

Diversions Efforts in King County, Washington

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King County



Adults

Pre-Arrest/Arrest: LEAD—Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (www.leadkingcounty.org)

- Arrests for low-level drug crimes in Seattle showed **indisputable racial disparities** with extremely damaging consequences.
- After a decade of contentious debate, in the mid-2000s a group of stakeholders asked: What if we could use arrest **only as a last resort** for drug offenses?
- What if we gave officers **a new alternative** to arrest/don't arrest?
- What if that could yield **better outcomes** for everybody?

LEAD Pathways

ARREST DIVERSION

Law enforcement officers can divert people to LEAD rather than arrest them when an alleged crime occurs.



SOCIAL CONTACT REFERRAL

Police officers can refer presumptively eligible people to LEAD without the occurrence of an alleged crime.



COMMUNITY REFERRAL

Community members can directly refer potentially eligible people to LEAD without involving law enforcement officers or systems.



The LEAD Workforce

- Project Management
- LEAD Case Managers (inclusive of mixed lived and professional experience)
- Screening and Outreach Coordinator(s)
- Prosecutorial Liaisons



Pre-Filing: Community Diversion Program (CDP) (www.kingcounty.gov/cdp)

- Offered once, exclusively for adults facing a first-time, low-level, property or drug felony.
- Supported by the King County Executive and funded unanimously by the King County Council in November 2020.

CDP Process

Police submit low-level property / drug offense to Prosecutor (Up to 1,000 persons annually)

Experienced DPA reviews and screens for eligibility (eliminating repeat offenders, reviewing criminal history, facts alleged, nature of the charges, police input)

Harmed Parties are contacted by Loss Recovery Team to assess needs and initiate financial recovery

Eligible Program Participants are evaluated by the Public Health Care Coordinators & directed to a culturally relevant, community-based program to address needs

Community Providers begin engagement

When the participant engages with the community provider the PAO will decline to file the case.

Stanford University conducts CDP program evaluation in partnership with PAO, Public Health and PSB

The CDP Workforce

- Jail Health – Care Coordination, Contract Owner
- Office of Performance Strategy and Budget- Project Management
- King County Prosecuting Attorney's Office - Criminal Division- Co-Sponsor
- Preventing gun violence necessitates public health strategies.

The Vision:

CDP envisions a safe, connected and just community where all residents can thrive.

The Mission:

MISSION to lead criminal legal system change by

1. Diverting low level, first time, felony property or drug offenses to community partners who provide individualized services that address root causes of behavior and disrupt the cyclical nature of criminal legal system involvement
2. Providing harmed community members resources to promptly address financial impacts they have experienced
3. Contributing to public safety and healthy communities



Juveniles

2019: A Tipping Point for Juvenile Justice

- 2017 PAO Juvenile Division was created, recognizing that children are different than adults.
- By 2019, restorative justice programs like Choose 180 (community-based diversion), Family Intervention and Restorative Services, and Truancy Intervention were diverting hundreds of youth to supportive community programs and away from the criminal justice system.
- That same year, the PAO diverted more juvenile cases than we filed through the court system for the first time ever. The number of King County youth in secure detention which decreased from a high of 205 in 2000 to an historic low of 30 in 2019.

Pre-Filing: Family Intervention and Restorative Services (FIRS)

- A no-cost service for youth and their families to get de-escalation support and respite services in the wake of family violence incidents.
- Short-term respite center for youth brought to detention for family violence.
- Staffed 24/7 by a community partner. Youth often move to the FIRS Center the same day they are brought to detention.



Thank You!

<https://www.kingcounty.gov/prosecutor>



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