



King County

516 Third Avenue, Council
Chambers, 10th Floor,
Seattle, WA 98104

Meeting Agenda

Law and Justice Committee

Councilmembers:

Rhonda Lewis, Chair;

Rod Dembowski, Vice-Chair;

Claudia Balducci, Jorge L. Barón, Teresa Mosqueda

Lead Staff: Leah Krekel-Zoppi (206-477-0892)

Co-Lead Erica Newman (206-477-7543)

Committee Clerk: Gabbi Williams (206-477-7470)

9:30 AM

Wednesday, October 7, 2026

Hybrid Meeting

Hybrid Meetings: Attend King County Council committee meetings in person in Council Chambers (Room 1001), 516 3rd Avenue in Seattle, or through remote access. Details on how to attend and/or provide comment remotely are listed below.

Pursuant to K.C.C. 1.24.035 A. and F., this meeting is also noticed as a meeting of the Metropolitan King County Council, whose agenda is limited to the committee business. In this meeting only the rules and procedures applicable to committees apply and not those applicable to full council meetings.

HOW TO PROVIDE PUBLIC COMMENT: The Law and Justice Committee values community input and looks forward to hearing from you on agenda items.

There are three ways to provide public comment:

1. In person: You may attend the meeting and provide comment in the Council Chambers.
2. By email: You may comment in writing on current agenda items by submitting your email comments to committees@kingcounty.gov. If your email is received before 8:00 a.m. on the day of the meeting, your email comments will be distributed to the committee members and appropriate staff prior to the meeting.
3. Remote attendance at the meeting by phone or computer: You may provide oral comment on current agenda items during the meeting's public comment period by connecting to the meeting via phone or computer using the ZOOM application at <https://zoom.us/join> and entering the Webinar ID number below.



Sign language and interpreter services can be arranged given sufficient notice (206-848-0355).
TTY Number - TTY 711.
Council Chambers is equipped with a hearing loop, which provides a wireless signal that is picked up by a hearing aid when it is set to 'T' (Telecoil) setting.



You are not required to sign up in advance. Comments are limited to current agenda items.

You have the right to language access services at no cost to you. To request these services, please contact Language Access Coordinator, Tera Chea at (206) 477-9259 or email Tera.chea2@kingcounty.gov by 8:00 a.m. no fewer than three business days prior to the meeting.

CONNECTING TO THE WEBINAR:

Webinar ID: 889 0017 7467

By computer using the Zoom application at <https://zoom.us/join> and the Webinar ID above.

By phone by calling 1-253-215-8782 and entering the Webinar ID above.

HOW TO WATCH/LISTEN TO THE MEETING REMOTELY: There are three ways to watch or listen to the meeting:

- 1) Stream online via this link www.kingcounty.gov/kctv or input the link web address into your web browser.
- 2) Watch King County TV on Comcast Channel 22 and 322(HD) and Astound Broadband Channels 22 and 711(HD).
- 3) Listen to the meeting by telephone see "Connecting to the Webinar" above.

To help us manage the meeting, if you do not wish to be called upon for public comment, please use the Livestream or King County TV options listed above, if possible, to watch or listen to the meeting.

1. **Call to Order**

2. **Roll Call**

3. **Approval of Minutes** p. 4

September 2, 2026 meeting minutes

4. **Public Comment**

To show a PDF of the written materials for an agenda item, click on the agenda item below.



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Briefing

5. [Briefing No. 2026-B0115](#) p. 7

Evaluation of Juvenile Recidivism Data and Juvenile Diversion Programs

Claus Portner, Professor of Economics, Seattle University

6. [Briefing No. 2026-B0116](#) p. 10

King County Superior Court Family Law Caseload & Judicial Resource Needs Report

Presiding Judge Averil Rothrock, King County Superior Court

Discussion and Possible Action

7. [Proposed Motion No. 2026-0232](#) p. 46

A MOTION confirming the executive's appointment of Chris Smith, who resides in council district four, to the King County community advisory committee for law enforcement oversight, as an at-large representative.

Sponsors: Barón

Nick Bowman, Council staff

8. [Proposed Motion No. 2026-0246](#) p. 54

A MOTION acknowledging receipt of the Victim Support Service Improvement Plan required by the 2026-2027 Biennial Budget Ordinance, Ordinance 20023, Section 17, Proviso P7.

Sponsors: Lewis

Brandi Paribello, Council staff

Other Business

Adjournment



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King County

516 Third Avenue, Council
Chambers, 10th Floor,
Seattle, WA 98104

Meeting Minutes Law and Justice Committee

Councilmembers:
Rhonda Lewis, Chair;
Rod Dembowski, Vice-Chair;
Claudia Balducci, Jorge L. Barón, Teresa Mosqueda

Lead Staff: Leah Krekel-Zoppi (206-477-0892)
Co-Lead Erica Newman (206-477-7543)
Committee Clerk: Gabbi Williams (206-477-7470)

9:30 AM

Wednesday, September 2, 2026

Hybrid Meeting

DRAFT MINUTES

1. **Call to Order**

Chair Lewis called the meeting to order at 9:31 a.m.

2. **Roll Call**

Present: 4 - Barón, Dembowski, Lewis and Mosqueda

Excused: 1 - Balducci

3. **Approval of Minutes**

*Councilmember Barón moved approval of the minutes of the July 1, 2026 meeting.
Seeing no objections, the minutes were approved.*

4. **Public Comment**

*The following individuals were present to provide public comment:
Alex Tsimmerman*

Discussion and Possible Action

5. [Proposed Motion No. 2026-0170](#)

A MOTION confirming the executive's appointment of Daniel Santon, who resides in council district seven, to the King County community advisory committee for law enforcement oversight, as an at-large representative.

A motion was made by Councilmember Barón that this Motion be Recommended Do Pass Consent. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 4 - Barón, Dembowski, Lewis and Mosqueda

Excused: 1 - Balducci

Nick Bowman, Council staff, provided an introductory overview. Daniel Santon, appointee to the Community Advisory Committee for Law Enforcement Oversight (CACLEO), provided comments on their background and interest on serving on the committee and answered questions from the members.

6. [Proposed Motion No. 2026-0183](#)

A MOTION confirming the executive's appointment of Kyle Jones, who resides in council district two, to the King County community advisory committee on law enforcement oversight, as an at-large representative.

A motion was made by Councilmember Barón that this Motion be Recommended Do Pass Consent. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 4 - Barón, Dembowski, Lewis and Mosqueda

Excused: 1 - Balducci

Nick Bowman, Council staff, provided an introductory overview. Kyle Jones, appointee to the Community Advisory Committee for Law Enforcement Oversight (CACLEO), provided comments on their background and interest on serving on the committee and answered questions from the members.

7. [Proposed Motion No. 2026-0186](#)

A MOTION confirming the executive's appointment of Samuel Hawkins, who resides in council district five, to the King County community advisory committee for law enforcement oversight, as an at-large representative.

A motion was made by Councilmember Barón that this Motion be Recommended Do Pass Consent. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 4 - Barón, Dembowski, Lewis and Mosqueda

Excused: 1 - Balducci

Nick Bowman, Council staff, provided an introductory overview. Samuel Hawkins, appointee to the Community Advisory Committee for Law Enforcement Oversight (CACLEO), provided comments on their background and interest on serving on the committee and answered questions from the members.

8. [Proposed Motion No. 2026-0144](#)

A MOTION accepting the office of law enforcement oversight's annual report for the year 2025.

A motion was made by Councilmember Barón that this Motion be Recommended Do Pass Consent. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 4 - Barón, Dembowski, Lewis and Mosqueda

Excused: 1 - Balducci

Tamer Abouzeid, Director, Office of Law Enforcement Oversight (OLEO), briefed the committee and answered questions from the members.

Briefing**9. [Briefing No. 2026-B0095](#)**

Human and Civil Rights Commission annual report

This matter was Presented

Jennifer Karls, Co-Chair, Daisy Wong, Co-Chair, and Allison Hastings, Secretary, King County Human and Civil Rights Commission (HCRC), briefed the committee via a PowerPoint presentation and answered questions from the members.

Other Business

There was no other business to come before the committee.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:43 a.m

Approved this _____ day of _____

Clerk's Signature

KING COUNTY PROSECUTING ATTORNEY'S OFFICE



LEESA MANION (she/her)
PROSECUTING ATTORNEY

JUSTICE
COMPASSION
PROFESSIONALISM
INTEGRITY
LEADERSHIP

March 31, 2026

The Prosecuting Attorney's Office Proviso Response Ordinance 20023

Background

This letter is in response to the Proviso in Ordinance 20023 to be revised via 1st Omnibus legislation in 2026 (proposed adjustments pending), which set forth the following:

(Original Proviso) P1 PROVIDED THAT:

741 Of this appropriation, \$50,000 shall not be expended or encumbered until the
742 prosecuting attorney transmits a letter confirming that the prosecuting attorney's office
743 provided juvenile recidivism data to the office of performance, strategy, and budget to
744 benefit a juvenile legal system outcomes study related to future legal system involvement
745 for youth referred by law enforcement to the prosecuting attorney's office.
746 The data provided by the prosecuting attorney to the office of performance,
747 strategy, and budget should include, but not be limited to, recidivism data for youth
748 subjected to traditional prosecution between January 1, 2019, through December 31,
749 2025. The data shared by the prosecuting attorney should correspond to best practices for
750 evaluating recidivism data as laid out by the Washington state Center for Court Research
751 and the Washington state Institute for Public Policy.
752 The letter required by this proviso shall be signed by the executive, or designee, to
753 confirm that the executive has received the necessary juvenile recidivism data from the
754 prosecuting attorney's office.
755 The prosecuting attorney should electronically file the letter by March 31, 2026,
756 with the clerk of the council, who shall retain an electronic copy and provide an
757 electronic copy to all councilmembers, the council chief of staff, and the lead staff for the
758 law and justice committee or its successor.

(Proposed adjustments pending 1st Omnibus 2026) P1 PROVIDED THAT:

Of this appropriation, \$50,000 shall not be expended or encumbered until the prosecuting attorney transmits a letter confirming that the Prosecuting Attorney's Office is willing to renew data sharing agreements regarding juveniles with the Executive Office, as allowed under state law, that will allow Executive Office analysis of the Prosecuting Attorney's Office-held data. The letter will include a description of the current research underway by external partners that

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Tel: (206) 477-1200 • Fax: (206) 296-9013 • www.kingcounty.gov/prosecutor

includes the use of data shared by the Prosecuting Attorney's Office, as allowed under state law, related to future legal system involvement for youth referred by law enforcement to the Prosecuting Attorney's Office.

The letter required by this proviso shall be signed by the executive, or designee, to confirm that the executive has reviewed the letter and agrees that appropriate data sharing agreements will be pursued to allow the Prosecuting Attorney's Office to share data that to inform executive office decision-making and to conduct executive office-led analysis, when appropriate.

The prosecuting attorney should electronically file the letter by March 31, 2026, with the clerk of the council, who shall retain an electronic copy and provide an electronic copy to all councilmembers, the council chief of staff, and the lead staff for the law and justice committee or its successor.

The PAO Response

The Executive plans to transmit proposed adjustments to the original P1 proviso via the 1st Omnibus supplemental legislation in 2026. The content of this letter reflects the proposed revisions.

Below are the PAO's specific responses to the proviso with proposed adjustments via the 1st Omnibus supplemental legislation 2026:

- **Data sharing as allowed under state law**

The Prosecuting Attorney's Office (PAO) confirms that that the PAO is in the process of renewing data sharing agreements with the Executive Office (EO), as allowed under state law, that will allow Executive Office analysis of the PAO-held data.

RCW Title 13.50 provides statutory requirements for confidentiality of most juvenile records as well as granting certain persons the right to request their juvenile files be sealed or destroyed at some point provided that they meet specified conditions in statute. Accordingly, data agreements for sharing relevant juvenile data requires: 1) an agreement to the terms and research purposes of the sharing, 2) a specific person or persons at the EO be designated to receive the data and perform related analysis/research and 3) a court order must be obtained that allows such data sharing. Further, as there is a specific statute governing juvenile records, the Public Records Act does not apply to those records.

Additionally, the PAO does NOT have comprehensive data related to juvenile referrals to the PAO as data are also held by other criminal justice agencies in King County or outside King County (e.g. law enforcement, courts and jails, etc.). For example, to see information related to any new offenses a juvenile may have been charged with outside of King County or, if they have turned 18, municipality data from the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) must be obtained.

- **Description of the current research by external partners**

The PAO is currently collaborating with Claus Portner, Professor of Economics, Seattle University, on research that aims to evaluate juvenile recidivism and the effectiveness of juvenile diversion programs. The PAO provides relevant data, as allowed under the state law, to Professor Portner so that he can conduct the research and provide subject matter expertise on how the juvenile court process works. The PAO has no capacity to conduct this in-depth research on recidivism on its own at this time.

This research will incorporate legal system data from Pierce County, King County, and the Administrative Office of the Courts (state-wide). Professor Portner's research and analysis will include assessing outcomes related to future legal system involvement for juveniles with cases referred for prosecution with an emphasis for youth referred to King County and Pierce County diversion programs, including Court Diversion and the Family Intervention Restorative Services program.

Executive Office staff have been invited and plan to attend future planning meetings to receive ongoing updates on the study. The PAO does not plan to pay Professor Portner for the said research; the professor is undertaking the research for its own sake. Results are expected to be available to the public by the end of 2026.

Sincerely,



LEESA MANION
King County Prosecuting Attorney

Executive Office Response

The Executive Office confirms that the Executive has reviewed the letter from King County Prosecutor Leesa Manion and agrees that appropriate data sharing agreements are currently being pursued to allow the Prosecuting Attorney's Office to share data to inform Executive Office decision-making and to conduct Executive Office-led analysis, when appropriate.

Additionally, Executive Office staff have been informed of the external study led by Seattle University professor Claus Portner and expect that study to provide information on future legal system involvement of youth referred to the Prosecuting Attorney's Office.



Girmay Zahilay
King County Executive
Executive Office signature

Date: March 30, 2026

Family Law Caseload & Judicial Resource Needs Report

SUMMARY RESPONSE TO 2026 – 2027 BIENNIAL BUDGET ORDINANCE 20023, SECTION 34, SUPERIOR COURT, PROVISIO P1, AS AMENDED BY ORDINANCE 20086, SECTION 15



Averil Rothrock, Presiding Judge

Aimee Sutton, Chief Judge of the Unified Family Court

Meagan Cordova, Family Court Operations Director

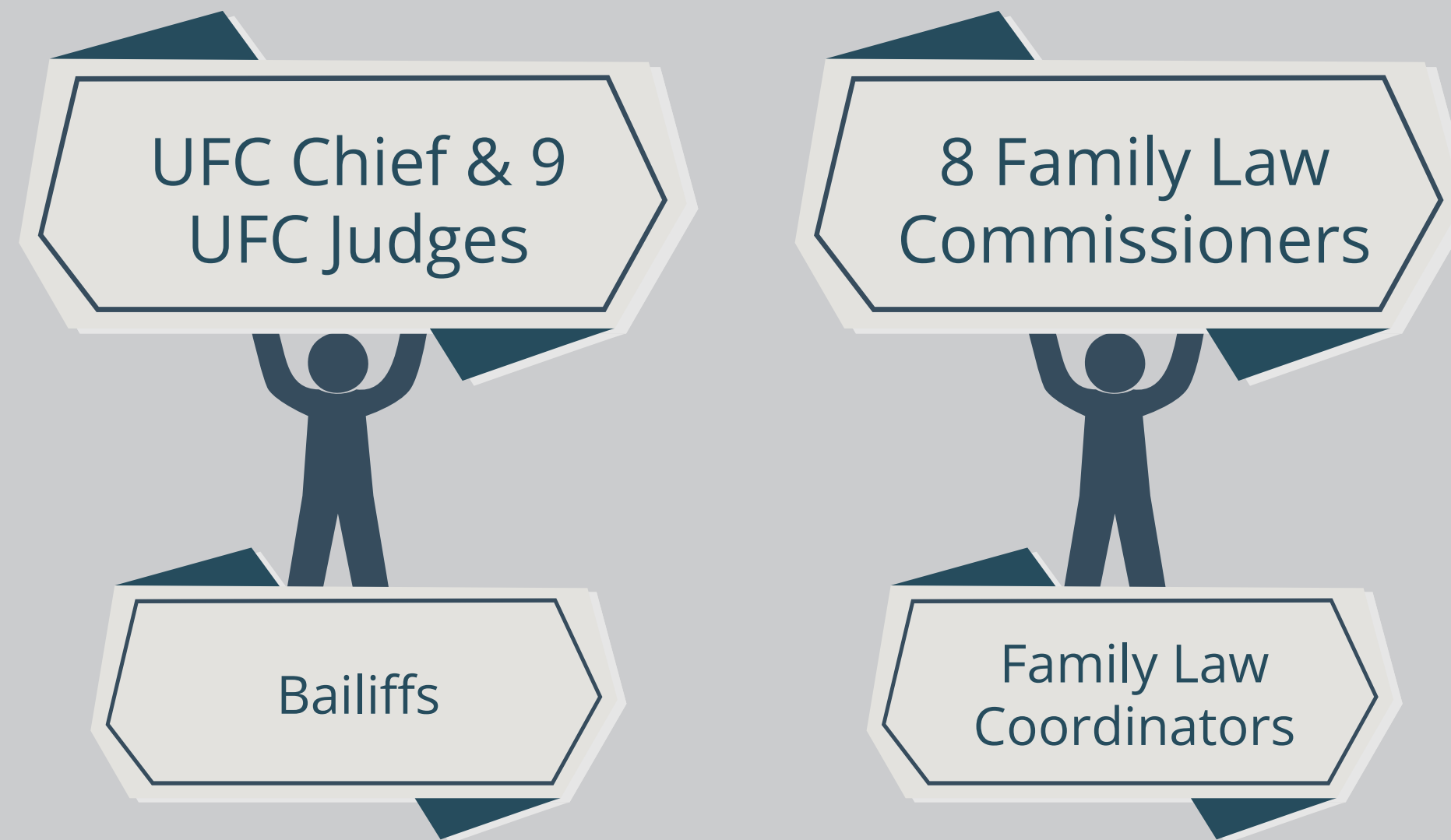
October 7th, 2026

Orientation: Roles of UFC Judges & Family Law Commissioners

EXAMPLE SCHEDULE	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
JUDGE	Trial	Trial	Trial	Family Law Motions	Pretrial Conferences Admin Time
COMMISSIONER	CPO FL Motions, TBA & State Calendars	CPO FL Motions, TBA & State Calendars	CPO FL Motions, TBA, ARY/CHINS/Truancy & State Calendars	CPO FL Motions, TBA & State Calendars	CPO FL Motions, TBA & State Calendars

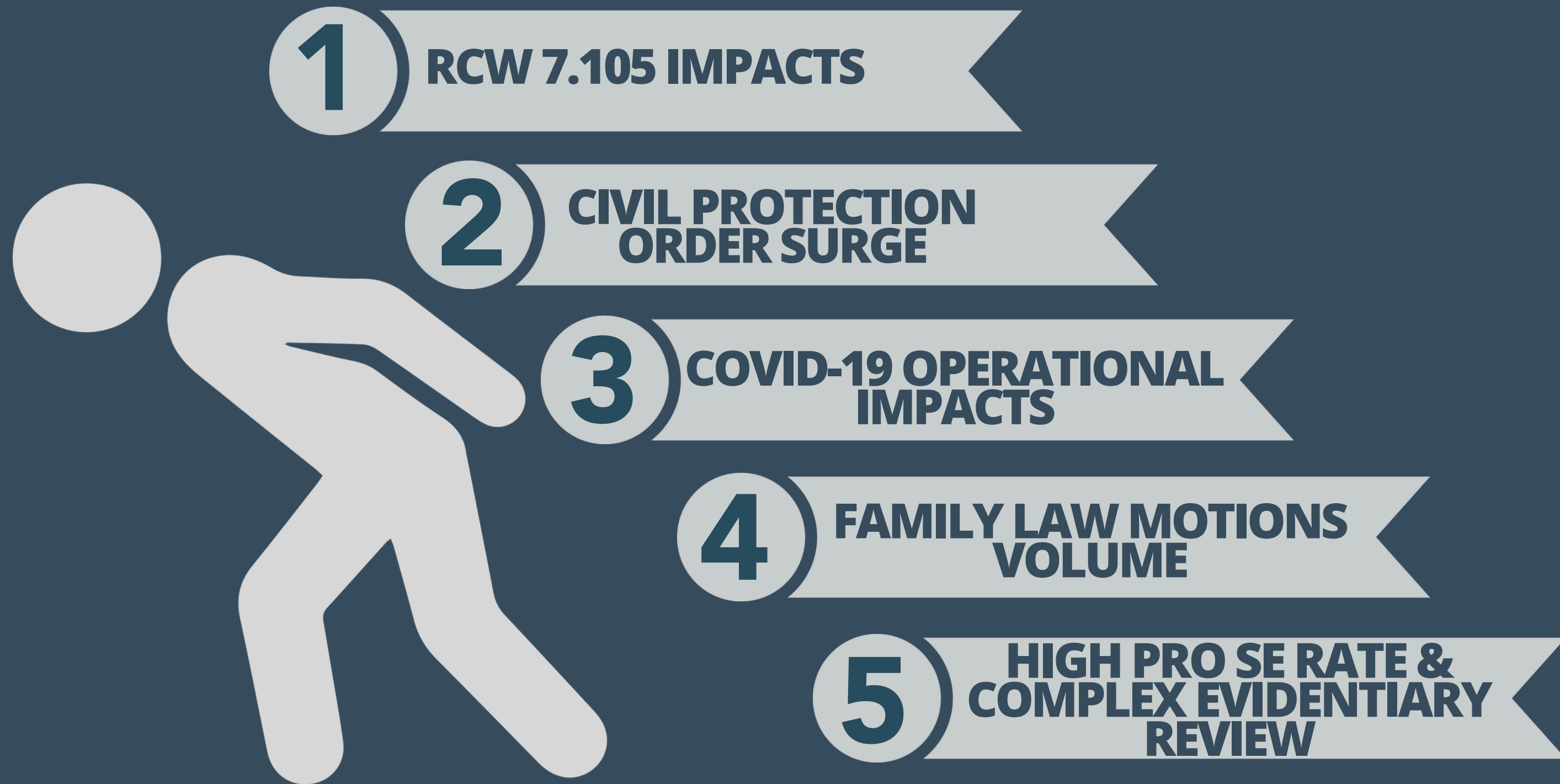
*Not shown, rotating weekly ½ day of admin time for all 8 commissioners, doubled for the 2 commissioners presiding over TBA

Unified Family Court Structure & Commissioner Role



- Washington's largest Unified Family Court
- Commissioners preside over core calendars: CPO & Family Law Motions
- Commissioners are primary drivers of day-to-day family justice access

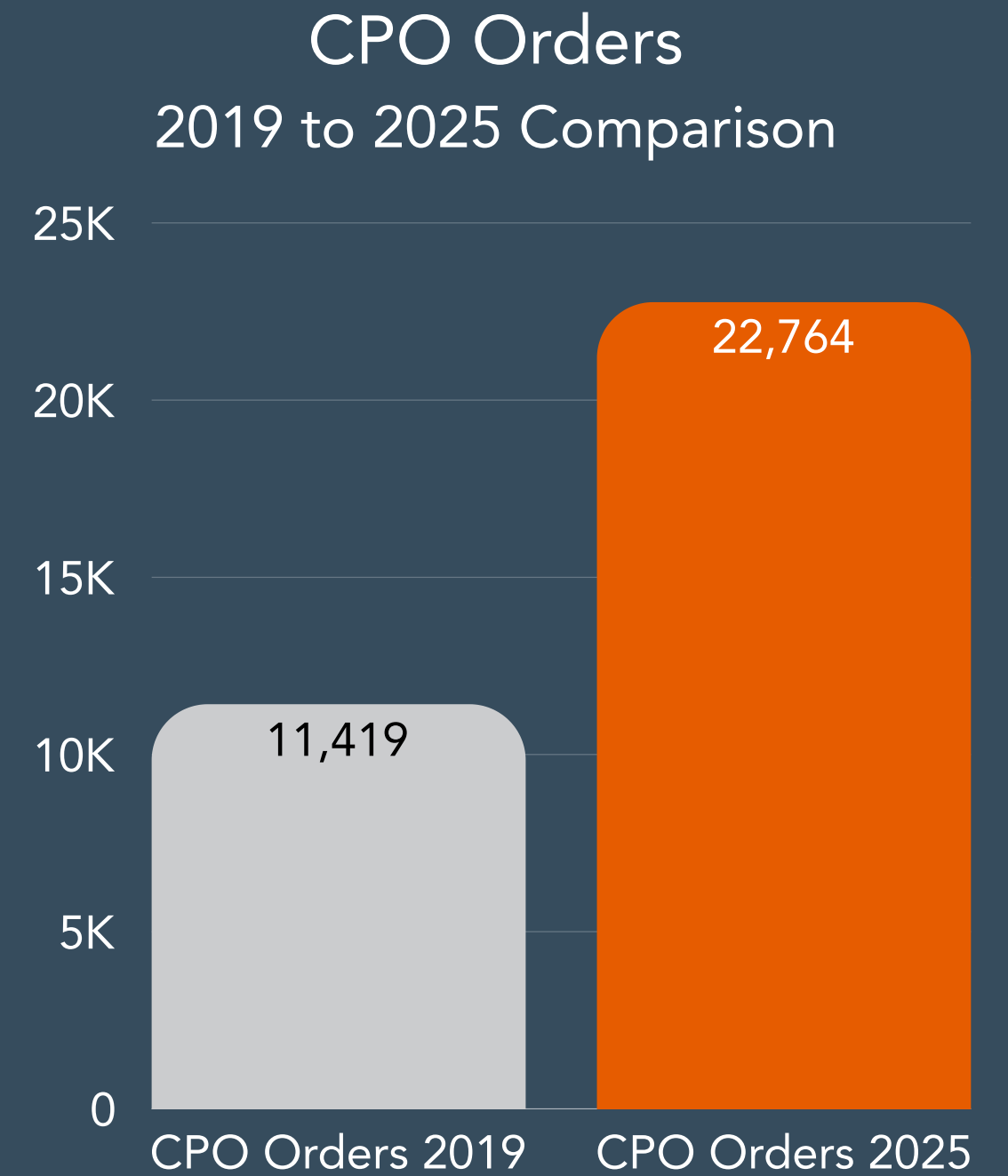
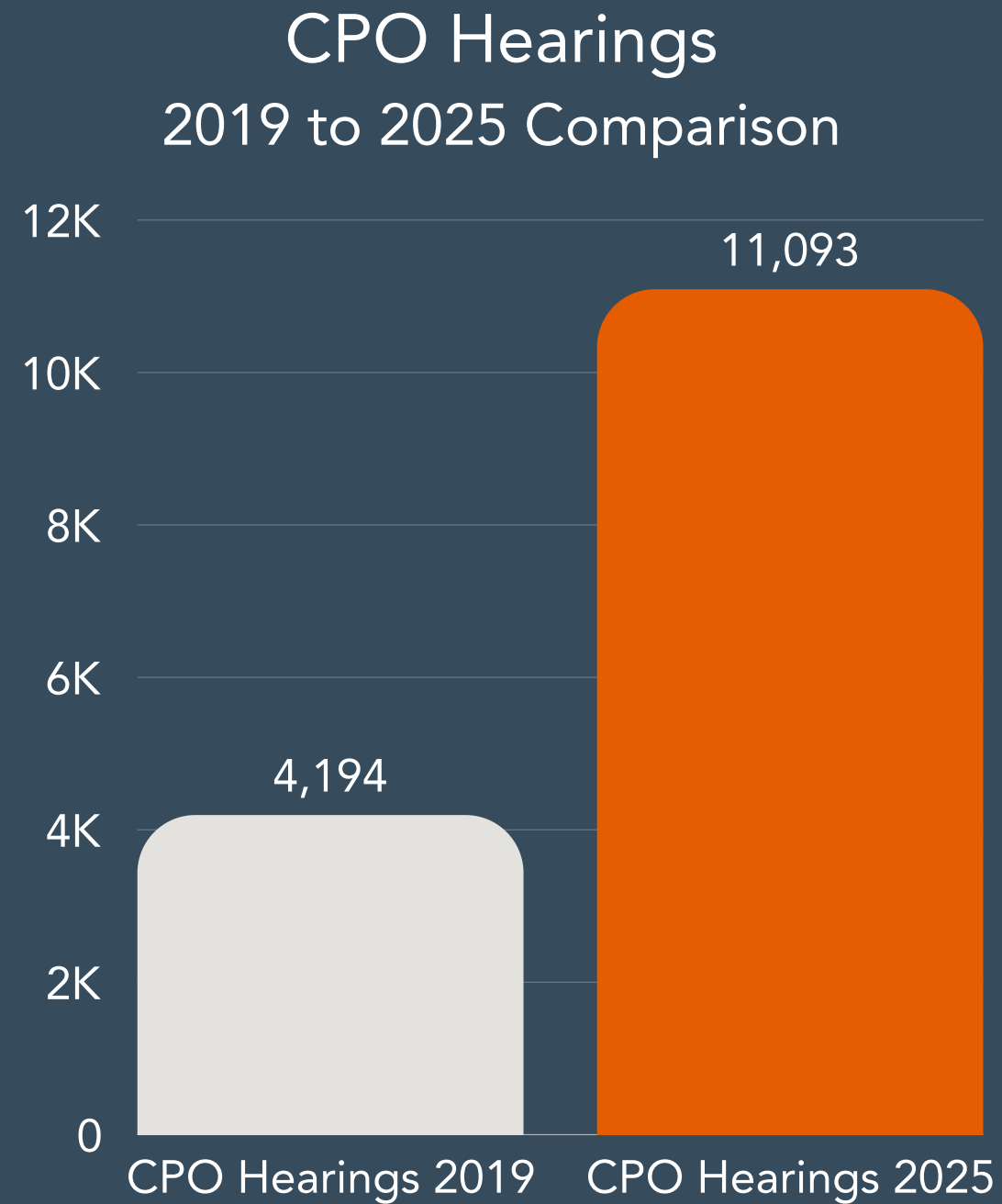
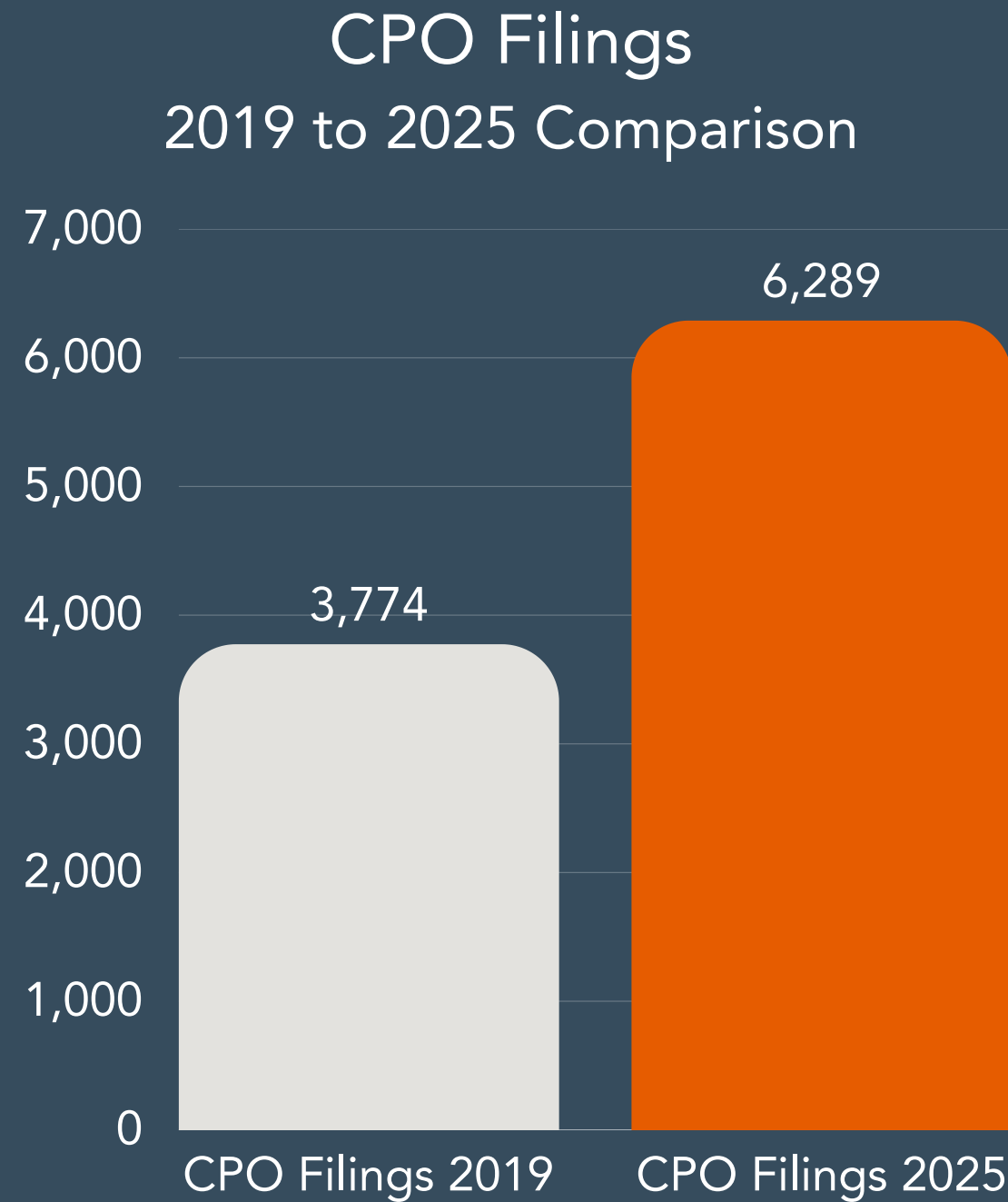
Key Drivers of Increased Workload



RCW 7.105: System-Wide Structural Shift

PROS	CONS
• No Wrong Door • Expanded Protections • Modernized Service Rules • Increased Accessibility • Remote Hearings • Pet Protection	• Filing Surge • Broader Legal Definitions • Administrative Strain • Greater jurisdictional responsibility for Superior Court

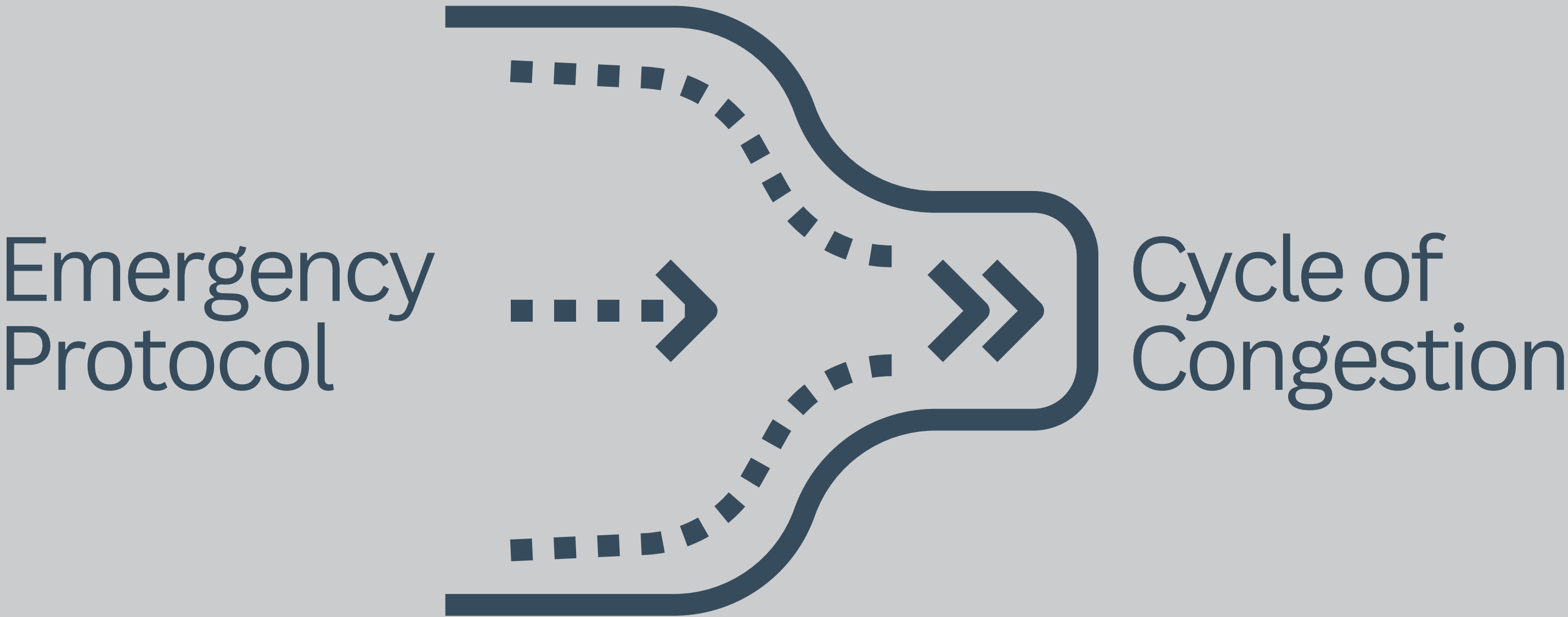
Civil Protection Order Surge



Minimum Judicial Touchpoints Per CPO Case

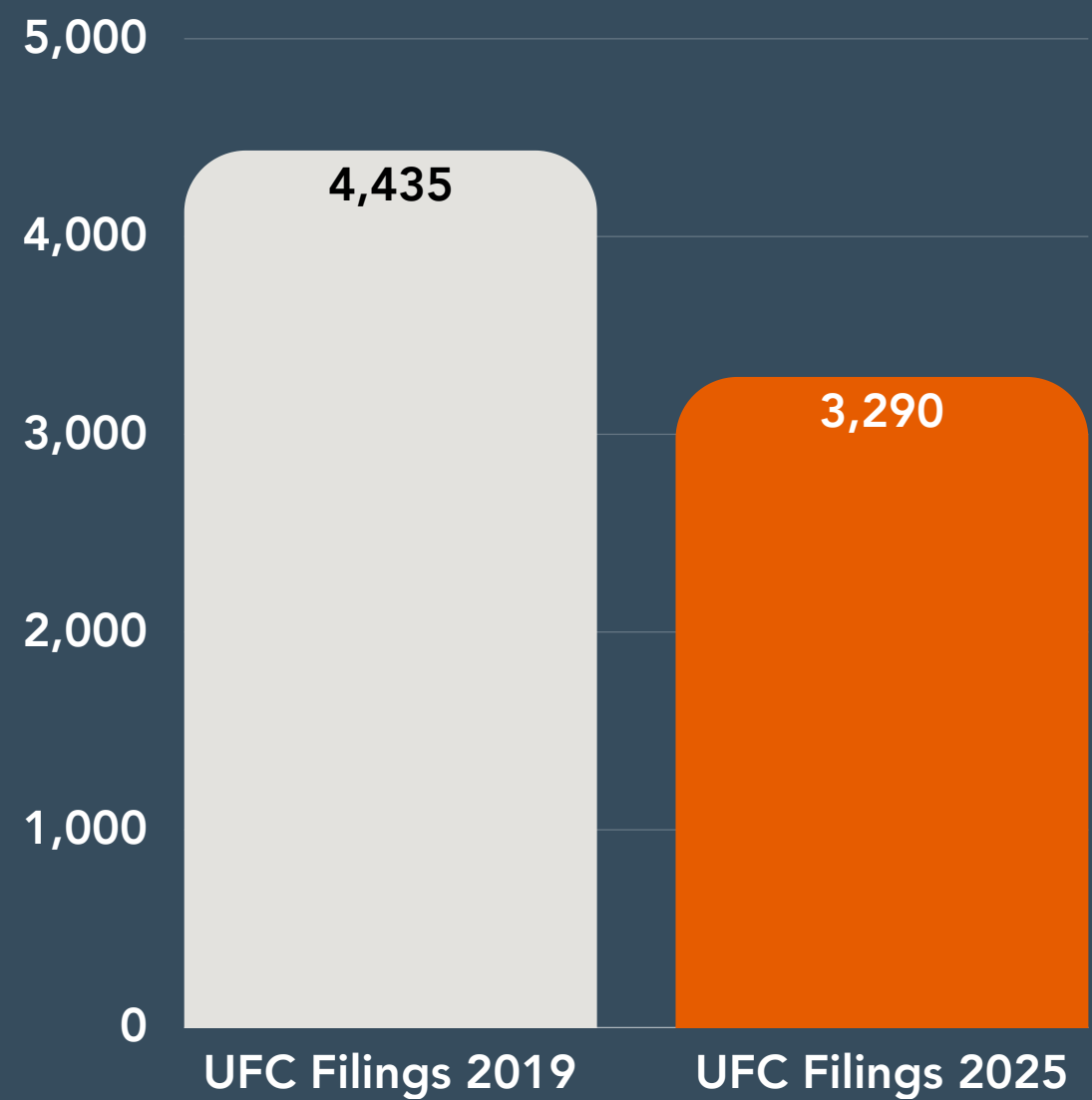


COVID-19 Pandemic Operational Impacts

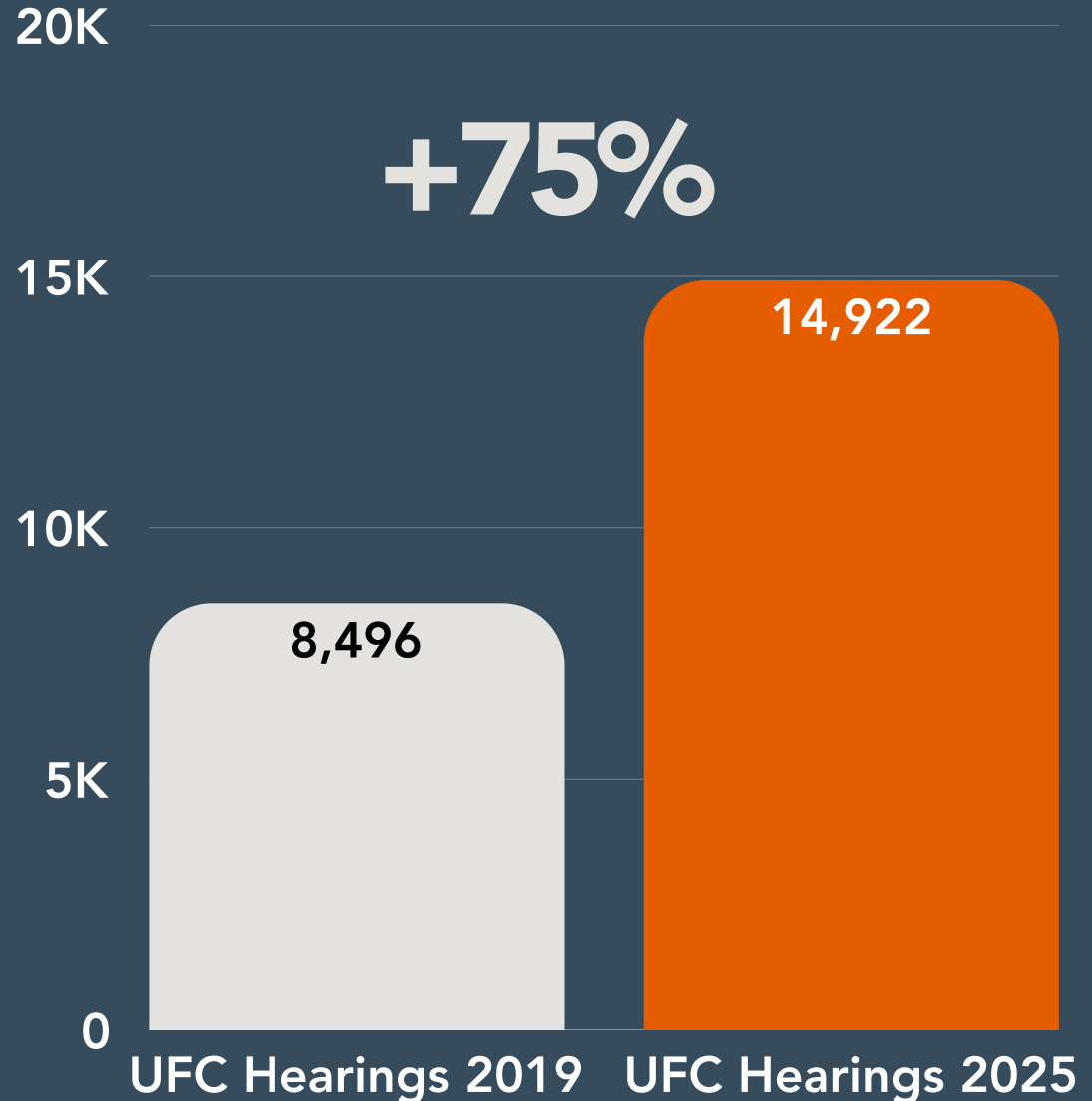


Family Law Motions Volume

UFC Filings
2019 to 2025 Comparison



UFC Hearings
2019 to 2025 Comparison



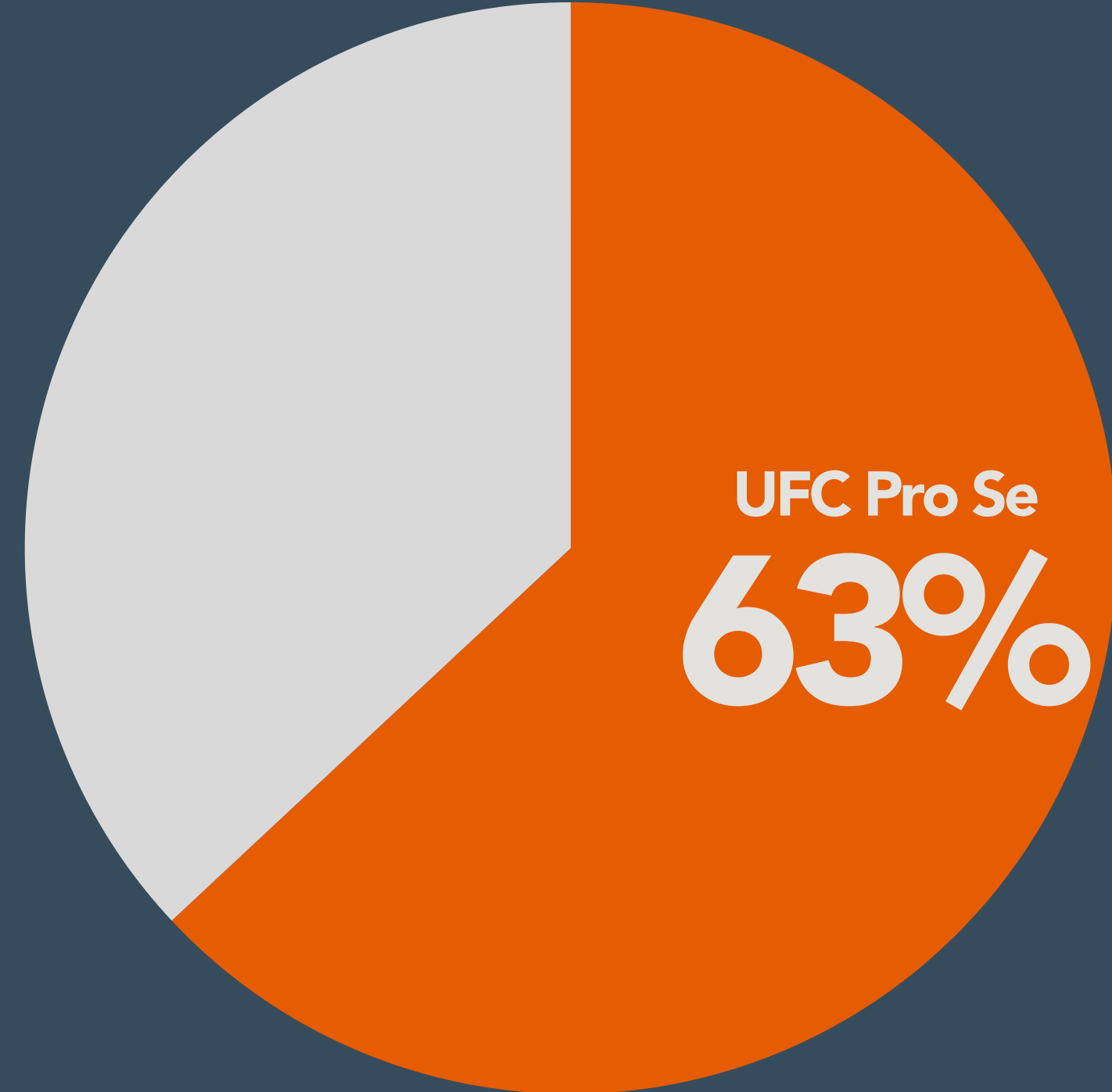
137%
increase in
motions per
case since
2019

Family Law Motions Delays



Attorney Cases
Pro Se Cases

High Pro Se Representation & Complex Evidence Review

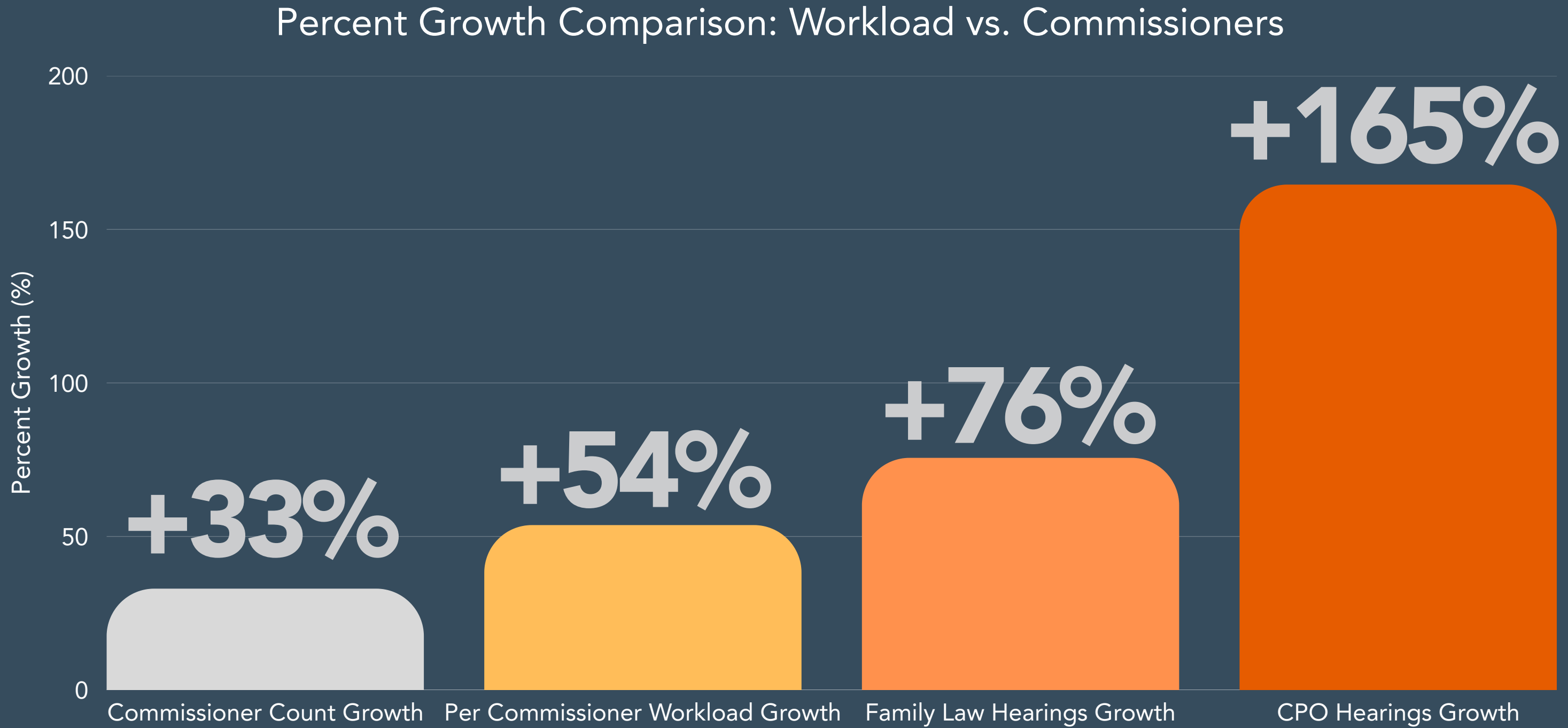


Beyond the Workload: Delayed Pretrial Relief for Family Law Clients

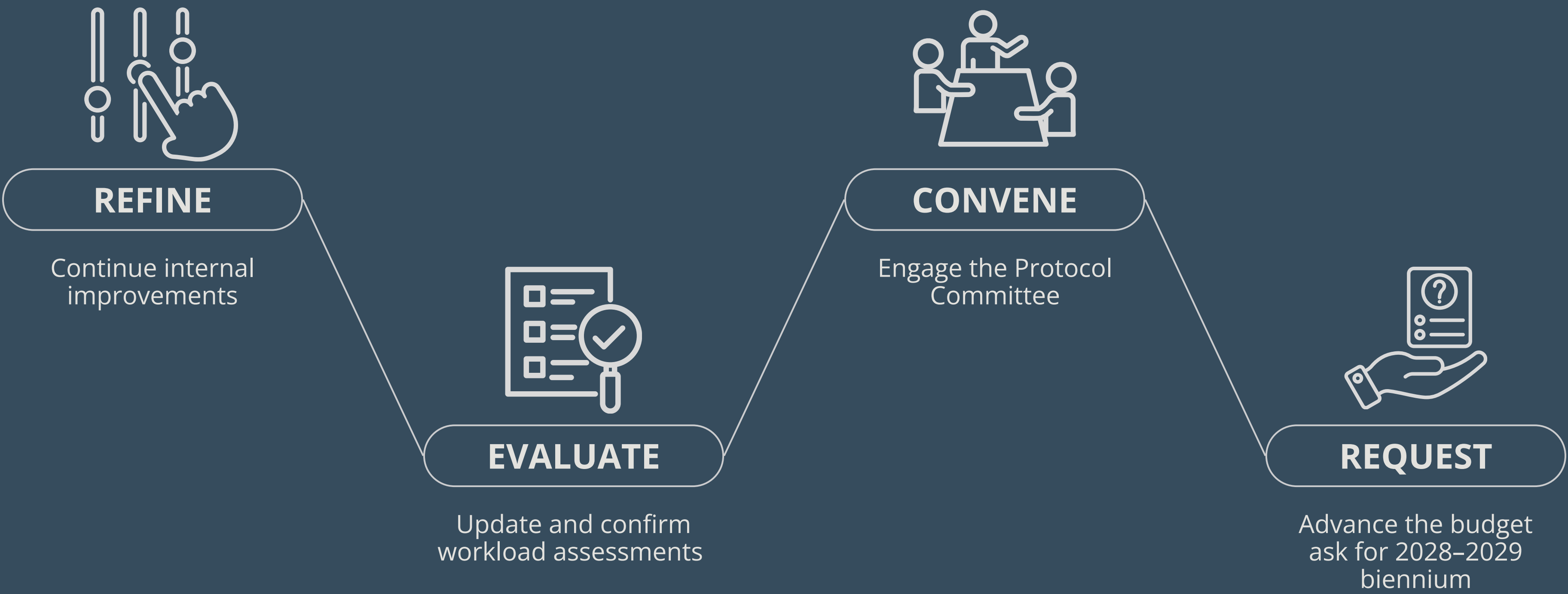
- Hearings delayed weeks to months
- Pro se parties require additional court resources
- Delayed temporary orders leave families in prolonged instability and high-conflict situations without timely court protections.
- Commissioner fatigue and burnout rise



Judicial Capacity No Longer Meets Demand 14



Path Forward for the Unified Family Court



Thank you!



Judge Averil Rothrock
Presiding Judge
averil.rothrock@kingcounty.gov

Judge Aimee Sutton
Chief, Unified Family Court
aimee.sutton@kingcounty.gov

Meagan Cordova
Family Court Operations Director
mcordova@kingcounty.gov

Truth Crushed to the Earth Will Rise Again, 2005. Art by Linda Beaumont, Photo by Spike Mafford, Quote by Martin Luther King, Jr.

**Superior Court for the State of Washington
for the County of King**

**AVERIL ROTHROCK
PRESIDING JUDGE
DEPARTMENT 16
E-MAIL: AVERIL.ROTHROCK@KINGCOUNTY.GOV**

**KING COUNTY COURTHOUSE
516 THIRD AVENUE, RM C-203
SEATTLE, WASHINGTON 98104
P: 206.477.1423**

July 29th, 2026

The Honorable Sara Perry
Chair, King County Council
Room 1200
King County Courthouse

Dear King County Council Chair Perry:

This letter transmits King County Superior Court's report in response to 2026-27 Biennial Budget Ordinance 20023, Section 34, Proviso P1, as amended by Ordinance 20086, Section 15.

As required, the enclosed report evaluates the judicial resources necessary to support the Court's family law workload. The report details the significant increase in the work of the Unified Family Court division of the Court.

Most pronounced is the impact of the growing workload on the Court's Family Law Commissioners. The increase is largely attributable to recent legislative changes impacting the Civil Protection Order actions. This report details that unprecedented surge in workload that shows no signs of abating, and other factors. It explores operational practices and scheduling/calendaring changes that the Court initiated during the pandemic and is examining to improve capacity in the post-pandemic environment. Members of the Family Law Bar Association have expressed concern about delays attorneys are experiencing in getting matters calendared before the court. The Court is attendant to these issues and is actively working to address them with our available resources.

The workload in Family Law has seen significant growth and change over the past 6 years, particularly impacting Family Law commissioners. The actions needed to address these changes are multi-dimensional. The Court has been actively working to analyze these areas in more detail in order to determine both short- and long-term approaches to mitigate these issues and reduce delay.

Thank you for your consideration of this report. The Court looks forward to the Council's continued support of its judicial officers and operational needs to provide the people of King County a forum for the resolution of their legal issues without undue delay.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Averil Rothrock". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Judge Averil Rothrock
Presiding Judge
King County Superior Court

cc: Linda Ridge, Chief Administrative Officer



King County Superior Court Family Law Caseload and Judicial Resource Needs Report

RESPONSE TO 2026 – 2027 BIENNIAL BUDGET ORDINANCE 20023, SECTION 34, SUPERIOR COURT, PROVISIO P1,
AS AMENDED BY ORDINANCE 20086, SECTION 15

July 31, 2026

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II. Proviso Text

Ordinance 20023¹, Section 34, Superior Court, P1, As Amended by Ordinance 20086, Section 15

P1 PROVIDED THAT:

Of this appropriation, \$50,000 shall not be expended or encumbered until the executive transmits a report from the protocol committee with assistance from the technical committee regarding the judicial resources needed to support the court's family law caseload.

The chair of the protocol committee shall convene the protocol committee in accordance with K.C.C. 2A.320.510 to review the judicial resources needed to support the court's family law caseload. The report shall describe in detail the methodology applied, the rationale for the methodology, including any changes to the methodology, and any conclusion reached with regard to the number of judges or commissioners needed in the superior court.

The executive should electronically file the report by July 31, 2026, with the clerk of the council, who shall retain an electronic copy and provide an electronic copy to all councilmembers, the council chief of staff, and the lead staff for the budget and fiscal management committee or its successor.

¹ [Link to Ordinance 20023](#)

III. Executive Summary

This report, prepared pursuant to Ordinance 20023, Section 34, evaluates the judicial resources required to support King County Superior Court’s family law workload. It summarizes the Family Court Operations division, examines workload and caseload trends, and assesses the operational challenges intensified by the COVID19 pandemic and the implementation of RCW 7.105. This report focuses on family law commissioners, who serve as the primary judicial officers for both family law motion practice and civil protection orders, and who are faced with a significant volume of daily judicial activity in the Unified Family Court. Their workload has expanded dramatically due to steep increases in hearings, orders, and evidentiary complexity. Although filings in some case types have declined, the number of hearings required per case has risen sharply, and civil protection order filings have surged. A consistently high proportion of self-represented litigants further increases preparation and hearing demands, as these matters require detailed procedural explanation and more robust written orders. Together, these forces have created a structural gap between judicial demand and judicial capacity, resulting in months long delays for family law motion hearings that historically were available within weeks.

The impacts of this imbalance are evident across the system: increased hearings, expanded in-chambers order review and drafting, increasingly complex evidentiary submissions, and calendar capacity limits that restrict access and slow caseload. Despite incremental increases in judicial staffing, commissioners and coordinators continue to carry an overwhelming share of expanding workload. Meeting the needs of King County families will require both strengthened internal operations and thoughtful consideration of future judicial resource options. Family Court Operations is committed to refining caseload practices, improving calendar accuracy, expanding support for self-represented litigants, strengthening early intervention pathways, and modernizing technology infrastructure. At the same time, strategic investment in judicial capacity, particularly commissioner staffing, may be necessary to restore timely access to justice. Continued monitoring, evaluation, and collaboration with County partners will guide these efforts, ensuring that the Unified Family Court remains responsive, equitable, and able to meet its core responsibility to the families it serves.

The original scope of this proviso contemplated the need to convene the Protocol Committee, in accordance with K.C.C. 2A.320.510. However, the Court is not currently proposing a formal request for additional judicial resources and the analysis conducted by the Protocol Committee is not needed at this time. The Protocol Committee will be convened, as appropriate, when the resource need has been more clearly assessed and defined, such as for the 2028-2029 Biennium Budget.

IV. Background

A. Family Court Operations Overview and the Role of Family Law Commissioners

The Family Court Operations (FCO) division of King County Superior Court administers the largest and most complex family justice system in Washington State. The division operates a Unified Family Court (UFC), consolidating all family related case types into a single coordinated structure. As of March 2026, the UFC is staffed by a Chief Judge, nine judges, eight family law commissioners, and more than ninety employees across six program areas. Eight additional judges hear juvenile Dependency and juvenile civil matters including At Risk Youth, Children in Need of Services, and Truancy Petitions. These proceedings are independent of the Unified Family Court's judicial assignments. In total, twenty-six judicial officers support the full spectrum of family, juvenile civil, and civil protection order cases. The UFC is guided by the principle of "one family, one judge," ensuring coordinated and holistic case management. The division presides over fourteen distinct case types, including dissolution, legal separation, parentage, child support, adoptions, juvenile civil matters, and Civil Protection Orders.

Family law commissioners perform the majority of daily judicial functions within FCO. Commissioners serve as the primary judicial officers for family law and civil protection order motions requiring immediate resolution. They preside over these calendars without individual bailiffs, relying instead on a small team of Family Law Coordinators who manage filings, scheduling, courtroom operations, and order finalization and entry. Family law commissioners possess subject-matter expertise to issue informed decisions in these matters as they make their way toward resolution. The assignment of this work to the specialized commissioners leverages the availability of the UFC judges to preside over discovery disputes, pretrial matters and the trials themselves. Even with 9 judges, UFC trials are routinely placed on standby and assigned to other judges as available for trial given the high demand for judges to hear UFC trials.

Each morning, commissioners hear the Civil Protection Order calendar, including cases involving domestic or family violence, sexual assault, stalking, harassment, and extreme risk firearm removal. These cases involve urgent safety concerns and represent a substantial portion of commissioner workload. One commissioner in Kent also supports the juvenile Becca calendar, further increasing workload demands.

Every afternoon, commissioners preside over the Family Law Motions calendar, hearing motions for temporary parenting plans, contempt matters, restraining orders, interim child support, and other essential orders that stabilize families during ongoing litigation. Commissioners also oversee and decide the Trial by Affidavit (TBA) calendar for designated support modification cases (cases where a parent wants to change the amount of child support that has been ordered), which requires review of voluminous written evidence in lieu of live testimony.

Family law commissioners provide the court's frontline response to families experiencing crisis, conflict, or rapid transition. Their decisions ensure immediate safety, establish interim stability, and promote efficient case progression. Because commissioners conduct the bulk of daily hearings across multiple case types, their workload directly impacts the court's capacity to provide timely and effective access to justice for thousands of families each year.

V. Report Requirements

B. Report Methodology

This report was developed through a collaborative, multi-month effort led by a technical working group composed of Superior Court and Department of Judicial Administration (DJA) personnel. The working group included the Superior Court Chief Administrative Officer, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, the Family Court Operations Director, the Superior Court Clerk/DJA Director, and the DJA statistician. Together, this team gathered, validated, analyzed, and interpreted a broad range of available operational and workload data to identify the factors contributing to increased family law demand and judicial resource constraints. The analysis relied on data from multiple sources, including Superior Court and DJA, statewide family and juvenile data from the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC), and historical UFC workload baselines dating back to 2015. The working group also reviewed major operational changes, such as the transition to virtual hearings and changes in calendaring practices, to understand both quantitative trends and their practical effects on caseload.²

Additional input and subject matter expertise were provided by the UFC Chief Judge, the Superior Court Presiding Judge, sitting family law commissioners, a Superior Court Project Program Manager, the Family Law Supervisors, the CPO/Weapons Supervisor, the FCO Lead and the Family Law/UFC Program Manager, the latter two who also assisted with data collection. The operational observations and perspectives of those consulted were integrated into the findings, especially where experience helped clarify the connection between workload patterns and courtroom operations.

The analyses and recommendations are grounded in the statutory framework governing family law and juvenile civil matters, including RCW 7.105 and Titles 11, 13, and 26 of the Revised Code of Washington, as well as the longstanding principles of the Unified Family Court model adopted in Washington State. Recommendations presented in this report reflect areas of broad agreement, though several items, particularly those involving long-term staffing models, will require continued discussion and evaluation by the Protocol Committee and court leadership. This methodology ensures that the resulting assessment is data driven, operationally informed, and rooted in both statutory requirements and contemporary needs of the Unified Family Court.

As noted previously, the original scope of this proviso contemplated the need to convene the Protocol Committee, in accordance with K.C.C. 2A.320.510. Because the Court is not currently proposing a formal request to add judicial resources in the current biennium budget, the Protocol Committee need not convene at this time.

C. What judicial resources are needed to support the court's family law caseload?

Since 2019, Family Court Operations and the Family Law Commissioners have faced a steadily rising workload driven by more hearings, mandated orders, and increasingly complex cases. Despite incremental staffing increases, growing from 8 to 10 UFC judges (including the Chief) and from 6 to 8 Family Law commissioners

² The Court lacks a data analyst and is limited to data captured by the Clerk's Office and through software known as KCMS.

between 2019 and the present, judicial resources have not kept pace. Calendar demands and the volume of work, especially for commissioners and coordinators, continue to outstrip capacity.

Table 1.

Year	#UFC Judges	# Family Law Commissioners
2019	8	6
2020	8	6
2021	8	6
2022	8	6
2023	8	6
2024	9	7
2025	9	7
2026	10	8

RCW 7.105

Washington's new protection order statute, RCW 7.105, took effect July 1, 2022, unifying all major protection order types into a single, survivor-centered framework designed to increase accessibility, efficiency, and consistency. Emphasizing the principle of "No Wrong Door" for litigants, the statute created a uniform petition form, expanded remote and in-person filing options, standardized service requirements, and permitted alternative service methods in most cases. It also broadened the definition of domestic violence to include coercive control and affirmed Superior Court's authority to address related family law issues within protection order proceedings. Under RCW 7.105, every petition may require up to three hearings: an ex parte temporary order, a full hearing before a family law commissioner, and a weapons-surrender compliance hearing before the UFC Chief Judge.

Prior to RCW 7.105, Washington law, specifically former RCW 10.14.150, required civil anti-harassment petitions involving adult respondents to be filed in district court, unless superior court jurisdiction had already been invoked through a related family law or pending action. RCW 7.105 eliminated these jurisdictional barriers, requiring superior courts to accept a wide variety of petitions previously restricted to district courts. The statute also removed filing fees for anti-harassment petitions, which further increased accessibility and shifted substantial case volume into King County Superior Court.

RCW 7.105 also intersects with RCW 9.41.801, which recognizes the heightened lethality risk when respondents to protection orders continue to have access to firearms. Because noncompliance with firearm-prohibition orders is common, RCW 9.41.801 directs courts and law enforcement to emphasize swift and certain enforcement. The Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) created a statewide monitoring dashboard to support this mandate and to track trends in protection order filings, orders, and compliance activity across Superior Courts and courts of limited jurisdiction.

Under RCW 7.105.050, courts of limited jurisdiction must transfer protection order proceedings to Superior Court in several circumstances, including when the parties have an existing Superior Court case; when any party is under 18; when the order would affect parenting or residential time; when parties share a dwelling and exclusion is sought; or when the order would affect real-property rights. These transfer requirements, combined with the elimination of filing barriers, have contributed to significant shifts in protection-order case volume.

AOC dashboard data confirms this trend. Between 2023 and 2025, King County Superior Court experienced a 23% increase in unique protection-order cases and a 29% increase in orders issued. During the same period, protection-order cases in King County's courts of limited jurisdiction declined by 20% and orders fell by 25%. This divergence reflects both statutory

- RCW 7.105 significantly increased case complexity and workload.
- RCW 7.105 introduced several positive changes including the "no wrong door" approach to CPOs
- Coercive control requires deeper, more contextual fact finding, resulting in longer hearings and more detailed orders.
- Allegations of violence are easier to file, increasing contested hearings and retaliatory filings.

transfer mandates and broader operational impacts of RCW 7.105, which centralized protection-order work in Superior Court and expanded judicial responsibilities associated with each case.

King County Superior Court					
KC Superior Court	2023	2024	2025	Change 2023-25	
# of unique cases	7,575	8,586	9,296	1,721	23%
# of protection orders	17,518	26,320	22,649	5,131	29%
All King County Courts of Limited Jurisdiction (includes KC District Court)					
All KC CLJ	2023	2024	2025	Change 2023-25	
# of unique cases	7,417	6,837	5,900	-1,517	-20%
# of protection orders	10,608	9,566	7,969	-2,639	-25%
King County District Court					
KC District Ct	2023	2024	2025	Change 2023-25	
# of unique cases	4,550	4,244	3,249	-1,301	-29%
# of protection orders	7,203	6,456	4,894	-2,309	-32%

Impact

The implementation of RCW 7.105 brought meaningful improvements in access and survivor protection, but it also produced significant operational impacts on family law, Ex Parte, and civil protection order caseload within Superior Court. Following enactment, commissioners experienced marked increases in workload volume, hearing frequency, and preparation time. Many hearings have become longer and more complex because the statute requires more detailed judicial findings, especially when coercive control is alleged. The broadened definition of domestic violence has also contributed to more contested hearings and, in some cases, retaliatory or abusive litigation, increasing the need for careful judicial scrutiny.

The removal of prior filing barriers, particularly the shift of adult anti-harassment petitions from district courts to Superior Court, has substantially expanded Superior Court's protection-order caseload. Judicial officers report that these filings often involve lengthy narratives, voluminous exhibits, and complex factual disputes. The statutory requirement to evaluate alleged conduct from the perspective of a similarly situated person further increases the analytic demands of fact-finding, requiring deeper contextual review and contributing to longer hearings and lengthier, more individualized orders.

Taken together, RCW 7.105's changes have increased both the complexity and the volume of protection-order matters before Superior Court. These impacts fall most heavily on family law commissioners, who preside over the majority of full hearings, navigate expanded statutory obligations, and issue detailed, high-volume orders necessary for legal sufficiency and public safety.

- RCW 7.105's expanded transfer requirements and removal of filing barriers shifted a large share of protection order work from courts of limited jurisdiction to Superior Court, increasing case volume and complexity.
- From 2023–2025, King County Superior Court saw a 23% rise in unique protection order cases and a **29%** rise in orders, while courts of limited jurisdiction experienced notable declines.

The COVID-19 Pandemic, Statutory Changes, and the Emergence of New Challenges

As the COVID-19 pandemic took hold in Washington State in early 2020, King County Superior Court undertook rapid systemwide changes that significantly affected family law operations. After the first reported death on February 29th, 2020, court leadership activated its Crisis Response Plan and began issuing emergency directives to reduce viral transmission while preserving essential court functions. By March 11th, judicial officers were authorized to conduct non-trial hearings remotely, and on March 13th, all jury trials were suspended. The family law system was directly impacted on March 16th, when the UFC Chief Judge restricted Family Court motions to “mission critical” matters only, prioritizing urgent safety and child related issues, a strategy to mitigate the increasing delay in the wait time to motion hearing date due to the fact that hearings were taking significantly longer as staff and community members adapted to virtual technology. During this time, another strategy was that FCO hired two term-limited temporary family law commissioners to assist with the workload, supported by temporary federal emergency funds. Dependency hearings quickly shifted to remote formats, and ex-parte processes, including many that support family law, were moved online to maintain access during courthouse restrictions.

Throughout the spring and summer of 2020, family law litigants increasingly relied on telephonic interpretation, remote filing, and newly created online tools, including a web page designed to assist self-represented parties navigating family law processes during the pandemic. As the court formalized remote hearing procedures and adopted mandatory masking, distancing, and other public health measures, it expanded remote and hybrid hearing options across civil, juvenile, and family law calendars. Even as jury trials resumed in modified formats, including socially distanced trials at a temporary courthouse, the court continued handling family law trials and hearings via video, allowing judicial officers, litigants, witnesses, and interpreters to participate from home or office. By late 2020, Superior Court was conducting remote civil, dependency, involuntary treatment, and family law matters without interruption, ensuring continued access to parenting plan modifications, domestic violence protection orders, support actions, and other critical family justice processes despite the ongoing public health emergency.

Impact on Family Law Motions Calendar

Before the pandemic, the wait time for a family law motion hearing was typically two to three weeks. Once COVID-19 emergency protocols were implemented, however, the transition to virtual only hearings significantly lengthened individual hearing times due to widespread technology barriers. This created immediate pressure on an already full motion calendar. As a result, non-emergency matters were deferred for extended periods, marking the beginning of a scheduling backlog that would deepen over the following years.

When the calendar reopened, the sense of scarcity persisted. Parties, anxious to secure hearing dates for matters that had stalled during the emergency period, flooded the schedule.

- Complications created by the Pandemic were experienced all over the State.
- Statewide, courts are grappling with substantial increases in CPOs, increased hearing volume, longer and more complex hearings, and the need for deeper preparation.

This surge contributed to a cycle of congestion, compounded by repeated concerns raised by the UFC Chief Judge that practitioners were “over securing” hearing slots and failing to strike or confirm them appropriately, further slowing the system and reducing access for others.

Statewide Acknowledgement of COVID-Related Delays

Importantly, the challenges King County has faced in post-COVID family law scheduling are not unique to the county. The Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) has expressly acknowledged that delays stemming from COVID-19 were a statewide issue affecting all trial courts, particularly in civil protection order (CPO) matters. To fully appreciate the volume of work King County is responsible for, the Annual Protection Order Dashboard demonstrates King County processed over 25% of all CPO’s filed statewide and roughly the same as Snohomish, Pierce and Thurston Counties combined ([Dashboard Reporting Tool \(DRT\) - The Annual Protection Orders](#)). Since 2021, courts across Washington have been grappling with substantial increases in protection order filings, more hearings, longer hearings, and greater preparation time, all occurring without marked additional resources. These pressures intensified after the implementation of RCW 7.105, which further expanded procedural and substantive obligations for courts handling protection orders.

In response, the AOC sought legislative funding in 2024 to help courts manage these systemwide strains. This resulted in the creation of the Protection Order Reimbursement and Training (PORT) Project, a statewide support initiative providing passthrough funding to trial courts. Through PORT, courts may be reimbursed for pro tem judicial coverage to handle CPO calendars, for time spent training pro tem judicial officers, and for other costs associated with ensuring courts can meet the dramatically increased demand. The PORT Project reflects the AOC’s formal recognition that COVID-era delays, combined with complex statutory changes, have placed unprecedented workload pressures on courts across Washington, not just in King County. This statewide acknowledgment underscores that the scheduling backlog and resource constraints experienced locally are part of a broader pattern affecting courts throughout the state. King County Superior Court applied for PORT funding but was declined due to AOC fiscal year funding limitations. King County Superior Court will continue to monitor future opportunities for support.

Civil Protection Order Workload

Family law commissioners manage the highest volume and most urgent calendars within Family Court Operations, particularly the Civil Protection Order (CPO) docket. These calendars, including domestic and violence, sexual assault, stalking, harassment, and extreme risk firearm removal, are heard almost exclusively by commissioners. Vulnerable Adult Protection Orders (VAPOs) are excluded from CPO totals in this report because they are heard by Ex Parte commissioners who have expertise regarding vulnerable adults.

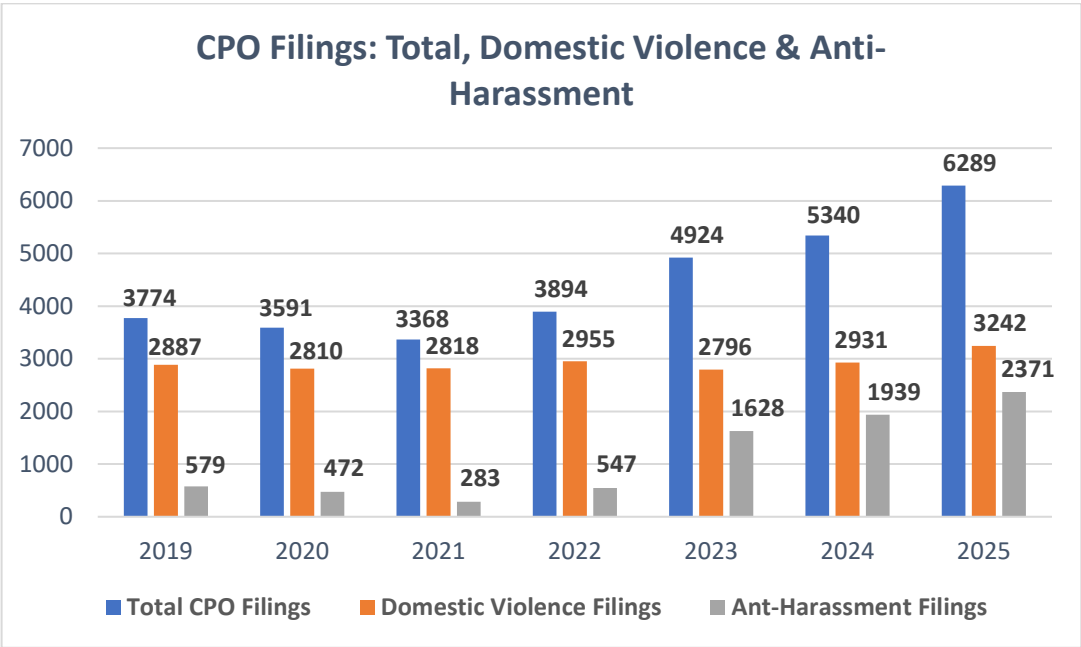
Demand for CPO hearings has expanded sharply. Between 2019 and 2025, annual CPO petitions increased from 3,774 to 6,289, a 66% rise over six years, with petitions averaging

- Virtual hearings and technology barriers significantly lengthened hearing times, creating an immediate backlog and a prolonged scheduling scarcity once calendars reopened.
- The AOC acknowledged statewide strain and created the PORT Project for support, though King County’s application was declined due to funding limits, leaving the court to seek future opportunities.
- King County, alone, processes **25%** of the State’s CPOs – **more than Pierce, Snohomish, and Thurston Counties combined.**
- Civil Protection Orders are the most urgent and highest-volume calendars, handled almost entirely by commissioners.

more than 4,400 annually during this period. Growth accelerated in 2023, 2024, and 2025, reaching 4,924, 5,340, and 6,289, respectively. As of July 2026, there have already been 3,078 petitions, placing the court on track for another exceptionally high-volume year.

Domestic violence (DV) and anti-harassment petitions constitute the largest share of CPOs heard by commissioners. DV filings have remained consistently high, rising from 2,887 in 2019 to 3,242 in 2025. By contrast, anti-harassment filings, previously heard by judges prior to 2022, have surged dramatically. Anti-harassment cases grew from 579 filings in 2019 to 2,371 filings in 2025, a more than four-fold increase. The growth was immediate following the statutory change which eliminated the filing fee for most anti-harassment petitions. As of July 2026, commissioners have already heard 1,618 DV filings and 1,113 anti-harassment filings, reflecting a continuation of steep volume increases.

Chart 1.

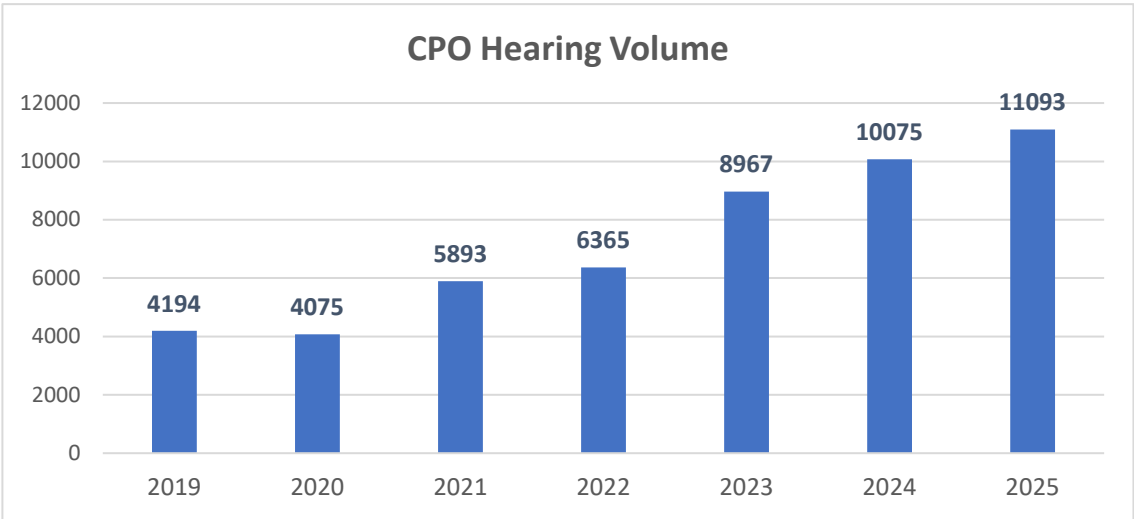


1. This chart represents total CPO filings, DV CPO filings, and Anti-Harassment CPO filings per year 2019 - 2025. VAPO not included.

Civil Protection Order hearing volume has risen even more sharply than filings. Commissioners conducted 4,194 hearings in 2019; this number rose to 8,967 hearings in 2023 and 11,093 hearings in 2025 constituting a 165% increase across seven years. The largest jump began in 2022, coinciding with implementation of RCW 7.105, which expanded statutory requirements, increased procedural complexity, and significantly increased the number of hearings required per case.

- Between 2019 and 2025, CPO filings increased from **3774** to **6289** filings per year - an increase of **66%**.
- Between 2019 and 2025, Anti-Harassment filings alone increased from **579** to **2371** per year – an increase of over **300%**.
- CPO Hearing volume has increased more sharply than filings.

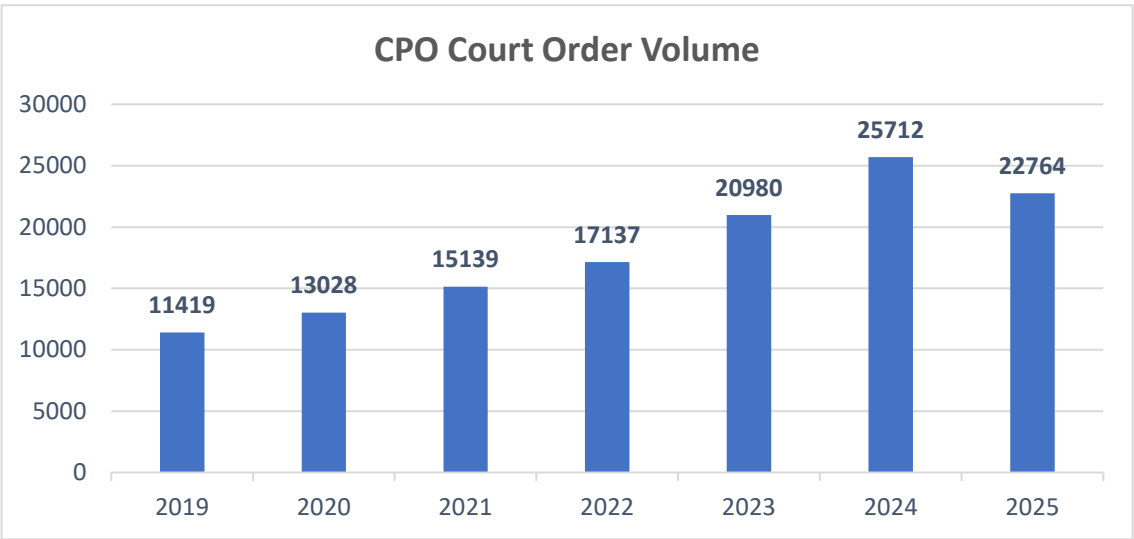
Chart 2.



2. This chart represents the number of court hearings held in association with CPOs per year.

Order entry volume, encompassing both hearings and substantial in chambers judicial work, has also increased dramatically. Commissioners and UFC judges entered 11,419 CPO orders in 2019; by 2023 that number climbed to 20,980 orders, and by 2024 reached 25,712 orders. In 2025, commissioners entered 22,764 orders. This represents a 99 to 125 percent increase in judicial output, depending on the year. Even during periods of slightly reduced hearings, order production remained extremely high, reflecting increasing demands for legally detailed findings, multi-issue protection orders, firearm surrender enforcement, and complex case management tasks. During 2020 alone, commissioners issued 13,028 orders, including 11,374 domestic violence protection orders, demonstrating the sustained intensity of workload even during pandemic limitations.

Chart 3.



3. This chart indicates the number of court orders issued in association with CPO matters for each calendar year.

- Between 2019 and 2025, CPO hearings increased from **4,194** to **11,093** – an increase of **165%**.

- The largest increases are seen in **Anti-Harassment** and coincide with legislative changes (RCW 7.105).

- Between 2019 and 2025, CPO orders increased from **11,419** to **22,764** – an increase of **99%**.

- **25,712** orders were issued for CPO matters in 2024 – an increase of **125%** over 2019.

Between 80% and 90% of CPO petitioners since 2019 have been self-represented. This dramatically increases commissioner workload, requiring additional procedural explanation, step by step guidance, longer hearings, and detailed written orders to ensure statutory compliance and clarity for litigants navigating the court without attorneys, all of which the statute mandates.

- Since 2019, **80-90%** of CPO petitioners are self-represented, year over year.

Taken together, filing growth, hearing increases, and order entry expansion show that CPO workload has grown at a pace far exceeding other areas of family court. Filings increased by 66% percent from 2019 to 2025; hearings increased by 165%; orders increased between 99 and 125%. Commissioners have absorbed almost all growth in CPO calendars. Because commissioners also must review, draft, and enter orders for matters that do not require hearings such as motions without oral argument, the true workload is substantially higher than hearing counts alone suggest. These trends demonstrate the disproportionate strain placed on the commissioner bench, driven by RCW 7.105's statutory expansion, rapid growth in anti-harassment filings, complexity in current protection order practice, and the persistently high number of self-represented litigants requiring detailed procedural clarification and written guidance.

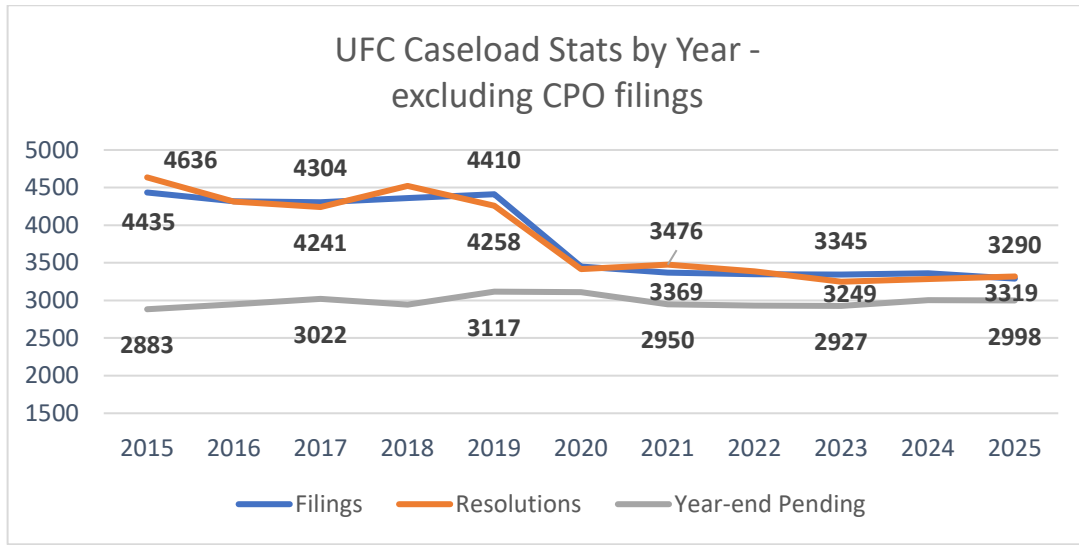
- Despite a reduction in filings, the amount of work per case has increased dramatically evidenced by the continually increasing number of hearings.

Family law commissioner capacity directly determines the court's ability to provide timely access to justice, safeguard vulnerable individuals, and maintain public safety for thousands of residents countywide.

Family Law Motions Workload

Although Unified Family Court (UFC) filings, excluding Civil Protection Order matters, declined over the past decade, the workload carried by family law commissioners has increased substantially. From 2015 to 2019, UFC filings averaged nearly 4,400 per year. From 2020 to 2025, that average dropped by approximately 23% to around 3,400 filings annually, with case resolutions declining at similar rates. Despite these decreases and increased judicial resources, the number of pending cases has remained mostly static. There is a correlation between the sharp rise in motion hearings per case and the relatively static pending case numbers. Today's family law matters are generating significantly more hearings per case than in prior years, increasing judicial workload and likely slowing case resolution. This trend disproportionately affects family law commissioners, who hear the vast majority of UFC motion matters. The strain is intensified by the large proportion of self-represented litigants, between 42% and 67% since 2019, whose cases require additional procedural explanation, guidance, and judicial time.

Chart 4.

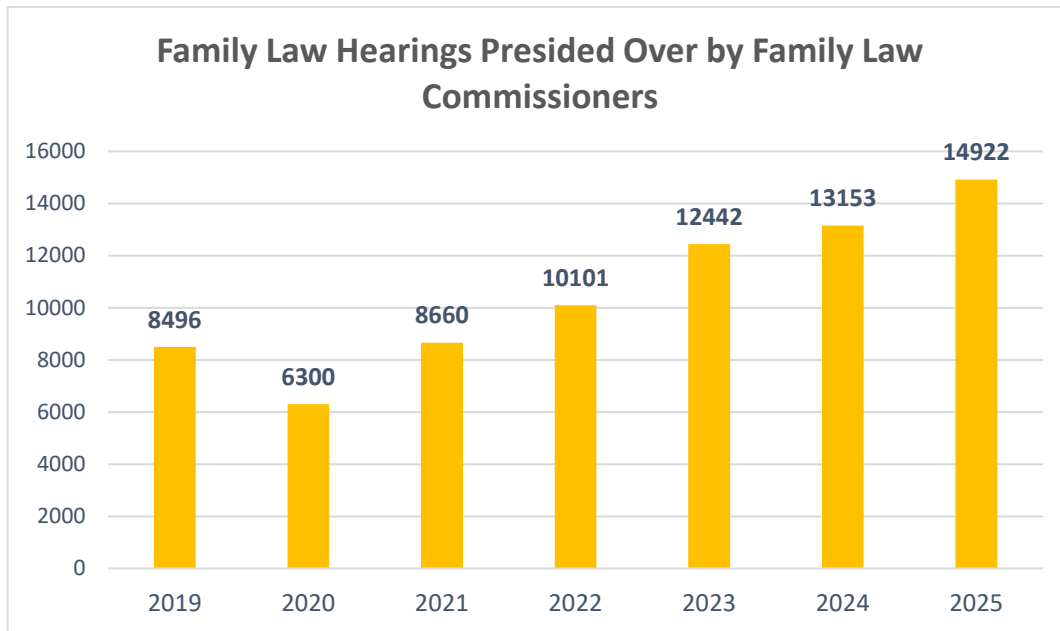


4. This chart represents CPO filings, resolutions, and year-end pending cases per calendar year 2015 - 2025.

Family law hearing volume has increased sharply since 2019, and commissioners have absorbed the majority of this growth. In 2019, commissioners handled 8,496 hearings, representing 66% of all UFC hearings (12,858 total). By 2025, commissioner heard hearings increased to 14,922, a 75% rise over seven years. The scale of this growth demonstrates that commissioner workload is rising significantly even as total filings decline.

- Despite a reduction in filings, the amount of work per case has increased dramatically evidenced by the continually increasing number of hearings.

Chart 5.



5. This chart represents the total numbers of hearings presided over by Family Law Commissioners per year 2019 - 2025.

- Between 2019 and 2025, the number of hearings presided over by Family Law Commissioners increased by 75% - from 8,496 to 14,922.

Order entry volume provides an additional indicator of workload, reflecting both hearings and the large number of matters resolved through in chambers review. Commissioners and judges entered 58,017 family law orders in 2019. In 2023 and 2024, total order production rose to 58,433 and 59,540, and remained high in 2025 at 58,603 orders. Although overall filings have declined by just over 25% since 2019, order volume has increased by 1%. While a 1% increase may appear minimal, it is significant when compared with the sharp reduction in filings. This shows that each case now requires more judicial time, more detailed written findings, and more complex decision-making than in prior years. Because order entry data captured by the Clerk's Office is not separated between commissioners and judges, and the Court does not currently have a mechanism to capture this data, actual commissioner workload is likely even higher than the data indicates.

Daily calendar capacity limits, necessary to control volume and daily workload of commissioners and staff, further constrain the system and amplify workload pressure. Each of the eight commissioner calendars utilizes a formula that considers volume and complexity of hearing types to set calendars. There is a constant struggle to balance the short or limited matters, the emergent and critical matters, and the more complex and time-consuming matters. This restricts access and creates undesirable delays for both represented and self-represented litigants and is a direct reflection of sustained intensity of commissioner calendars.

These limitations translate into real world delays for families seeking court intervention. Current lead time for scheduling of Family Law Motions at each of the three Superior Court locations ranges from two weeks to over two months depending on the motion type and complexity. These delays are not driven by increased filings, but by substantial increases in hearings per case, the volume of self-represented litigants, and the limits of existing commissioner capacity.

Taken together, reductions in filings, dramatic increases in hearings, persistently high order entry volume, strict calendar capacity constraints, and extended hearing scheduling delays show a consistent trend: family law commissioner workload has grown significantly faster than filings and faster than overall judicial capacity. Commissioners are absorbing the bulk of increased demand across the UFC, and current staffing levels are likely insufficient to meet the pace, intensity, and complexity of modern family law motion practice.

Evidence Review and Hearing Preparation Workload

A substantial portion of commissioner workload occurs off the bench, before hearings begin. Family law and civil protection order matters require review of increasingly complex and varied materials, including police reports, medical and behavioral health records, financial disclosures, emails, text messages, photographs, audio files, and videos. Audio and video submissions must include transcripts or timestamped summaries, but commissioners often must review the original recording when accuracy or context is disputed.

- The number of court orders issued has increased during the period of reduced filings further demonstrating the increase in judicial time per case.

- Increased hearings per case, high levels of self-represented litigants, and limited commissioner capacity are the primary drivers of delays.

- Commissioners spend extensive off-bench time reviewing complex, uncapped evidence submissions across family law and CPO matters, adding substantial workload beyond courtroom hours.

Page limits do little to contain the overall volume of materials. Local Family Law Rule (LFLR) 6 caps declarations but places no limits on exhibits, financial records under LFLR 10, or reports from CASA, Family Court Services, or expert evaluators. Civil Protection Order cases are even less constrained. RCW 7.105 allows petitioners to file statements *of any length*, and attachments such as professional reports or correspondence are rarely limited. Even when parties prepare required summaries of lengthy text messages or photos, commissioners may need to review the full underlying materials to make complete and legally sufficient findings.

High rates of self-represented litigants further increase preparation time. Without counsel to organize or narrow the record, commissioners often undertake this work themselves, sometimes multiple times if hearings are continued. Although family law motion hearings typically allow only five minutes of argument per side, the preparation required to evaluate evidence, ensure compliance with submission rules, and manage incomplete or improper filings far exceeds the time spent in the courtroom.

Taken together, evidence review and hearing preparation represent one of the most time intensive aspects of a commissioner's role. The growing volume, diversity, and complexity of materials, especially in matters involving self-represented litigants, substantially increases off bench workload and is not captured by hearing time measures alone.

Judicial Resources Needed

If Family Court Operations (FCO) were to maintain the level of judicial capacity it had relative to the workload in 2019 when each family law commissioner handled approximately 1,416 hearings per year, two additional commissioners would have been necessary in 2025. 2026 is currently on pace to match 2025 numbers. Thus, the current information and trends support increasing commissioner capacity.

Across both family law motions and civil protection orders, workload growth continues to outpace available judicial resources. Even after increasing the commissioner bench from six to eight, the volume of hearings, written orders, statutory obligations, and support needs for self-represented litigants exceeds current capacity. Motion hearings that previously occurred within two to three weeks are now routinely scheduled two to three months out, with longer delays for self-represented litigants. Increasing case complexity, expanded in chambers review, and higher civil protection order volume following the implementation of RCW 7.105 contribute to these extended wait times.

Since 2019, commissioner hearing volume has increased seventy five percent in family law matters and one hundred seventy six percent in civil protection order matters. Under these conditions, timely access to justice is difficult to sustain without both strengthened internal operations and a clear understanding of the judicial resources required to meet current and future workload.

- Judicial demand has grown far faster than judicial capacity.
- Future staffing decisions need to be guided by a thorough internal analysis of operations to determine the most effective combination of judicial resources and process improvements.
- FCO will evaluate targeted options such as an additional commissioner, expanded pro tem coverage, and stronger coordinator support.

While initial workload comparisons and the information in this report suggest additional judicial resources are needed, FCO recognizes its obligation to inform staffing decisions based on internal analysis. The Court is still assessing available data and, even without a data analyst, synthesizing this information. A closer examination of commissioner responsibilities, hearing types, scheduling practices, caseload patterns, and points of congestion will help clarify where process improvements can relieve pressure and where additional staffing may be the most effective solution. Further, the Court added an additional motions calendar staffed by judges pulled off their trial calendars on a rotational basis, and the Court is assessing the impact of this change. The outcome of that assessment will provide further guidance.

Thus, several judicial resource strategies may merit future evaluation as part of this broader assessment. These include adding a full-time family law commissioner to stabilize daily calendar availability, expanding access to pro tem commissioners during backlogs or high-volume periods, and strengthening coordinator support to reinforce calendar management and internal practice improvements.

Through this balanced approach, integrating comprehensive internal analysis with careful exploration of judicial resource options, FCO aims to develop a data informed plan that supports timely and equitable access to justice for families and survivors. Such a plan may be introduced for development of the 2028-2029 biennium budget. Given the current fiscal environment and updated budget forecasts, the Court is choosing a deliberate path of due diligence, looking for internal efficiencies and improvements which will focus the analysis and more carefully define a future ask for support in the way of judicial officers, staff, or both.

VI. Conclusion/Next Steps

This review makes clear that King County Superior Court's Unified Family Court, and particularly the Family Law Commissioners, are operating under unprecedented pressure. The surge in civil protection order filings, the substantial increase in family law and CPO hearings, the high rate of self-represented litigants, and expanded obligations under RCW 7.105 have created a significant structural gap between judicial demand and current capacity. Although filings in some areas have declined, the intensity, complexity, and volume of judicial work required per case have risen sharply, in addition to the average number of motions per filed case. Families who once received motion hearings within two to three weeks now routinely wait months for relief. These findings underscore the need for both strengthened internal operations and strategic investments in judicial resources to restore timely access to justice.

Family Court Operations recognizes that sustainable improvement will require combining meaningful internal practice changes that increase efficiency and predictability, paired with carefully targeted expansion of judicial capacity. Neither strategy alone can fully address the challenges facing the Unified Family Court.

In the coming months, FCO will continue implementing internal reforms aimed at reducing calendar congestion, improving caseload, and strengthening scheduling accuracy. These efforts include restoring consistent litigant compliance with court rules, conducting weekly reservation audits, and refining calendar management practices. FCO will expand tools and supports for self-represented litigants, strengthen early intervention pathways, reduce unnecessary continuances, and pursue modernization of technology infrastructure to reduce duplicative

manual work and enhance real-time visibility into scheduling, caseflow, and workload trends. In addition, FCO will evaluate the calendar cap formula to ensure hearing types are accurately calibrated for the time and complexity they require, improving flexibility and scheduling efficiency.

FCO is also committed to examining broader caseflow management strategies, including case assignment calendaring models and differentiated case management approaches that may shorten time to resolution and better allocate resources. These reviews will be data driven to the best of our capability and paired with ongoing evaluation of performance indicators to ensure operational changes produce measurable improvements. As part of this sustained commitment, FCO will continue evaluating the impacts of remote and in person hearings, the role of early intervention, and the operational challenges introduced by RCW 7.105 and pandemic era shifts.

At the same time, increases in judicial staffing remain an important component of long-term system stability. Additional judicial resources can reinforce internal improvements, reduce bottlenecks, and increase the court's overall ability to manage the intensity and complexity of current caseloads. King County Superior Court will continue to work with the King County Executive and the King County Council to evaluate staffing options that align with workload trends and support timely, equitable service for King County families. Given the complex budget environment where forecasts indicate limited future resources, the Court is taking a measured approach to bolster internal efficiency, improve case processing, and gather additional data to better define and support the future resource request.

Through this balanced approach, advancing internal operational improvements while assessing opportunities to expand judicial capacity, the Unified Family Court aims to rebuild a system that is responsive, accessible, and capable of meeting the needs of King County families.

The work reflected in this report was made possible through extensive collaboration among judicial officers, Family Court Operations staff, administrative teams, and county partners, including the King County Bar Association. Their insights provide the foundation for informed decision making. As for next steps, the Court will continue refining internal practices, monitor workload trends, and coordinate with the Executive and Council on future resource planning to support timely, effective, and equitable access to justice.

Ultimately, ensuring timely access to justice in family law matters is a core public responsibility. By coupling strategic internal reforms with thoughtful investment in judicial resources, the Unified Family Court can fulfill that responsibility and uphold the County's commitment to meaningful access to justice for years to come.



Metropolitan King County Council Staff Report

Committee:	Law and Justice		
Agenda Item:	7	Analyst:	Nick Bowman
Proposed No.:	2026-0232	Meeting Date:	October 7, 2026

OVERVIEW

TOPIC: Proposed Motion 2026-0232 would confirm the Executive’s appointment of Chris Smith, who resides in Council District 4, to the Community Advisory Committee for Law Enforcement Oversight, as an at-large representative for a term to expire on March 31, 2029.

BACKGROUND

Purpose. The Community Advisory Committee for Law Enforcement Oversight (CACLEO) supports the activities of the County’s Office of Law Enforcement Oversight (OLEO), which is responsible for civilian oversight of the King County Sheriff’s Office (KCSO). CACLEO’s duties include serving as liaison between OLEO and the communities it serves, advising OLEO on law enforcement training policies and procedures, and advising KCSO and the County Council on matters of equity and social justice related to law enforcement, as well as, on problems and opportunities for improvement in KCSO practices.¹

Membership. CACLEO is an eleven-member body who represent the diversity of the sheriff's service area including members who live in cities that contract with the sheriff for law enforcement services; members who live in unincorporated King County; and members who are selected at-large.²

APPOINTEE INFORMATION

Chris Smith is a resident of Seattle, who according to their application materials, is passionate about reform and has worked with numerous community-based organizations including the NW Community Bail Fund, Ostara Collective Initiative, and Pro Choice Washington among others.

¹ KCC 2.36.050.D

² KCC 2.36.050.B

ANALYSIS

Staff has not identified any issues with the proposed appointment. It appears to be consistent with the requirements of Ordinance 18786.

INVITED

- Chris Smith, Appointee to the Community Advisory Committee for Law Enforcement Oversight.
- Jamie Tugenberg, Staff Liaison to the King County Community Advisory Committee for Law Enforcement Oversight

ATTACHMENTS

1. Proposed Motion 2026-0232
2. Transmittal Letter
3. Board Profile



KING COUNTY
Signature Report

ATTACHMENT 1
1200 King County Courthouse
516 Third Avenue
Seattle, WA 98104

Motion

Proposed No. 2026-0232.1

Sponsors Barón

- 1 A MOTION confirming the executive's appointment of
2 Chris Smith, who resides in council district four, to the
3 King County community advisory committee for law
4 enforcement oversight, as an at-large representative.
5 BE IT MOVED by the Council of King County:
6 The county executive's appointment of Chris Smith, who resides in council
7 district four, to the King County community advisory committee for law enforcement

- 8 oversight, as an at-large representative, for the remainder of a three-year term to expire
9 on March 31, 2029, is hereby confirmed.

KING COUNTY COUNCIL
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Sarah Perry, Chair

ATTEST:

Melani Pedroza, Clerk of the Council

APPROVED this ____ day of _____, ____.

Girmay Zahilay, County Executive

Attachments: None



King County | Office of the Executive

Executive Girmay Zahilay

Chinook Building, CNK-EX-0800
401 Fifth Avenue, Suite 800
Seattle, WA 98104-2391

August 18, 2026

The Honorable Sarah Perry
Chair, King County Council
Room 1200
C O U R T H O U S E

Dear Councilmember Perry:

This letter transmits a proposed Motion that would, if approved, confirm the appointment of Chris Smith, who resides in Council District four, to the King County Community Advisory Committee for Law Enforcement Oversight, as an at-large representative, for the remainder of a three-year term expiring March 31, 2029.

Chris's application, financial disclosure, board profile, and appointment letter are enclosed to serve as supporting and background information to assist the Council in considering confirmation.

Thank you for your consideration of the proposed legislation. If your staff have any questions about this appointment, please contact Rosa Mai, Community Service, Boards & Commissions Specialist, at 206-369-9279.

Sincerely,

Girmay Zahilay
King County Executive

The Honorable Sarah Perry

August 18, 2026

Page 2

Enclosures:

cc: King County Councilmembers

ATTN: Stephanie Cirkovich, Chief of Staff, King County Council

Melani Hay, Clerk of the Council

Karan Gill, Deputy Executive, Office of the Executive

Jasmin Weaver, Chief of Staff, Office of the Executive

Hyeok Kim, Chief Operating Officer, Office of the Executive

Sierra Howlett Browne, Director of Government Relations, Office of the Executive

Garrett Holbrook, Council Relations Manager, Office of the Executive

Rosa Mai, Community Service, Boards & Commissions Specialist, Office of the Executive

Jamie Tugenberg, Staff Liaison to the Community Advisory Committee for Law

Enforcement Oversight

Chris Smith

CACLEO BOARD PROFILE

Term Length: 3-years

Total Number of Members – 11 (3 King County Sheriff Contract Cities representatives; 3 Unincorporated King County representatives and 4 at-large representatives.)

*(Expired terms are in **BOLD** print.)*

Pos. No.	Name	KCC District	Representing	Date Appointed	Term Expires	Number of Appointed Terms
1	VACANT		As a representative from King County Sheriff contract cities		3/31/28	
2	VACANT		As a representative from King County Sheriff contract cities		3/31/29	
3	Jonathan Deex	9	As a representative from King County Sheriff contract cities	6/6/25	3/31/27	Partial
4	VACANT Chris Smith Pending appointment	4	As an at-large representative		3/31/29	
5	VACANT Shamelle Richards Pending appointment	2	Representing unincorporated King County		3/31/27	
6	Daniel Martin	8	As a representative from King County Sheriff contract cities	8/12/25	3/31/28	1
7	Heidi Jackson	8	Representing unincorporated King County	10/9/2025	3/31/28	Partial
8	VACANT Samuel Hawkins Pending appointment	5	As an at-large representative		3/31/28	
9	VACANT Kyle Jones	2	As an at-large representative		3/31/28	

	Pending appointment					
10	VACANT		As an at-large representative		3/31/29	
11	VACANT Daniel Santon	7	As an at-large representative		3/31/27	



Metropolitan King County Council Staff Report

Committee:	Law and Justice		
Agenda Item:	8	Analyst:	Brandi Paribello
Proposed No.:	2026-0264	Meeting Date:	October 7, 2026

OVERVIEW

TOPIC: A motion acknowledging receipt of a Victim Support Services Improvement Plan (the Plan) as required by the 2026-2027 Biennial Budget Ordinance.

LEGISLATION SUMMARY

Proposed Motion 2026-0264 would acknowledge receipt of the motion and the Plan required by Ordinance 20023, Section 17, Proviso P7. Approval of the proposed motion would release \$250,000 to the Office of the County Executive.

KEY ISSUES FROM THE ANALYSIS

- A. **Proviso Response.** The Plan appears to satisfy the proviso requirements, although it was transmitted late. It is a policy choice for the Council whether the information provided in the proviso response and summarized in this staff report is sufficient to meet the intent of the proviso.

BACKGROUND & TIMING CONSIDERATIONS

Background. King County, via the Office of Prosecuting Attorney, offers support to victims of crime who are navigating through the criminal justice process. The County provides System Advocate and Community Advocate resources.

A crime victim may interact with a System-based Advocate when engaging with a government or law enforcement agency; crime victims do not need to engage with such an agency in order to interact with a Community Advocate. The County connects crime victims to advocacy and support services in the following areas:

- Gender Based Violence
 - Domestic Violence Advocacy Team
 - King County Sexual Assault Services
 - Children's Justice Center for King County
- Homicide and Violent Crime
- Vulnerable Population Advocacy
- Mental Health and Veterans Court Advocacy

- Forensic Mental Health and Competency Advocacy
- Post Sentencing and Sentence Review Advocacy
- Involuntary Treatment Court Family Liaison
- Juvenile Court Victim Advocacy
- Protection Order Advocacy

Proviso language. The 2026-2027 Biennial Budget included a proviso (Ordinance 20023, Section 17, Proviso P7) that withheld \$250,000 from the Office of Performance, Strategy, and Budget¹ budget:

“Of this appropriation, \$250,000 shall not be expended or encumbered until the executive transmits a victim support service improvement plan and a motion that should acknowledge receipt of the plan, and a motion acknowledging receipt of the plan is passed by the council. The motion should reference the subject matter, the proviso's ordinance, ordinance section, and proviso number in both the title and body of the motion.

A. The plan shall include, but not be limited to:

1. An inventory of services provided and funded by King County agencies that are available to survivors of violence and victims of crime and their families, as well as an inventory of such services provided by contracted services providers;

2. Evaluation of best practices, current gaps in the system, and the most prevalent needs of survivors, victims, and their families; and

3. A plan to expand and improve services for victims of crime and survivors of violence and their families, including the people themselves or family members of people who have been harmed in interactions with law enforcement.

B. The plan should be developed in collaboration with community service providers, those who have or may use such services, and collaboration across criminal legal system agencies.

The executive should electronically file the plan and a motion required by this proviso by June 30, 2026, with the clerk of the council, who shall retain an electronic copy and provide an electronic copy to all councilmembers, the

¹ The Office of Performance, Strategy, and Budget was absorbed into the Office of the County Executive appropriation unit ([Ordinance 20086](#)) after Executive Girmay Zahilay's reorganization of administrative offices and Executive departments ([Ordinance 20082](#)).

council chief of staff, and the lead staff for the law and justice committee or its successor.”

Timing Considerations. There are no timing considerations.

ANALYSIS

Key Issue A. Proviso Response. Proposed Motion 2026-0246 was transmitted on August 31, 2026. This is after the June 30, 2026, deadline indicated in Ordinance 20023, Section 17, Proviso P7, which requests information on the services provided or funded by King County for crime victims and their families, as well as a plan to improve services based on an evaluation of best practices and system gaps.

This section of the staff report provides a summary of the required components of the proviso, which are indicated in bold.

An inventory of services provided and funded by King County agencies that are available to survivors of violence and victims of crime and their families, as well as an inventory of such services provided by contracted services providers.

The Plan states that King County provides crime victim support services in two primary ways:

- System-based victim advocates support victims and survivors of crime navigate the criminal legal process and understand their rights to information, protection, and participation under Washington State’s Crime Victims Bill of Rights (RCW 7.69.030).
- Community-based advocates support victims and survivors with services and resources to address the harm caused by crime and do not require engagement with the criminal legal system. For these services, King County contracts with various community partners.

Figure 1 provides a representative example of the summary of services found in the Plan on pages 4 and 5; significant details on these services, including funding sources, who is contracted to provide services, and how to access services, among others, can be found in Appendix A (pages 15 and 16) of the Plan.

Figure 1. Summary of Victim Support Services, pgs. 4-5

Table 1 – Summary of King County Victim & Survivor Supports & Services

Support-Type	Provider	Eligibility for Services	Services Available
System-based Victim Advocates	Prosecuting Attorney's Office	- Domestic violence survivors - Homicide & violent Crime - Child abuse - Vulnerable populations (elder abuse, hate crimes, trafficking) - Alternative courts & specialized advocacy (mental health, competency, post-sentencing & sentencing review, Juvenile Court)	- Crisis intervention and emotional support - Linkages to community resources and support - Information about the criminal justice process and what to expect - Important updates on case information - Support during court hearings and trials - General information on trauma and victimization - Assistance with crime victim compensation application - Information on crime victim rights - Assistance with safety planning - Assistance with victim impact statements - Intervention with landlords, creditors, and employers on behalf of the victim - Assistance with civil protection orders
System & Community-based Response	King County Sexual Assault Resource Center	Children, teens and adults who have experienced sexual assault	- All felony level victim advocacy for King County's Sexual Assault Unit 24-hour resource line - Legal & general advocacy services - Therapy services - Prevention education & outreach
Civil Legal Support – "Project Safety"	Prosecuting Attorney's Office & Community Partners	Individuals who have civil legal needs as a result of victimization	Legal Support and referral for civil legal issues, including family, housing, employment, immigration, consumer laws, protection orders, and access to public benefits, healthcare & education.

Evaluation of best practices, current gaps in the system, and the most prevalent needs of survivors, victims, and their families.

Best Practices. The Plan summarizes the best practices for systems-based and community-based services separately to delineate between the statutory rights afforded to victims in criminal legal proceedings. The Plan concludes that best practices for both systems-based and community-based advocacy "is a victim-centered approach to services that are readily accessible and appropriate to meet the needs of crime victims, survivors and their families."

A more detailed list of best practices for systems-based services can be found on page 6 and a detailed list of best practices for community-based services can be found on pages 6 through 7. Figure 2 provides a representative example of the detailed lists.

Figure 2. Detailed lists of Best Practices, pgs. 6-7

Best practices in meeting the goals of system-based advocacy to ensure that victims and survivors' interests are represented and upheld in the justice system include:⁴

- Inform victims as early as possible in the case process about the role of system-based advocates. Inform victims about privacy and confidentiality limits and supports in criminal proceedings.
- Assist victims in understanding the criminal legal process and the continuum of justice options.
- Provide support and advocacy throughout all criminal legal proceedings.
- Implement protocols addressing the cross-jurisdictional issues impacting the services and supports available to victims during criminal proceedings.
- Establish policies and protocols to partner with other crime victim and support service providers to connect victims with ongoing support services from community-based service providers, including referral policies as needed.
- Establish an end-of-case process that provides information to victims and survivors about post-conviction processes, their rights and available resources
- Provide assistance in accessing financial resources. In Washington State, the Crime Victim's Compensation Fund provides financial assistance for victims of violent crimes.
- Establish culturally and linguistically specific programs and resources to ensure access to services for victims and their families.

Gaps in the System and Most Prevalent Needs. The Plan provides an assessment of current gaps in the system and states it is “derived from discussions with system-based and community-based advocates, King County staff from the Regional Office of Gun Violence Prevention, the Department of Community and Human Services, and Prosecuting Attorney’s Office, community partners and contractors, and victim services organizations.”

Additionally, the Plan states it uses information from “reports from the June 2025 Victim Support Summit and recommendations from the Victim Justice Coalition, and an October 2024 presentation to the King County Council from the King County Women’s Advisory Council (Appendices B and C to the Plan).” The Plan lists gap in the system and most prevalent needs in the below categories. Details for each of these categories can be found on pages 7 through 10 of the Plan.

- Sufficient and Sustained Funding Resources to Support Crime Victims and Survivors.
- Services and Supports for Victims and Survivors of all Crimes.
- Sufficient Wrap-Around Supports and Flexible Financial Assistance.
- Coordination Across System Partners, Service Providers, and Jurisdictions.

- Mobile Advocacy and Early Intervention.
- Comprehensive Referral Services and Follow-Up.
- Cultural and Linguistic Competency.

A plan to expand and improve services for victims of crime and survivors of violence and their families, including the people themselves or family members of people who have been harmed in interactions with law enforcement.

The Plan provides recommendations “to improve services for victims and survivors of violence and address the most prevalent needs identified by victim service advocates and organizations.” The Plan lists recommendations in the categories below. Details for each of these categories can be found on pages 10 and 11 of the Plan.

- Improve multi-agency coordination and collaboration.
- Convene a working group of system-based partners, including criminal justice, social services, health providers and community-based organizations to develop strategies to improve coordination and access to victims and survivors of all crimes and their families.
- Develop a comprehensive guide of services and resources available to all crime victims and survivors, including those provided by other jurisdictions within King County.
- Increase flexible financial assistance funding.
- Advocate for increased and sustained state funding to maintain victim services.
- Integrate data and continuous improvement. Use outcome data to refine service delivery and scope and guide strategic planning. Data should include client satisfaction and areas of unmet need.

Conclusion. The Plan appears to be responsive to the proviso requirements.

INVITED

- Aaron Rubardt, Budget Director, Office of the Executive

ATTACHMENTS

1. Proposed Motion 2026-0246 (and its attachment)
2. Transmittal Letter



KING COUNTY
Signature Report

ATTACHMENT 1
1200 King County Courthouse
516 Third Avenue
Seattle, WA 98104

Motion

Proposed No. 2026-0246.1

Sponsors Lewis

1 A MOTION acknowledging receipt of the Victim Support
2 Service Improvement Plan required by the 2026-2027
3 Biennial Budget Ordinance, Ordinance 20023, Section 17,
4 Proviso P7.

5 WHEREAS, the 2026-2027 Biennial Budget Ordinance, Ordinance 20023,
6 Section 17, Proviso P7, requires the executive to transmit a Victim Support Service
7 Improvement Plan, and

8 WHEREAS, Ordinance 20023, Section 17, Proviso P7, further requires the
9 executive to submit a motion that acknowledges receipt of the Victim Support Service
10 Improvement Plan;

11 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT MOVED by the Council of King County:

12 The receipt of the Victim Support Service Improvement Plan, which is

- 13 Attachment A to this motion, in compliance with Ordinance 20023, Section 17, Proviso
14 P7, is hereby acknowledged.

KING COUNTY COUNCIL
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Sarah Perry, Chair

ATTEST:

Melani Pedroza, Clerk of the Council

APPROVED this ____ day of _____, ____.

Girmay Zahilay, County Executive

Attachments: A. Victim Support Service Improvement Plan

Victim Support Service Improvement Plan

June 30, 2026



King County

Summary

King County Ordinance 20023 requests information on the services provided or funded by King County for crime victims and their families, as well as a plan to improve services based on an evaluation of best practices and system gaps.

In June 2025, King County co-convened a Crime Victims and Survivors Summit to elevate the voices of those who have experienced crime and hear how the County can better support crime victims and their families.¹ The gathering brought together survivors, family members, advocates, community leaders and policy makers to discuss what is working, where gaps remain, and where meaningful improvements are needed. Participants described significant challenges navigating court processes, limited access to trauma-informed therapy, fragmented and inconsistent advocacy services, and a lack of sustained support beyond the life of a criminal case. Survivors also reported difficulty accessing services due to the limited availability of resources and the siloed nature of existing support systems. A second Summit held in January 2026 focused on issues facing survivors of Commercial Sexual Exploitation.

Following these convenings, the Executive and Council recognized the need for better support for crime victims, survivors and their families. This proviso response provides an overview of the work King County currently offers, areas of service gaps and recommendations for improving services. The Executive Office collaborated with the King County Prosecuting Attorney's Office (PAO), Seattle/King County Department of Public Health (DPH), and the Department of Community and Human Services (DCHS) in developing the report. Best practices information was gathered from advocates and practitioners in the field of victim services, organizations supporting victims and survivors, and a review of available literature

King County's services for crime victims and survivors are offered through several avenues, including system-based crime victim advocacy, restorative justice and diversion services, gun violence prevention and response, and community-based services and supports. These services are administered by the King County Prosecuting Attorney's Office (PAO), Seattle/King County Department of Public Health (DPH), and the Department of Community and Human Services (DCHS).

From the analysis of best practice and discussions with advocates and providers, the major service gaps include the following:

- The lack of support services that are available to victims and survivors of all crimes, with few community resources available for victims and survivors of non-gender based violent crimes, such as unsolved homicides and assaults.
- The absence of a coordinated intake and referral process to minimize the challenge victims and survivors face when seeking services across a fragmented system of service providers and jurisdictions, particularly for individuals with access needs including culturally and linguistically appropriate services.
- Insufficient funding for service providers to address immediate and long-term care needs, including wrap around services that include mental health care, flexible financial support and navigation.

Recommendations include service mapping across other providers and jurisdictions to identify opportunities for more comprehensive services that can meet the needs of victims, families and

survivors; improvements to coordination and referral processes to minimize the need for victims to self-navigate a complex service environment; expansion of supports available to victims and survivors of non-gender based violent crimes; and system evaluation that prioritizes the experience of victims and survivors.

Report Requirements

This section is organized to respond to each of the requirements included in Ordinance 20023, Section 17, Proviso P7, which requests:

- 1. An inventory of services provided and funded by King County agencies that are available to survivors of violence and victims of crime and their families, as well as an inventory of such services provided by contracted services providers;*
- 2. Evaluation of best practices, current gaps in the system, and the most prevalent needs of survivors, victims, and their families; and*
- 3. A plan to expand and improve services for victims of crime and survivors of violence and their families, including the people themselves or family members of people who have been harmed in interactions with law enforcement.*

Inventory of services Crime victim support services include programs and funding that are designed to advocate for and help individuals and families harmed by crime address immediate and longer-term needs, support physical and emotional recovery, and be supported through criminal legal proceedings. King County provides crime victim support services in two primary ways:

- System-based victim advocates support victims/survivors of crime navigate the criminal legal process and understand their rights to information, protection, and participation under Washington State’s Crime Victims Bill of Rights (RCW 7.69.030). Crime Victim Advocates may also help victims and survivors apply for Washington State’s Crime Victim’s Compensation Fund and refer them to community-based resources and support.

System-based advocacy is provided by the Prosecuting Attorney’s Office of Victim Services (“Victim Advocates”) who are trained to support victims of domestic violence, homicide and violent crime, and crimes against vulnerable populations (hate crimes, elder abuse and trafficking). For survivors of sexual assault, advocacy services are provided by the King County Sexual Assault Resource Center (KCSARC). For crimes occurring in the City of Seattle, the city’s Crime Survivor Services provides advocacy assistance and connection to resources. Restitution is also available for crime victims who participate in diversion programs or whose cases are adjudicated in Adult Drug Court.

- Community-based advocates support victims/survivors with services and resources to address the harms caused by crime and do not require engagement with the criminal legal system. King County contracts with a number of community partners that offer a range of services and supports for victims and survivors of domestic violence and gender-based violence. Through funding provided by the Veterans, Seniors, and Human Services Levy (VSHSL) and the Community Services Operating (CSO) appropriation unit, the King County Department of Community and Human Services (DCHS) Adult Services Division (ASD) provides direct and contracted services that support individuals, families, and

communities impacted by violence and victimization. In addition, King County offers restitution for victims in its youth and community diversion programs and victim support in several of its behavioral health programs. King County also provides hospital-based services for victims of gun violence and their families, including flexible financial support, through the Regional Office of Gun Violence Prevention (ROGVP).

The following table summarizes the services available to victims and survivors of crime (a detailed inventory is provided in Attachment A).

Table 1 – Summary of King County Victim & Survivor Supports & Services

Support-Type	Provider	Eligibility for Services	Services Available
System-based Victim Advocates	Prosecuting Attorney's Office	• Domestic violence survivors • Homicide & violent Crime • Child abuse • Vulnerable populations (elder abuse, hate crimes, trafficking) • Alternative courts & specialized advocacy (mental health, competency, post-sentencing & sentencing review, Juvenile Court)	• Crisis intervention and emotional support • Linkages to community resources and support • Information about the criminal justice process and what to expect • Important updates on case information • Support during court hearings and trials • General information on trauma and victimization • Assistance with crime victim compensation application • Information on crime victim rights • Assistance with safety planning • Assistance with victim impact statements • Intervention with landlords, creditors, and employers on behalf of the victim • Assistance with civil protection orders
System & Community-based Response	King County Sexual Assault Resource Center	Children, teens and adults who have experienced sexual assault	• All felony level victim advocacy for King County's Sexual Assault Unit • 24-hour resource line • Legal & general advocacy services • Therapy services • Prevention education & outreach
Civil Legal Support – "Project Safety"	Prosecuting Attorney's Office & Community Partners	Individuals who have civil legal needs as a result of victimization	Legal Support and referral for civil legal issues, including family, housing, employment, immigration, consumer laws, protection orders, and access to public benefits, healthcare & education.

Support-Type	Provider	Eligibility for Services	Services Available
Gun Violence Prevention	Department of Public Health, Regional Office of Gun Violence Prevention, Harborview Medical Center & Contracted Providers	Victims of firearm injury and those at risk of gun violence	Hospital-based services: • Immediate basic needs assistance for patients and families • Referral to community partners for eligible individuals to ensure continuity from hospital to community services • Bereavement and trauma support including counseling referrals and coordination with victim assistance for funeral cost support Community-based services: • Safety planning • Rapid response & intervention • Safe passage
Community-based victim & survivor services	Department of Community and Human Services & Contracted Providers	Victims/survivors of gender-based violence, domestic violence, human trafficking and exploitation	• 24-hour multi-lingual domestic violence hotline • Mobile-advocacy services • Trauma-informed therapy • Violence prevention & education • Flexible Financial Assistance • Advocacy and systems navigation
Diversion & restorative intervention	Prosecuting Attorney's Office & Community Partners	Victim & youth accused of harm and their family members	• Restitution • Advocacy for victims seeking accountability and solutions from the accused

1. Evaluation of best practices, current gaps in the system, and the most prevalent needs of survivors, victims, and their families

a. Evaluation of best practices

This section summarizes the best practices for systems-based and community-based services separately to delineate between the statutory rights afforded to victims in criminal legal proceedings. However, there is overlap between the service needs for victims, survivors and their families for wrap-around support, restitution and recovery. Across all best practices for both systems-based and community-based advocacy is a victim-centered approach to services that are readily accessible and appropriate to meet the needs of crime victims, survivors and their families. The Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) at the U.S. Department of Justice is the leading federal agency on the policies and practice to advance justice and healing for all victims of crime and defines a victim-centered approach as:

Placing the crime victim's priorities, needs, and interests at the center of the work with the victim; providing nonjudgmental assistance, with an emphasis on client self-determination,

where appropriate, and assisting victims in making informed choices; ensuring that restoring victims' feelings of safety and security are a priority and safeguarding against policies and practices that may inadvertently re-traumatize victims; ensuring that victims' rights, voices, and perspectives are incorporated when developing and implementing system- and community-based efforts that impact crime victims.²

System-based advocacy

The goal of system-based advocacy is to ensure that the victim and survivor's interests are represented and their rights are upheld within the criminal justice system. In Washington State, victims rights are governed by [RCW 7.69.030](#), which includes the right to information about these protections, notification of the disposition of their criminal case, protection from harm and threats, attend criminal proceedings, submit a victims impact statement, and seek an order of restitution.³

Best practices in meeting the goals of system-based advocacy to ensure that victims and survivors' interests are represented and upheld in the justice system include:⁴

- Inform victims as early as possible in the case process about the role of system-based advocates. Inform victims about privacy and confidentiality limits and supports in criminal proceedings.
- Assist victims in understanding the criminal legal process and the continuum of justice options.
- Provide support and advocacy throughout all criminal legal proceedings.
- Implement protocols addressing the cross-jurisdictional issues impacting the services and supports available to victims during criminal proceedings.
- Establish policies and protocols to partner with other crime victim and support service providers to connect victims with ongoing support services from community-based service providers, including referral policies as needed.
- Establish an end-of-case process that provides information to victims and survivors about post-conviction processes, their rights and available resources
- Provide assistance in accessing financial resources. In Washington State, the Crime Victim's Compensation Fund provides financial assistance for victims of violent crimes.
- Establish culturally and linguistically specific programs and resources to ensure access to services for victims and their families.

Community-based advocacy

Community-based victim assistance providers work to respond to the mental, physical, financial, social, emotional, and spiritual needs of crime victims and survivors. They may also offer intervention, risk reduction, and prevention services to victims, survivors of crime and their families. Robust, survivor-centered, trauma-informed advocacy is central to the best practices of services that are available to crime victims and survivors. Services must also be responsive, accessible, culturally and linguistically appropriate, with victim support offered as soon as possible after the harm occurred. Best practices include:

- **Crisis Response** - Victim-centered services assess immediate needs for safety and security. Services should be directed toward calming a situation, establishing physical and emotional safety, and, when appropriate, reinforcing the victim's ability to make choices regarding possible courses of action. Crisis support should be available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

- **Mobile Advocacy** - Mobile advocacy is an evidence-based strategy⁵ for supporting survivors of domestic and sexual violence. Mobile advocacy is survivor-driven, trauma-informed advocacy where survivors identify and define their objectives for regaining control of their lives. Mobile advocates meet survivors in locations of their choice and may accompany survivors to appointments. Mobile advocacy is not considered a crisis response but a mid- to long-term support designed to follow survivors across a wide range of needs.

- **Flexible Financial Assistance** - Flexible financial assistance refers to short-term funds used to address key basic needs and financial barriers faced by survivors receiving advocacy services. Examples include, but are not limited to:⁶
 - housing assistance (hotel/motel emergency stays, rental applications, rental assistance, rental deposit, utilities set-up fees or costs)
 - transportation (taxi, bus pass, fuel, car repairs)
 - childcare (co-pays, child care expenses)
 - employment (education, professional certification and training programs)
 - medical fees (clinical and therapeutic services)
 - legal fees (court fees)
 - financial literacy
 - relocation assistance
 - food
 - clothing
 - other needs identified as interfering with survivors' ability to create safe, healthy, and stable lives.

- **Culturally Proficient and Accessible Services for All Victims and Survivors** - A victim centered approach to services is welcoming, culturally inclusive, physically accessible, and appropriate to all victims seeking assistance. ⁷This includes victims/survivors who are racial or ethnic minorities, individuals with limited English proficiency, immigrants or refugees, LGBTQIA+ individuals, individuals who are experiencing homelessness, individuals with disabilities or specific access needs, individuals with mental illness or substance use disorders, victims/survivors of human trafficking, and other identities. The desired result is for victims and survivors to be welcomed, safe, and supported when accessing services and see reflections of their culture and experience in the organization.⁸

System Best Practices

Best practices also address how responsive and comprehensive the system can be in delivering services to victims and survivors of crime.⁹ Some key elements include:

- Collaboration and communication between agencies, organizations, groups, and systems that serve victims and survivors in order to develop a comprehensive and seamless response to victim/survivor needs.
- Effective policies and protocols to connect the work between system partners and victim service programs on behalf of victims, ensuring clear definition of roles and responsibilities for all partners and referral processes.

- Cooperative working relationships with and/or between criminal justice partners, including law enforcement.
- Multi-disciplinary training to ensure that all partners are knowledgeable of victim's interests.
- Comprehensive inventory of community resources that provide victim-centered services.
- Support of culturally specific programs and resources to ensure access for victims.
- Collaboration to advance new ways of integrating and delivering victim-centered services and leveraging other community resources.

An illustration of these principles at work was a U.S. Department of Justice, Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) demonstration project designed to create a comprehensive, coordinated, and seamless system for delivering victim services through collaboration across sectors.¹⁰ The City of Denver was selected as an urban site to develop distinct, context-specific collaboration models for Denver Victim Services (VS2000). The purpose of the demonstration project was to integrate services for victims of crime across multiple agencies, break down silos, and tailor collaboration models to local needs and conditions. Denver's approach emphasized interagency partnerships and protocols between victim service agencies, law enforcement, courts and community agencies; integrated case management to ensure continuity of care; shared data systems to improve coordination and reduce duplication; advocacy for policy change to expand access to services; and service adaptations to address political and demographic diversity. While the Denver demonstration project ended, it demonstrated that collaboration can transform victim services from a fragmented, reactive response to a seamless, victim-centered system and has informed its partnership protocols and training frameworks.

b. Current gaps in the system, and the most prevalent needs of survivors, victims and their families

This assessment of current gaps in the system is derived from discussions with system-based and community-based advocates, King County staff from the Regional Office of Gun Violence Prevention, the Department of Community and Human Services, and Prosecuting Attorney's Office, community partners and contractors, and victim services organizations. It also draws from reports from the June 2025 Victim Support Summit and recommendations from the Victim Justice Coalition, and an October 2024 presentation to the King County Council from the King County Women's Advisory Council. (Appendices B and C)

- **Sufficient and Sustained Funding Resources to Support Crime Victims and Survivors.** The Crime Victims Fund (CVF) was created by Congress in 1984 to provide Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) grants to state, territorial, and local programs that assist victims of crime. CVF funding has historically been a major sustainer of services for over six million victims of all types of crimes annually through almost 6,500 direct service organizations, such as domestic violence shelters, rape crisis centers, and child abuse treatment programs. However, with federal Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) dollars down 76% since 2018—dropping from \$74.7 million to just \$17.8 million—programs that support survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, trafficking, and other crimes have seen unsustainable reductions in victim services funding. For six consecutive years, Washington State providers have relied on temporary state funding (\$21.3 million for fiscal year 2027) to offset these federal cuts.¹¹ While this has helped keep services in place, advocates note that it

has not created the stability programs need to sustain services, retain staff, or meet growing demand across communities.

- **Services and Supports for Victims and Survivors of all Crimes.** The availability and scope of victim support services vary depending on the type of crime that caused the harm, the jurisdiction where the crime occurred, and the disposition of the relevant criminal case. King County's community-based services are primarily provided for victims and survivors of gender-based violence and human trafficking, including, but not limited to, domestic violence, sexual assault, and commercial sexual exploitation. While King County invests in other services that improve access to behavioral health, housing stability, and risk reduction, which can benefit all crime victims, there are few community-based supportive resources specifically directed to victims and survivors of non-gender based violent crimes. The King County Prosecuting Attorney's Office Victims Support Unit offers system-based advocacy to all victims in felony level criminal cases. However, outside of the support they offer through the criminal legal proceedings, they have limited ability to connect clients to other needed support services and do not have funds to offer clients flexible financial assistance. There is also a particular gap in services for survivors of unsolved violent crimes as system-based advocacy services only become available after criminal charges are filed.
- **Sufficient Wrap-Around Supports and Flexible Financial Assistance.** Victim-centered care should be driven by the needs of the victim and survivor. Based on an individual's circumstances, support needs could include immediate crisis intervention, safety planning, housing assistance, legal services, and mental health supports.
 - **Housing Resources** – Domestic Violence remains one of the leading causes of homelessness in King County.¹² Shelter availability and access enable survivors to be safe until permanent housing can be secured. However, shortages in shelter spaces, including those that are ADA accessible, gender affirming, and culturally appropriate lead to the risk of homelessness or return to the abusive environment.
 - **Flexible Financial Assistance** – Flexible financial supports are short-term funds that are available to address key basic needs and financial barriers faced by crime victims and survivors. King County provides funding for flexible financial assistance through community-based partners serving victims and survivors of gender-based crime. However, providers report that the funding is insufficient to meet the breadth of needs faced by their clients. System-based advocates do not have the ability to offer their clients any flexible financial supports to address immediate needs. A recent example described by the King County's Prosecutors Office is the lack of childcare resources for a victim who was called to testify. In this instance, office staff volunteered to care for the victim's children during the court proceedings.¹³
 - **Long-term Care** – Victims and survivors are likely to have long ranging needs to overcome the impacts of crime on their financial, health, and emotional well-being. King County funds a network of providers who support victims and survivors of gender-based violence and sexual assault that are committed to providing services for as long as needed. However, they are limited by available resources, staffing, and practitioners able to provide ongoing trauma informed, culturally, and linguistically appropriate care. As noted, King County does not fund community-based long-term care for victims and survivors of non-gender based violent crimes

or unsolved homicides. System-based advocates are only able to support victims during criminal proceedings and are limited to referring clients to community services for long-term care.

- **Coordination Across System Partners, Service Providers, and Jurisdictions** – King County supports collaboration efforts across organizations that provide services to survivors of gender-based violence, primarily through Veteran’s Seniors Human Services Levy (VSHSL) funding. DCHS’s Adult Services Division convenes community-based providers, Public Health – Seattle & King County, the King County Prosecuting Attorney’s Office, survivor advocacy organizations, violence prevention partners, and other County and regional entities to support aligned implementation and service coordination around gender-based violence response, prevention, and intervention, gun violence prevention, and elder abuse response.

One of King County’s funded partners, the Coalition for Ending Gender Based Violence provides coordination across over 40 member organizations to build capacity, connections to other systems including homelessness response and behavioral health, and advocate for public policies to improve the response to gender-based violence. In addition, there are other state-wide organizations dedicated to ending domestic violence through collaboration with its member networks and promoting prevention through education and policy change. Collaborations such as these strengthen relationships and communication across agencies, which can lead to improved access to services for victims and survivors. While King County supports other service collaborations, including gun violence incident response, prevention, and intervention, similar networks of service providers for other types of violent and unsolved crimes are unavailable. Advocates are often left to rely on their professional relationships and knowledge to connect victims and survivors with needed services.

- **Mobile Advocacy and Early Intervention** – Mobile advocacy is a victim-centered, trauma-informed response to service provision that is driven by the needs of crime survivors. King County funds several organizations to provide system navigation and mobile advocacy for victims and survivors of gender-based violence, including those who serve LGBTQIA+, BIPOC, and immigrant communities. King County also supports a 24-hour, multi-lingual, multi-modal hotline for survivors of intimate partner violence to provide immediate crisis support and triage and serve as a referral source for the County’s advocacy, health, housing, and counseling services. These services are best practices for victim-centered support yet are generally unavailable to victims and survivors of non-gender based crime.
- **Comprehensive Referral Services and Follow-Up** – Victims and survivors describe challenges in accessing services in a complex and fragmented environment. Unless guided by an advocate, they are left to navigate multiple systems and organizations to find appropriate care. These challenges are compounded for those seeking culturally and linguistically appropriate services or requiring alternative formats for accessibility. While King County has a guide for victims and survivors of domestic violence, stalking, sexual assault and human trafficking that is available in several different languages¹⁴, there is no

similar guide for other types of crime. Currently, there is no comprehensive mechanism to connect victims and survivors of all crime to relevant and culturally/linguistically appropriate services in King County.

Recently the Urban Institute evaluated VictimConnect Resource Center, the only national hotline for victims and survivors of all crime types, offering support and referrals from trained victim assistance specialists. The evaluation pointed to the hotline's usefulness to the victim services field in expanding crime victims' access to meaningful information, improving their outlook and perceptions of control, and likelihood of engagement with providers. A key to achieving these outcomes was direct interaction with a trained victim assistance specialist, either by phone or chat. Speaking or chatting with a specialist was also associated with the likelihood of victims/survivors taking further action and connecting with the resources provided. The usefulness of this resource locally will depend on expanding local resources offered within its database and adaptation to local needs.¹⁵

- **Cultural and linguistic competency** – There continues to be the need for more culturally rooted and trusted community-based services for victims and survivors of all crimes. Victims note that there are few resources for families of victims and inadequate services for communities of color and immigrant communities. Other agencies that serve victims and survivors, including hospitals, law enforcement, and prosecutors, also need competencies in culturally and linguistically appropriate victim supports, and knowledge of community resources and services that meet those needs.

2. A plan to expand and improve services for victims of crime and survivors of violence and their families, including the people themselves or family members of people who have been harmed in interactions with law enforcement.

This section offers several recommendations to improve services for victims and survivors of violence and address the most prevalent needs identified by victim service advocates and organizations. These recommendations recognize the system and community-based agencies that exemplify victim-centered services and the challenges they face with constrained resources. King County funding constraints will limit the timing and scale of implementing these recommendations. Effective partnerships will be vital to building an integrated and comprehensive system of victim services that is accessible and responsive to the needs of all victims and survivors of crime, including those who have been unjustly harmed in interactions with law enforcement.

- Improve multi-agency coordination and collaboration. Services rightly reflect a diversity of approaches, including specialization in crime-specific services and support adapted for specific cultural and linguistic communities. This diversity in approach creates more opportunities to provide services that are accessible and appropriate for every crime victim. However, this has also led to a complicated and fragmented service environment that crime victims and survivors find difficult to navigate.
 - Convene a working group of system-based partners, including criminal justice, social services, health providers and community-based organizations to develop

strategies to improve coordination and access to victims and survivors of all crimes and their families. This could build from existing networks of providers, such as the Coalition Ending Gender Based Violence or the Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence. Outcomes could include:

1. Developing formal partnerships and/or clear procedures that define roles, and referral practices, including trauma informed warm handoffs.
 2. Identifying strategies and partnerships to expand services to victims and survivors of non-gender based violent crimes and unsolved violent crimes.
 3. Identifying opportunities to partner with other systems, including housing, behavioral health and others, to address the long-term care needs of victims and survivors.
 4. Implementing model service standards, such as the Office for Victim's Center Achieving Excellence framework, covering program, competency and ethics standards.¹⁶
 5. Creating cross-training opportunities in trauma-informed care, victims' rights and culturally responsive and accessible services,
- Develop a comprehensive guide of services and resources available to all crime victims and survivors, including those provided by other jurisdictions within King County, that can be utilized as a resource for system-based and community advocates and system partners. This guide alone should not be considered sufficient to address the needs of victims and survivors without additional navigation support.
 - Assess whether existing technology-based resources, such as VictimConnect, is a viable tool for connecting crime victims and survivors to local resources and support.
 - Include detailed information on services available and eligibility criteria. This guide should be made available in a diversity of language and accessibility formats
 - Increase flexible financial assistance funding, including support available to system-based advocates to help victims/survivors engaged in the criminal justice process.
 - Advocate for increased and sustained state funding to maintain victim services, particularly to mitigate against declines in federal VOCA support.
 - Integrate data and continuous improvement. Use outcome data to refine service delivery and scope and guide strategic planning. Data should include client satisfaction and areas of unmet need.
 - Track outcomes on clients served, satisfaction, utilization of services and reported gaps. Include feedback from victims, survivors and their families into program planning and continuous improvement.
 - Keep victims and survivors at the center of policy and practice and provide opportunities to elevate voices, without causing further harm. Continue to offer respectful forums for learning and accountability, such as the Victim & Survivors Summits convened in June 2025 and January 2026.

Endnotes:

¹ Converge Media coverage of June 2025 Victim/Survivor Summit [Voices of Hope and Healing: King County's Inaugural Summit on Crime Survivors Marks a Pivotal Moment — Converge Media](#),

² Achieving Excellence, Model Standards for Serving Victims and Survivors of Crime, Glossary Office for Victims of Crime, Office of Justice Programs, US Dept. of Justice [OVC Model Standards](#)

³ For a general description of services offered by System-Based and Community-Based Advocates, see [Victim advocates – Prosecuting Attorney's Office - King County, Washington](#), and [VictimSupportServices.org](#)

⁴ Best Practice Guidelines: Crime Victims Services, (Nov 2010) Minnesota Department of Public Safety, Office of Justice Programs; and interviews with King County Prosecuting Attorney's Office Victim Support Advocates, Colleen McInalls and Wendy Ross

⁵ Nicole Allen, et al, "Exploring the Core Service Delivery Process of an Evidence-Based Community Advocacy Program for Women with Abusive Partners," *Journal of Community Psychology* 41, no. 1 (2013): 1-18, <https://vaw.msu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/Allen-et-al-2013-process-of-CAP.pdf>

⁶ "Domestic Violence Housing First: King County Region Flexible Financial Assistance Results August 2016—July 2018," *The Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence*, 2018, <https://wscadv.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/FINAL-King-County-FFA-Results.pdf>

⁷ [OVC Model Standards](#)

⁸ Best Practice Guidelines: Crime Victims Services, (Nov 2010) Minnesota Department of Public Safety, Office of Justice Programs, p. 5

⁹ [OVC Model Standards](#)

¹⁰ [Making Collaboration Work: The Experiences of Denver Victim Services 2000 \(December 2002\)](#)

¹¹ Washington State Department of Commerce, 2025-27 First Supplemental Budget Session, Agency recommendations for services for crime victims & survivors, [DP-PL-1Z-Svcs for crime victims & survivors.pdf](#)

¹² [Domestic Violence Impacts on Housing and Homelessness – New Beginnings](#)

¹³ Comments by David Martin, KCPAO DV Unit Chair at Domestic Violence Initiative Regional Task Force Quarterly Meeting, May 12, 2026

¹⁴ King County Domestic Violence, Stalking, Sexual Assault, and Human Trafficking Guide for Survivors, [dvsah-electronic-handbook.pdf](#)

¹⁵ Outcomes of the Victim Connect Resource Center; Findings from a Rigorous Evaluation of a Technology Based Victim Hotline, May 2026, Urban Institute, [Outcomes of the VictimConnect Resource Center](#); Outcomes Evaluating a National Victim Hotline: How We Did It and What We Learned, Center for Victim Research, [Bing Videos](#)

¹⁶ Achieving Excellence, Model Standards for Serving Victims and Survivors of Crime, Office for Victims of Crime, Office of Justice Programs, US Dept. of Justice [OVC Model Standards](#)

Appendices:

Appendix A – Inventory of Victim Support Services

Appendix B – Report out and Recommendations from June, 2025 Victim/Survivor Summit

Appendix C - Preventing Gender Based Violence in King County; Centering Communities, Supporting Survivors, King County Women’s Advisory Board presentation to King County Council Committee of the Whole, October 7, 2024

Appendix A – Inventory of Victim Support Services

Agency	Initiative and # (if levy funded)	Program Name	Description	Service Providers	Criminal Legal System Involved/ Crime Survivor	Eligibility for Services	Description of Services Available	When are Services Available	How to Access Services	System Coordination	Notes
DPH	VSHSL HL3C (only partially funded by VSHSL)	Regional Office of Gun Violence Prevention	Partnerships with local hospitals, community organizations, researchers, and public agencies to create a coordinated, data-driven approach to reducing firearm-related injuries and deaths.	Harborview, Community Passageways Freedom Project Progress Pushers Urban Family (TBD)		Gun Violence	All	Simultaneous with First Responders	Referrals from Law Enforcement	Across Other Human Services/Housing Providers	firearm injury, coordination, prevention, intervention, stabilization & restoration services
DCHS	General Fund	EER Restorative Community Pathways/King County Youth Diversion and Intervention program	A program to divert juvenile cases out of the criminal legal system and provide services for harmed parties. Harmed parties are eligible for restitution funds and comprehensive services provides through Community Navigators. Typically harmed parties who opt into full services are youth.	CHOOSE 180 Creative Justice Collective Justice Congolese Integration Network East African Community Services PICA (Pacific Islander Community Assn.) RVC (Rooted in Vibrant Communities)	Both Crime Survivor and Accused	Other (explain in notes)	Culturally & Linguistically Tailored Services, Flexible Financial Assistance	Referral from prosecutor's office	Community Navigator		PAO determines eligibility - individuals allegedly harmed by youth
PAO	General Fund	Community Diversion Program and Therapeutic Alternative Diversion	PAO Community Diversion Program (CDP). Victim Services is limited to financial loss recovery.	County provides victim services	Both Crime Survivor and Accused	Other (explain in notes)	Flexible Financial Assistance	Referral from prosecutor's office			PAO determines eligibility - financial losses related to a CDP eligible case
Superior Court, DCHS	MIDD CD-13	Family Intervention Restorative Services - FIRS	FIRS is for youth arrested for violence towards their family members. FIRS is a collaborative approach with community and court-based partners. Every family referred is assigned a team of a social worker and a juvenile probation counselor.	Therapeutic Health Services Institute for Family Development Ryther	Both Crime Survivor and Accused	Domestic Violence	Trauma Informed Therapy, Peer to Peer Support, Support Groups, Services for siblings & children, Culturally & Linguistically Tailored Services	Referral from law enforcement, Referral from prosecutor's office	Referrals from Law Enforcement		
DIA (lead),DCHS, PAO, DPD, SC	MIDD and CJTA	Adult Drug Court	Adult Drug Court is a therapeutic court for individuals charged with a felony crime. Services to victims are limited to restitution funds up to \$10,000.	County provides victim services	Both Crime Survivor and Accused	Other (explain in notes)	Flexible Financial Assistance	Upon filing of a criminal case	Through Crime Victim Advocate		
DCHS	Community Services Contracts	CSO Contracts - Domestic Violence Survivor Services and Sexual Assault Victim Services	King County Council allocates general funds to bolster programming in priority areas, including the Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault (DV/SA) Survivor field in 2025. Though not directly funded by the VSHSL, survivors of DV/SA are a priority population for the Adult Services Division.	Abused Deaf Women's Advocacy Services API Chaya Consejo Counseling and Referral Service Domestic Abuse Women's Network Harborview Medical Center King County Sexual Assault Resource Center LifeWire New Beginnings Refugee Women's Alliance Seattle Indian Health Board Solid Ground Washington The DOVE Project The Salvation Army YWCA of Seattle, King and Snohomish Counties	Crime Survivor	Domestic Violence	All	Simultaneous with First Responders	Community Navigator	Across Victim Services Providers	
DCHS	Community Services Contracts	CSO Contracts - Legal Services	King County Council allocates general funds to bolster programming in priority areas, including support for legal aid in 2025. Though not directly funded by the VSHSL, one agency provides direct legal support for victims and survivors of DV/SA, which is a priority population for the Adult Services Division.	(1 out of 5 that directly support crime victims): Eastside Legal Assistance Program	Crime Survivor	Sexual Assault Exploitation	Legal Services				
DCHS	MIDD PRI-09	Sexual Assault Behavioral Health Services	Mental Health Professional (MHP) staff with expertise in sexual assault and substance abuse are colocated within a Community Sexual Assault Program (CSAP) to provide behavioral health treatment, referral, advocacy and supports for sexual assault survivors served by the organization.	King County Sexual Assault Resource Center (KCSARC) Harborview Abuse and Trauma Center (HATC)	Crime Survivor	Sexual Assault Exploitation	Trauma Informed Therapy, Advocacy & Referrals, Navigation of Court Processes		Self Referral	Other	Individuals can self-refer at any time, not required to be in the midst of criminal case/court proceeding. Coordination of care across multiple systems based on individual need. System coordination BH system, housing, courts, schools, etc.

DCHS	MIDD PRI-10	Domestic Violence and Behavioral Health Services & System Coordination	Domestic Violence Behavioral Health Services program co-locates a licensed Mental Health Professional (MHP) with expertise in domestic violence and substance abuse within a communitybased domestic violence survivor advocacy organization to provide behavioral health treatment, referral and supports for domestic violence survivors served by the agency.	Coalition Ending Gender-based Violence (CEGV) Domestic Abuse Women's Network (DAWN) New Beginnings Refugee Women's Alliance (ReWA)	Crime Survivor	Domestic Violence	Trauma Informed Therapy, Advocacy & Referrals, Navigation of Court Processes	Self Referral	Other	Individuals can self-refer at any time, not required to be in the midst of criminal case/court proceeding. Coordination of care across multiple systems based on individual need. System coordination BH system, housing, courts, schools, etc.	
PAO		VICTIM ASSISTANCE UNIT (EN_500030)*	VICTIM ASSISTANCE UNIT (EN_500030)*		Crime Survivor	Other (explain in notes), Domestic Violence, Gun Violence, Violent Crime, Sexual Assault Exploitation	Navigation of Court Processes, Advocacy & Referrals	Referral from law enforcement, Referral from prosecutor's office, Upon filing of a criminal case	Proactive Outreach to Victims	Across Prosecutorial Jurisdictions	
PAO	General Fund	Protection Orders and Victim Support Program*	Protection Orders and Victim Support Program*		Crime Survivor		Legal Services		Self Referral		
DCHS	VSHSL SS3	Consolidated Domestic Violence Hotline	The hotline provides immediate crisis support and triage and serve as a referral source for the county's advocacy, health, housing, and counseling services.	New Beginnings	Crime Survivor	Domestic Violence	Advocacy & Referrals	Simultaneous with First Responders	Mobile Advocacy	Across Other Human Services/Housing Providers	
External Support General Fund fund to KCSARC	General Fund	Council Add		KCSARC	Crime Survivor	Domestic Violence	Services for siblings & children, Trauma Informed Therapy, Advocacy & Referrals, Navigation of Court Processes		Self Referral	Other	Project utilizes blended funding. Individuals can self-refer at any time, not required to be in the midst of criminal case/court proceeding. Staffing includes legal advocates, therapists, peers, child (specialty) advocates, behavioral health specialists, etc. in a cross-disciplinary team. System coordination to address client needs: legal/courts, BH system, housing, basic needs, etc.
DCHS	MIDD CD-08	Children's Domestic Violence Response Team	The CDVRT provides behavioral health and advocacy services to children (birth to 17) who have experienced DV, and support, advocacy, and parent education to their non-violent parent. Provides screening, assessment, development of a multidisciplinary staff team, engagement and coordination of care.	Sound Mental Health	Crime Survivor	Domestic Violence					
DCHS	VSHSL SS4	Gender-Based Violence Specialized System Navigation and Mobile Advocacy	This program will provide survivor-centered advocacy that addresses the impacts of gender-based violence (GBV), human trafficking, and exploitation.	Abused Deaf Women's Advocacy Services, API Chaya, Gender Justice League, King County Sexual Assault Resource Center, Mother Nation, Multi-Communities, Refugee Women's Alliance (ReWA), Social and Environmental Entrepreneurs (SEE), The DOVE Project, The Organization for Prostitution Survivors, YWCA Seattle King Snohomish	Crime Survivor	Domestic Violence	Long-term Case Navigation & Support, All	Simultaneous with First Responders	Self Referral	Across Other Human Services/Housing Providers	Eligibility varies by provider and program model but may include King County residents who are youth or adults experiencing gender-based violence, domestic violence, sexual assault, human trafficking, commercial sexual exploitation, homelessness, criminalization, or related forms of victimization; survivors from communities disproportionately impacted by systemic inequities, including Black, Indigenous, and People of Color, immigrant and refugee communities, LGBTQIA+ individuals, Native American and Alaska Native populations, Pacific Islander, Native Hawaiian, Asian, and South Asian communities, Deaf and Hard of Hearing individuals, and adults with disabilities; as well as individuals seeking culturally responsive, survivor-centered, voluntary, or confidential support services.
DCHS	VSHSL HL 10	Countywide Gender-Based Violence and Trafficking Prevention	Funds culturally responsive community programs across King County that prevent gender-based violence and trafficking through education, outreach, survivor-centered support, healing services, and community-based prevention efforts for historically marginalized populations.	API Chaya, Coalition Ending Gender-Based Violence, Domestic Abuse Women's Network (DAWN), Filipino Community of Seattle, King County Sexual Assault Resource Center, Lavender Rights Project, Mother Nation, Sexual Violence Law Center, Somali Family Safety Task Force, The Organization for Prostitution Survivors, YWCA Seattle King Snohomish	Crime Survivor	Domestic Violence	Long-term Case Navigation & Support	Simultaneous with First Responders	Self Referral	Across Other Human Services/Housing Providers	Eligibility varies by provider and program model but may include criteria such as being a Washington State or King County resident; being age 18 or older; identifying as part of a resilient or historically marginalized community, including BIPOC, transgender, nonbinary, immigrant, refugee, Native American, or LGBTQIA+ populations; being a survivor of domestic violence, sexual assault, gender-based violence, trafficking, or exploitation; seeking prevention, legal, stabilization, or support services; or participating in accountability-based intervention programs connected to the criminal legal system or community-based referrals.
DCHS	VSHSL HL 11	Elder Abuse Multi-Disciplinary Team	supports coordinated, cross-system efforts between Aging and Disability Services and the King County Prosecuting Attorney's Office to prevent, investigate, and respond to elder abuse affecting older adults in King County.	City of Seattle Aging and Disability Services, KC Prosecuting Attorney's Office (PAO) *	Crime Survivor	Domestic Violence	Long-term Case Navigation & Support	Simultaneous with First Responders	Self Referral	Across Other Human Services/Housing Providers	Eligibility varies by provider and program model but may include King County residents age 55 or older who are currently experiencing abuse, neglect, exploitation, financial exploitation, or self-neglect, including older adults seeking support, intervention, protection, or coordinated elder abuse services.

DJA	Legal Financial Obligations collections	Collects funds for victims	County Legal Financial Obligations Collectors in DJA	Crime Survivor		Specific financial payments	DJA focusses on individuals who have financial means to pay.	Ordered by a Judge	3 FTE equivalent; collect restitution funds for victims.
PAO	Project Safety	Provides crime victims with legal assistance to resolve civil legal issues that arise as a result of victimization, with a focus on historically marginalized communities.	Clients are referred to the navigators by advocates from the King County Prosecuting Attorney's Office. As needs are identified, navigators refer to program partners, including the King County Bar Association, Northwest Immigrant Rights Project, Northwest Justice Project, Eastside Legal Assistance Program, and Sexual Violence Law Center.	Crime Survivor	Any crime victim	Assistance with civil legal issues, including family legal support and referral for civil legal issues, including family, housing, employment, immigration, consumer laws, protection orders, and access to public benefits, healthcare & education.		PAO Advocates	

Appendix B – Notes and Reflections from June 5, 2025 Victims Summit

Notes from Summit organizers

What stood out most from the panel conversations:

Across the board, participants were deeply moved by the raw, personal stories shared by survivors. The most resonant themes included the lack of voice survivors feel in the justice process, the absence of sustained support beyond the legal case, and how often the system is centered on the defendant rather than the person harmed. Many noted the speed and callousness of the system, contrasting it with the slow and painful recovery survivors face. The stories exposed a common experience of being retraumatized by institutions designed to support, with survivors often needing to self-advocate or navigate systems alone. The silencing of victims, plea deals that disregard survivor voices, and empathy given more to the accused than to those harmed were recurring concerns. Participants were particularly impacted by the breadth of lived experience, including the challenges faced by Black women, LGBTQ+ individuals, and immigrant communities.

Gaps or challenges in current survivor support:

Participants identified numerous systemic failures, including a severe lack of aftercare, inconsistent access to advocates, and an over-reliance on survivors to seek out help themselves. Funding instability and competitive models were a major concern, especially when programs that briefly succeed are abruptly defunded. The survivor support system is described as fragmented, with poor coordination across agencies (e.g., hospitals, law enforcement, prosecutors), and lacking in cultural and linguistic competence. There are few resources for families of victims, including siblings and children, and services for communities of color and immigrant populations are inaccessible or distrusted. Legislative and policy-related barriers, such as limited courtroom space or unclear victim rights, exacerbate harm. The siloing of work between organizations and a scarcity mindset further limit survivors' access to meaningful support.

What can we do differently to better support survivors:

Recommendations spanned systemic, structural, and cultural change. Participants called for consistent, flexible funding not tied to temporary grants or restitution payments. They want community-rooted, trauma-informed responses, with mobile and early interventions, survivor navigators, and wraparound services that include mental health care, shelter, and advocacy.

There's a strong need for clear, accurate, and compassionate communication from the moment harm occurs. Culturally responsive education and prevention work — particularly

with youth and marginalized communities — was highlighted as a long-term solution. Legislative reforms were proposed, including changes to firearm surrender laws, protection orders, and the plea-bargaining process. Importantly, participants urged investment in survivors' leadership and more inclusive policy-making spaces.

Takeaways to carry forward:

Many attendees expressed a renewed commitment to keeping survivors at the center of policy and practice. They want to hold institutions accountable, continue conversations with decision-makers, and advocate for reforms in legislation and funding. A key theme was that healing must not depend on prosecution, and that community-based, survivor-led solutions need to be lifted and supported. There was also recognition that elevating survivors' voices — particularly those often ignored — is essential to building a just system. Attendees left with a commitment to bring these insights back to their own work, amplify survivor stories, and support a more coordinated, compassionate, and sustainable approach to justice.

3.5.26 King County Crime Victim and Survivor Wish List; Recommendations from Victim Justice Coalition

The June 2025 Survivor Summit was convened to elevate survivor voices and engage policymakers in identifying service gaps and practical solutions to better support crime victims and their families in King County. The gathering brought together survivors, family members, advocates, and community leaders to discuss what is working, where gaps remain, and where meaningful improvements are needed.

Participants described significant challenges navigating court processes, limited access to trauma-informed therapy, fragmented and inconsistent advocacy services, and a lack of sustained support beyond the life of a criminal case. Survivors also reported difficulty accessing services due to the limited availability of resources and the siloed nature of existing support systems.

Currently, many services are organized by the type of crime (sexual assault and DV) resulting in gaps and barriers for survivors whose experiences do not fit neatly into these categories. In addition, survivor services are often siloed by jurisdiction. Victims of crimes occurring within the City of Seattle may have access to different services than victims of crimes occurring just across the street in neighboring jurisdictions such as Shoreline. These jurisdictional differences create unnecessary barriers and confusion for survivors seeking help.

Participants emphasized the need for comprehensive, wraparound services that are accessible to all victims of violent crime regardless of the type of crime, where it occurred, or the status of a criminal case. Survivors identified the need for services responsive to individual circumstances, including counseling and mental health care, housing assistance, legal services—including immigration support—and other critical resources.

Funding data shared at the Summit indicated that under prior King County Executive leadership, approximately 14% of a \$63 million justice-related budget was allocated to services for victims and survivors, while 86% supported programs for individuals described as “impacted by the criminal legal system,” referring to criminal defendants. This distribution prompted discussion that current funding levels do not adequately reflect the needs of victims, survivors, and their families in King County.

The following priorities emerged from the roundtable discussions.

1. Dedicated Advocacy for Unsolved Violent Crimes, Including Homicides

There is a critical need for funded victim advocacy services for survivors and families of unsolved violent crimes, including homicides occurring outside the City of Seattle. Families in these jurisdictions often have no access to advocacy support because advocates are typically assigned only after charges are filed by the King County Prosecuting Attorney's Office.

Participants emphasized that best-practice models across the country include dedicated advocates assigned to unsolved homicide cases who provide long-term case navigation and support. King County should explore similar models to ensure families receive consistent communication, support, and resource coordination regardless of whether charges are filed.

County-level investment in dedicated advocacy for unsolved violent crimes is essential to both equity and public safety.

2. Sustained, Long-Term Aftercare and Wraparound Services

Survivors repeatedly shared that support often ends when a criminal case concludes—or if charges are never filed. Healing does not follow the timeline of prosecution. National best practices emphasize the importance of sustained, trauma-informed services.

Needed services include:

- Ongoing mental health support
- Survivor navigators and case management
- Peer support networks
- Flexible financial assistance
- Family-centered services, including support for siblings and children

Funding should not be tied solely to prosecution outcomes, restitution, or short-term grants.

3. Consistent Access to Advocacy Across Jurisdictions

Participants described inconsistent access to advocates depending on where a crime occurs. A coordinated countywide model is needed to ensure equitable access to trained, trauma-informed advocates regardless of geography.

Other jurisdictions have implemented mobile victim advocacy response models, where advocates respond alongside or shortly after first responders. Early intervention is widely

recognized as a best practice, improving safety planning, reducing retraumatization, and strengthening long-term engagement with services. King County should explore similar mobile or rapid-response advocacy models.

4. Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Services

Participants emphasized that existing services are often inaccessible or distrusted by Black communities, immigrant communities, and LGBTQ+ survivors. Needed investments include:

- Culturally rooted, community-based organizations
- Multilingual services and interpretation
- Recruitment and support for advocates from impacted communities
- Trust-building outreach and education

Participants also stressed that survivor services should be available independent of organizations whose primary focus is supporting offenders. Access to advocacy, counseling, and financial assistance should not be contingent upon participation in—or proximity to—offender-focused programming. **All victims, survivors and their families should be able to receive culturally responsive, trauma-informed services through independent, survivor-centered pathways.**

5. Improved System Coordination and Communication

Survivors described fragmented systems and poor coordination between hospitals, law enforcement, prosecutors, and community agencies. Clear, accurate, and compassionate communication from the moment harm occurs was identified as a major unmet need.

Best practices emphasize structured cross-agency coordination, shared communication protocols, and proactive outreach to victims. Investment in survivor-centered coordination systems would strengthen service delivery and public trust.

6. Stable and Flexible Funding

Participants raised concerns about funding instability and competitive grant structures that often undermine effective programs. Sustainable and flexible funding models are needed to support collaboration rather than competition among organizations providing services to victims and survivors.

7. Elevating Survivor Voice and Leadership

Survivors consistently reported feeling silenced or excluded in justice processes and policy discussions. Participants emphasized the importance of:

- Centering survivor voices in policymaking
- Expanding inclusive decision-making spaces
- Supporting survivor-led initiatives
- Ensuring victim rights are clearly understood and upheld

National best practices increasingly incorporate survivor advisory boards and survivor-informed program design.

8. Prevention and Early Intervention

Participants emphasized that long-term solutions require investments in prevention, youth engagement, firearm safety, and early intervention. Community-rooted, trauma-informed responses should begin immediately after harm occurs.

Early contact with trained advocates has been shown to improve safety planning, increase service utilization, and reduce retraumatization.

Establishing a King County Victim Service Center

To address the fragmented nature of the current system, we recommended the creation of a **King County Victim Service Center** to provide a low-barrier, comprehensive, and coordinated system of support for survivors.

King County is home to a wealth of expertise and resources that could contribute to such a center, including nonprofit victim service organizations, peer support networks, individuals with lived experience, system-based advocacy units within the King County Prosecuting Attorney's Office and local police departments, the University of Washington Harborview Abuse & Trauma Center, legal aid organizations, and many others.

However, providing survivors with a list of organizational phone numbers and expecting them to independently navigate multiple systems—each with its own eligibility requirements, intake processes, and limitations—is insufficient.

A **Victim Service Center** would significantly improve upon the current fragmented service landscape by offering integrated, survivor-centered assistance designed to address the full range of victims' needs. Such a center would ensure that survivors across King County receive equitable, culturally responsive, and coordinated services regardless of the type of crime, the jurisdiction where it occurred, or the status of a criminal case.

Conclusion

A central theme of the Summit was that healing should not depend solely on prosecution outcomes. Survivors and families called for a more survivor-centered system that ensures access to services, sustained support, and coordinated responses following violent crime.

King County has an opportunity to align its investments with nationally recognized best practices, including early intervention, mobile advocacy response models, culturally responsive services, dedicated advocacy for unsolved violent crimes, and coordinated service delivery.

Washington State's Victims of Crime Bill of Rights affirms that victims should be treated with the same dignity, respect, and courtesy as criminal defendants. Yet there is a significant disparity between that principle and current funding allocations. Only a small portion of justice-related funding supports services for victims and survivors, raising concerns about whether current investments reflect the commitments outlined in state law and the needs of victims and their families.

These recommendations reflect a consistent message from survivors: meaningful justice includes voice, access to services, sustained support, and accountable systems.

Establishing a coordinated and survivor-centered system of care is both a practical and moral imperative. Survivors and their families deserve a system that recognizes their needs and supports their path toward healing and justice.

Project Safety - <https://kingcounty.gov/en/dept/pao/courts-jails-legal-system/victim-services-resources/project-safety> **Project Safety** is an innovative, collaborative approach to address the civil legal needs of crime victims in King County, Washington, with a priority on historically marginalized communities. Project Safety provides critical and time-sensitive legal assistance, empowers survivors, and prevents further victimization to help achieve stability.

Odessa Brown Children's Clinic Community Advocacy Restorative Education (CARE) Clinic
- <https://www.seattlechildrens.org/clinics/odessa-brown/services/care-clinic/>

The CARE Clinic officially opened Feb. 9, 2026, at OBCC Central District. The CARE Clinic is a safe, welcoming space for young people up to age 21 to get medical and behavioral healthcare if they have experienced or been exposed to trauma. OBCC leaders, community partners and youth created the clinic together to deliver care with dignity rooted in trust, teamwork and connection. Case management and coordination of care

We assign a navigator to each person receiving services at the CARE Clinic. This team member helps make sure the young person feels at home and gets the services and support they want, as easily as possible. "We design your care so that you do not have to tell the story of your trauma over and over to different members of your care team"

Chicago Survivors (Chicago, IL) – [Program Overview – Chicago Survivors](#)

Chicago Survivors (CS) offers crime victim and support services to surviving family members of Chicago homicide victims. Services are free, voluntary and open to all. They are survivor-shaped, trauma-informed, family-centered and delivered primarily in survivors' homes.

They offers five linked programs:

1. **IMMEDIATE CRISIS RESPONSE** - Chicago Survivors Crisis Responders are dispatched to the crime scene or hospital within two to four hours of the homicide to provide support to the victim's family and to protect their rights as crime victims. Crisis Responders attend to the immediate emotional and practical needs of the family. They liaise with law enforcement, assist in accessing crime scene clean up, arrange for emergency guardianship, provide accompaniment to the Medical Examiner's Office, provide information and rights assistance in funeral arrangements, organize a vigil and/or a flier distribution, engage in interactive safety planning, and address any other emerging urgent needs.
2. **PROACTIVE IN-HOME FAMILY SUPPORT AND CASE MANAGEMENT** – Families are assigned a Family Support Specialist and will receive up to six months of family support and case management services. Family Support Specialists assess the needs and strengths of families following the crime and develop a Service Plan in consultation with the householder(s), including supportive counseling, application for Crime Victims Compensation Funds, and assistance with ongoing practical needs. Family Support Specialists continue to liaison with detectives and advocate on behalf of families during a homicide investigation.
3. **YOUTH PROGRAM: TRIAGE, COUNSELING AND REFERRAL FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH, 0-17 YRS.** Chicago Survivors' licensed Youth Clinical Counselors are specifically trained to triage and fast-track referral of children who are severely traumatized, and to support children, teens and parents as they process their experience. Youth Clinical Counselors provide free supportive counseling for children 7-17 years old, utilizing Healing Arts Kits to encourage self-expression and psycho-education, and provide facilitated referrals for children who are younger. When children and teens transition back to school, Youth Clinical Counselors work directly with the parent or guardian, teachers and administrators so that they all have what they need for a successful re-engagement with school.

4. **COMMUNITY OF SURVIVORS** families are invited to participate in Chicago Survivors Community of Survivors, led by our Survivor Community Manager. Family members engage in peer-to-peer support through on-going Support Groups, Workshops, Family Dinners, Memorial Events and Advocacy Opportunities
5. **COURT-BASED CRIMINAL JUSTICE ADVOCACY AND UNSOLVED CASE MEETINGS** Chicago Survivors' Criminal Justice Advocate provides comprehensive support throughout the court process for the victim's family when an alleged offender is charged in a homicide, including court accompaniment and interpretation, interactive safety assessment and planning when necessary, and protection of crime victim rights in the courtroom.
When a homicide case is unsolved for nine months or more, a family is encouraged to sign up for a Survivor Family Unsolved Case Meeting in which two family members may question command-level law enforcement about how or why the case remains unsolved. These meetings are run by the family and facilitated by our Criminal Justice Advocate. Unsolved Case Meetings may clarify misunderstandings, explain unmet legal requirements, or provide new information that reinvigorates investigations.

Trauma Intervention Programs (TIP) –Second Responders are on-the-scene to provide emotional first aid to survivors [Trauma Intervention Programs, Inc.](#) 24/7 on-scene crisis response modeled nationally - Provide emotional support, help arrange for shelter, food, clothing, and transportation, notify family and friends, serve as liaison between the survivors and emergency and hospital authorities, help arrange follow-up services, provide information and referral to appropriate agencies for ongoing assistance.

Seminole County Sheriff's Office – Victim Services

<https://www.seminolesheriff.org/page.aspx?id=75> To reach a Victim Advocate 24 hours a day, call the Communications Center at (407) 665-6650 and request that the "On Duty" Victim Advocate call you. Victim advocates provide crisis support and respond to crime scenes **as needed**, 24 hours a day alongside law enforcement. They assist victims of violent crime with advocacy, referrals, crisis counseling, and help navigating the justice system.

Pinellas County Sheriff's Office – Victim Services [PCSO - Victim Services](#)

Advocates may be **called to the scene by law enforcement 24/7** to assist victims and families immediately with crisis intervention, referrals, and support through the justice process.

These programs demonstrate how counties can fund and deploy advocacy services directly to victims and families immediately following a crime or traumatic event, ensuring rapid support and connection to resources as part of the community safety infrastructure.

Malheur County District Attorney's Victim Assistance Program

<https://www.malheurco.org/district-attorney/district-attorney-information/d-a-victim-services/>

Upon contact by law enforcement, Victim Advocates provide 24-hour on-call response for the Victims of Domestic/Family Violence; this immediate crisis intervention service is then followed by on-going support and advocacy throughout the investigation and prosecution of the case. In addition to these services, the Victims' Assistance Program coordinates, facilitates and monitors a semi-monthly Victims' Impact Panel (VIP). This is a panel of victims and community partners who come together to speak to adult offenders. As a part of their post-sentencing supervision, these offenders are required to attend the VIP where they hear about the devastation to families, friends and communities resulting from a criminal offense. *We are dedicated to reducing the impact of the crime on you, the Victim, by providing the emotional and practical support you need to deal with problems resulting from victimization, and to guide and support you through the criminal justice system.*

Larimer County, Colorado's Victim Response Team

<https://www.larimer.gov/sheriff/investigations/victim-response-team>

which operates 24/7 to provide on-scene assistance, emotional support, and referrals after someone is victimized. The Larimer County Sheriff's Office Victim Response Team (VRT) was established in 1994 to provide services for victims. The Victim Response Team responds to victims throughout Larimer County 24 hours, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.

The services provided include:

- On-scene assistance
- Emotional support
- Referrals to local resources
- Information regarding the Crime Victim Compensation program

In addition to the support provided victims, one of the main goals of the VRT is to inform victims of the legal rights.

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San Bernardino County, CA – Bureau of Victim Services <https://sbcountyda.org/victim-services/> The Bureau of Victim Services, sponsored by the San Bernardino County District Attorney's Office, is committed to providing crime victims with access to comprehensive, quality services regardless of the nature of their victimization, age, race, religion, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, capability, or geographic location.

In addition, we seek to make the criminal justice system more understandable, accessible, and humane.

Appendix C

Preventing Gender-Based Violence In King County: Centering Communities, Supporting Survivors

King County Women's Advisory Board
Presentation to the King County Council
Committee of the Whole
10/7/24

Women's Advisory Board

Established in 1978, the King County Women's Advisory Board (WAB) makes recommendations to the King County Council and the Executive to improve the lives of women and ensure our county government takes into account women's needs, rights, and well-being.

Recently, the WAB worked collaboratively and in partnership with community to develop the following recommendations to address:

- Childcare access and affordability
- Improving wage equity and promoting family friendly workplace policies

Once adopted, the WAB advocates before the King County Council and Executive to successfully implement these recommendations.

Centering Communities, Supporting Survivors: Process & Community Voices

- API Chaya
- Civil Survival
- Coalition Ending Gender-Based Violence
- Collective Justice
- Cowlitz Pathways to Healing
- Harborview Center for Traumatic Stress
- Ingersoll Gender Center
- King County Prosecuting Attorney's Office
- King County Sexual Assault Resource Center
- LifeWire
- Seattle Mayor's Office on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault
- Refugee Women's Alliance
- Sexual Assault Forensic Examination Best Practice Task Force
- Sexual Violence Law Center
- Somali Family Safety Task Force
- Taking Black Pride
- The Arc of King County
- The Northwest Network of Bi, Trans, Lesbian & Gay Survivors of Abuse
- YWCA Seattle | King | Snohomish
- Department of Community and Human Services (DCHS) staff
- And others

Recommendations: What we heard



Housing



Criminal Legal Involvement & Reporting



Behavioral Health



Economic Impact



Civil Legal Aid

GBV has a disproportionate impact on BIPOC & LGBTQIA Communities

Recommendations

01

Increase investments in survivor-centered mobile advocacy for survivors of GBV.



Double investment from \$6 to \$12 million per year.

02

Expand affordable housing options, and provide flexible funding for stable housing, for survivors and their families.



- Invest in dedicated transitional and permanent housing;
- Invest in additional emergency and affordable housing and provide flexible funding for survivors to stay in housing.

Recommendations

03

Address issues of housing discrimination and protect survivors of GBV from liability for property harm.

Presenter: Sarah

04

Increase funding to organizations supporting GBV survivors, including those impacted by incarceration, to access legal-support.

- Adopt a Fair Chance Housing ordinance in unincorporated King County;
- Adopt legislation protecting survivors of GBV from liability for rent owed and property damages caused by those causing harm.

- Provide additional funding to organizations that provide legal support to survivors, prioritize those that reach marginalized communities;
- Identify opportunities to increase legal support for survivor-defendants and those who have interacted with the criminal legal system.



Recommendations

05

Invest in access to comprehensive health care and mental health resources for GBV survivors.



- Increase funding to MIDD by \$1 million annually to fund 1) additional therapists who specialize in GBV 2) professional education related to domestic, sexual, and GBV for MIDD providers;
- Help to grow the pipeline of mental providers by creating and invest in programs to attract and retain qualified mental health providers;
- Fund two licensed psychiatrists to take referrals for medication and prescription management;
- Partner to increase funding for county, state, non-profit, and private behavioral health programs, focus on hiring staff with GBV training and provide incentives for accepting Medicaid;
- Expand access to comprehensive mental and physical health care, including Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners (SANE) at every hospital, 24/7 in King County.

Recommendations

06

Invest in, expand, and develop youth-based and mentor-led educational and skilled-based GBV prevention programs to serve youth across King County.

- Further invest in and expand community youth-centered educational and skill-based prevention, prioritize youth disproportionately impacted by GBV;
- Partner with the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction and public schools in King County to pilot a youth-centered GBV curriculum.

Recommendations

07

Invest and expand GBV prevention and education programs designed by and for communities disproportionately impacted by GBV.



King County should implement the recommendations outlined in the *Lifting Up Transformative Approaches to Address Domestic and Sexual Violation Prevention Report*, including, but not limited to:

- Focus on community-level strategies that address and change social conditions in which domestic and sexual violence happen and in a context that is relevant;
- Strengthen programs that are specifically designed to build bridges and strengthen people's ties to their ancestral cultures, communities (geographic, cultural, political; spiritual), and responsive care networks
- Foster collaboration, relationships, trust, and skills for communities to work together to prevent and intervene in interpersonal forms of violence.

Recommendations

08

Support the creation and funding of community-based organizations that work outside the criminal legal system to support survivors of GBV.



- Invest in developed and new community-based organizations working outside of the criminal-legal system;
- Fund GBV and anti-carceral response training for community-based organizations receiving grants;
- Conduct a countywide review and identify services that require a survivor to file a police report to receive services and understand the impact of that requirement.

09

Support the creation, implementation, and funding of community-based intervention programs for persons causing harm.

- Develop a pilot program to fund a series of projects aimed at reducing GBV through interventions for persons causing harm;
- Choose projects in consultation with King County agencies and the communities most impacted.

Recommendations

10

Create a King County GBV task force to further develop and implement these recommendations.

- Develop and recommend a Fair Chance Housing ordinance to ensure that survivors in unincorporated King County who have past involvement with the criminal legal system are not discriminated against;
- Work with communities to expand, develop, and support GBV prevention and education programs for youth and those communities disproportionately impacted by GBV;
- Design and implement community-based multi-disciplinary responses to GBV that will address root causes outside of the criminal legal system.

Women's Advisory Board

[King County Women's Advisory Board](#)

Meetings: First Wednesday of the Month

Time: 4:00-6:00pm

Tanya Matthews, Vice-Chair

WAB2@kingcounty.gov

Sarah Reyneveld

WAB4@kingcounty.gov

Marjan Didra

Resilient Communities Policy and Community Engagement Manager

Adult Services Division

mdidra@kingcounty.gov



Executive Girmay Zahilay

Chinook Building, CNK-EX-0800
401 Fifth Avenue, Suite 800
Seattle, WA 98104-2391

August 31, 2026

The Honorable Sarah Perry
Chair, King County Council
Room 1200
C O U R T H O U S E

Dear Councilmember Perry:

This letter transmits the Victim Support Service Improvement Plan response to Ordinance 20023, Section 17, Proviso P7, and a proposed Motion that would, if enacted, acknowledge receipt of the report.

As required, the enclosed report provides an inventory of the services provided or funded by King County for crime victims, survivors and their families, an evaluation of best practices, the most prevalent needs of crime victims and survivors, and recommendations to improve victim support services. The Executive Office collaborated with the King County Prosecuting Attorney's Office (PAO), Seattle/King County Department of Public Health (DPH), and the Department of Community and Human Services (DCHS) in developing the report. Best practices information was gathered from advocates and practitioners in the field of victim services, organizations supporting victims and survivors, and a review of available literature. Recommendations include service mapping across other providers and jurisdictions to identify opportunities for more comprehensive services that can meet the needs of victims, families and survivors; improvements to coordination and referral processes to minimize the need for victims to self-navigate a complex service environment; expansion of supports available to victims and survivors of non-gender based violent crimes; and system evaluation that prioritizes the experience of victims and survivors.

Thank you for your consideration of this report. If your staff have any questions, please contact Aaron Rubardt, Budget Director, Executive Department, at 206-263-9715.

Sincerely,

The Honorable Sarah Perry

August 31, 2026

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for

Girmay Zahilay

King County Executive

Enclosure

cc: King County Councilmembers

ATTN: Stephanie Cirkovich, Chief of Staff, King County Council

Melani Hay, Clerk of the Council

Karan Gill, Deputy Executive, Office of the Executive

Jasmin Weaver, Chief of Staff, Office of the Executive

Hyeok Kim, Chief Operating Officer, Office of the Executive

Sierra Howlett Browne, Policy Director, Office of the Executive

Garrett Holbrook, Council Relations Manager, Office of the Executive

Aaron Rubardt, Budget Director, Office of the Executive