine audits**, presenting updates on implementation in public reports and in public presentations to the King County Council.

Recommendations are to a broader range of criminal legal functions

Our office has broadened our oversight of the criminal legal system over the last several years. LEAP recommendations included the Department of Adult and Juvenile Detention, King County Superior Court, District Court, the Prosecuting Attorney's Office, the Department of Judicial Administration, and the County Executive.

Percent of LEAP recommendations to agencies other than the Sheriff's Office:



Key results

Implementation of our recommendations between July 2022 and June 2024 contributed to:



All the cells in downtown jail have been retrofitted to reduce risk of self-harm and suicide



100 percent of DAJD employees completed training on overcoming unconscious bias



Sex offense victims are more likely to be quickly connected with advocacy services



Nurses working in adult jails are more protected from violent incidents



Sheriff's Office is better equipped to track high risk assets and scale safeguards based on risk

91%

CONCURRENCE

Concurrence increases impact

Concurrence with our recommendations is the first step in positive change for the County. Between July 2021 and June 2024, we made 42 recommendations to law enforcement-related functions. Agencies concurred with 29 of these recommendations; King County District Court did not respond to three recommendations directed toward it in the Incarceration Alternative and Diversion Programs audit and Superior Court did not respond to 10 recommendations in the Protection Orders audit.

73%

TOOK ACTION

Advancement toward implementation

Following up on our recommendations advances positive change by providing transparency and increasing accountability. We track recommendations until they are complete, reviewing 79 audit recommendations over the last two years. Overall, agencies advanced 73 percent of the recommendations we followed up on toward implementation this biennium.



75%

PROGRESS

Most progress on recommendations depends upon the ongoing efforts of three agencies: Sheriff's Office, DAJD, and DES.

Of the 79 recommendations we followed up on between July 2022 and June 2024, 85 percent were directed at three agencies: the Sheriff's Office, the Department of Adult and Juvenile Detention (DAJD), or the Department of Executive Services (DES). These agencies made progress towards implementing 50 of their 67 recommendations, with a little over half of those — 26 — completed. DAJD made progress on 92 percent of its recommendations, completing half. DES advanced 89 percent of the recommendations directed to it, while the Sheriff's Office made progress on 59 percent of its recommendations; both DES and the Sheriff's Office completed nearly a third. For the Sheriff's Office specifically, these numbers represent an improvement from the last LEAP biennial report.

Seeking input for our oversight of the King County criminal legal system



Any member of the public with audit ideas is invited to share them through [our website](#). We look forward to incorporating those suggestions into our work program development process in 2024.

Publications

Between July 2022 and June 2024, our office completed two audits related to criminal justice functions in King County. We also followed up on recommendations from multiple audits. All publications are available on the [King County Auditor's website](#).

Performance audit reports

- *Incarceration Alternative and Diversion Programs: Improved Strategy, Data, and Coordination Could Help County Meet Goals*
- *Juvenile Detention: Many Youth Face Long Stays in Facility Designed for Short-Term Support*

Other products and presentations

- *Recommendation Updates for Criminal Legal Audits Since 2020*, presented to King County Council Law and Justice Committee, April 24, 2024

Work in progress

- King County Sheriff's Office Civil Asset Forfeiture
- Jail Behavioral Health Services

Follow-up reports

- Sex Offense Investigations and Outcomes
- Courthouse Security Screening
- Law Enforcement Oversight (2015)
- Public Defense Management
- Sheriff's Office Traffic Stops
- Sheriff's Office Calls for Service
- Sheriff's Office High Risk Equipment
- Sheriff's Office Overtime
- Jail Safety

2022-2024 audit team

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