



King County



# KING COUNTY AUDITOR'S OFFICE




DECEMBER 1, 2025

## Seventh Follow-Up on King County Sheriff's Office Overtime Audit

**Specifications in the King County Sheriff's Office's (Sheriff's Office) payroll reengineering technology project will remove long-standing data integration barriers, enabling completion of the remaining four audit recommendations.** Implementing the four remaining recommendations from our June 2017 audit, *King County Sheriff's Office Overtime: Better Strategy Could Reduce Hidden Costs and Safety Risks*, will improve officer safety by helping to limit overwork and providing key data for better modeling of unincorporated patrol staffing. However, limitations in the Sheriff's Office's current time and labor IT system present barriers in addressing these needs.

As explained in our December 2024 follow-up, the Sheriff's Office is advancing a plan for a new IT system that will address the recommendations (among other benefits). At the time of that follow-up, per discussions with staff from the Office of Performance, Strategy, and Budget, the Sheriff's Office hoped to receive omnibus funding for selecting the system in mid-2025 and implementing it in 2026. That did not occur; following additional work identifying technical needs and specifications by King County Information Technology and Sheriff's Office staff, the project was approved in the 2026–2027 budget. A request for proposal is planned in early 2026, with implementation of the selected system in 2027, based on the current project calendar.

**Eight audit recommendations were completed previously. Of the remaining four:<sup>1</sup>**

 <span style="font-size: 24pt; font-weight: bold;">0</span> <b>DONE</b>	 <span style="font-size: 24pt; font-weight: bold;">4</span> <b>PROGRESS</b>	 <span style="font-size: 24pt; font-weight: bold;">0</span> <b>OPEN</b>
<p><b>FULLY IMPLEMENTED</b> Auditor will no longer monitor.</p>	<p><b>PARTIALLY IMPLEMENTED</b> Auditor will continue to monitor.</p>	<p><b>REMAIN UNRESOLVED</b> Auditor will continue to monitor.</p>

See details below for implementation status of each recommendation.

<sup>1</sup> The 2017 overtime audit was conducted in two phases, with the initial audit focused on Sheriff's Office management of overtime, and an addendum focused on technical aspects of overtime pay administration in King County payroll systems. Together, both reports contain 20 recommendations. This follow-up is focused on the initial audit, which included twelve recommendations. Additional follow-ups can be found on the [Sheriff's Office Overtime Audit web page](#) on the Auditor's Office website.

**Recommendation 1****PROGRESS**

**The King County Sheriff's Office should ensure that off-duty hours are tracked in its scheduling program.**

STATUS UPDATE: Since the June 2017 audit report, technical barriers have been a challenge in addressing this recommendation. Initially, the Sheriff's Office held that it could add the capability to track off-duty work to its scheduling system "as resources allow," but that doing so required reopening the provider contract. Because the Sheriff's Office never developed a proposal to do so, we reverted this recommendation from "progress" to "open" in our December 2022 audit follow-up. However, as explained in our December 2024 follow-up, the specifications for the Sheriff's Office's Payroll Reengineering IT project includes capabilities addressing these needs.

WHAT REMAINS: Tracking all work — including off-duty work — in the Sheriff's Office's timekeeping system provides sergeants and managers vital data in trying to limit deployment of tired and overworked officers. To complete this recommendation, the Sheriff's Office needs to procure its new scheduling system and then operationalize tracking of off-duty work during system implementation.

**Recommendation 2****PROGRESS**

**The King County Sheriff's Office should incorporate total hours worked, including off-duty hours, into the overtime assignment criteria.**

STATUS UPDATE: When requesting overtime, officers are supposed to inform their supervisors of their workload, including off-duty work. And as of 2021, the typical officer workload is capped at 16 hours total per period, including overtime and off-duty work — a limit that some might perceive as high. Accordingly, as we explained in our December 2024 follow-up, the critical elements for this recommendation are complete. All that remains is operationalizing those elements in the scheduling system when assigning overtime shifts.

WHAT REMAINS: To complete this recommendation, automation in the Sheriff's Office's new scheduling system must include all hours worked and apply workload limits when assigning overtime shifts.

**Recommendation 3**

DECEMBER 1, 2021

**DONE**

**Recommendation 4**

DECEMBER 1, 2022

**DONE****Recommendation 5**

APRIL 1, 2019

**DONE****Recommendation 6****PROGRESS**

**The King County Sheriff's Office should document and integrate into its staffing system how it determines patrol minimums for unincorporated King County and how it calculates the relief factor it uses to set staffing targets.**

STATUS UPDATE: Our December 2022 audit follow-up explains the Sheriff's Office's long-standing challenges in completing Recommendation 6 and Recommendation 7. During our December 2024 follow-up, Sheriff's Office staff provided information on their staffing minimums in unincorporated patrol and their foundational significance when modeling staffing needs. They also recognize the value in being able to test and refine the accuracy of relief factor assumptions. On a practical level, implementing this recommendation would be significantly eased through a scheduling system providing broader data measures and automation, as is planned in the payroll reengineering project.

WHAT REMAINS: To complete this recommendation, the Sheriff's Office should use the capabilities specified in its new scheduling system procurement to apply and refine the relief factor(s) used for staffing unincorporated patrol.






**Recommendation 7****PROGRESS**

**The King County Sheriff's Office should create a staffing model for unincorporated patrol that accurately reflects both current and future staffing needs, the actual number of deputies that can be deployed to meet patrol minimums, and opportunities to reduce backfill overtime through strategic scheduling.**

STATUS UPDATE: As detailed in our audit follow-ups — most recently in December 2024 — the Sheriff's Office's challenges in developing a staffing model that clearly and accurately shows the level of insufficient unincorporated patrol staffing are long-standing. Identifying the actual number of deployable officers in comparison with the number needed is fundamental to show the extent of their "short staffing." This comparison is also foundational to better assess relief factors and use of overtime. As with Recommendation 6, Sheriff's Office staff recognize the value of tracking this data for their staffing model, but are hindered by the data reporting limitations of

their current time and labor IT system. The capabilities identified for the new scheduling system procurement would aid the Sheriff's Office in showing the impact of low staffing with greater precision and in managing needs with limited staff resources.

WHAT REMAINS: To complete this recommendation, the Sheriff's Office staffing model must show the number of officers needed in unincorporated patrol to meet minimum staffing, and then clearly compare it with the number of deployable officers available over time. It should also detail the number of non-deployable officers against the staffing level needed to identify the gap between the number of deployable and non-deployable officers and then determine whether its assumptions regarding relief factors and overtime are accurate. Ensuring these elements in the staffing model is a central component of the proposed payroll reengineering project.

Recommendation 8	APRIL 1, 2019	<b>DONE</b>	
Recommendation 9	DECEMBER 1, 2022	<b>DONE</b>	
Recommendation 10	APRIL 1, 2019	<b>DONE</b>	
Recommendation 11	APRIL 1, 2019	<b>DONE</b>	
Recommendation 12	APRIL 1, 2019	<b>DONE</b>	

Justin Anderson conducted this review. If you have any questions or would like more information, please contact the King County Auditor's Office at [KCAO@KingCounty.gov](mailto:KCAO@KingCounty.gov) or 206-477-1033.