## Follow-up on the King County Sheriff's Office Overtime Audit

**The King County Sheriff's Office made minimal progress addressing most key elements of our overtime recommendations due to overarching technical challenges in time and labor reporting and weak staffing data.** With two key exceptions, explained below, the King County Sheriff's Office (KCSO) has made minimal progress since our last audit follow-up in August 2020. Of the six unfinished recommendations we followed up on, one was completed and one advanced from "open" to "progress," but little advanced on the remaining four. KCSO reports that the primary barriers to completing these four recommendations were technical barriers related to adding off-duty hours into KCSO's time and labor management system and a lack of key data for modeling staffing needs. In addition, KCSO noted that emergent challenges with the COVID-19 pandemic and state law changes further limited its capacity to focus on this work. However, these are long-standing problems; without focused effort, KCSO will continue to bear the risks of overwork and inefficient use of overtime.

**KCSO arrived at an agreement with the King County Police Officer's Guild to place limits on total overtime hours and pilot a new unincorporated schedule, but implementation is not complete.** By reaching a memorandum of agreement with the King County Police Officer's Guild on a 16-hour limit for the number of total hours officers can work, KCSO completed one recommendation and took a substantial step toward completing two more. In order to realize the benefits of the limit, however, KCSO must incorporate them into KCSO's shift-scheduling system; otherwise, supervisors will not know which officers have exceeded the limit when assigning overtime work. Similarly, KCSO's pilot of a new staffing schedule in Precinct 4 could help answer key questions for modeling staffing needs and overtime—but realizing its potential benefits depends on whether KCSO implements the results into the recommended staffing model.

Of the 20 audit recommendations:

| 6 DONE | 5 PROGRESS | 1 CLOSED | 8 PENDING |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Fully implemented** Auditor will no longer monitor. | **Partially implemented** Auditor will continue to monitor. | **No longer applicable** Auditor will no longer monitor. | **Not yet reviewed** Auditor will follow up at future date. |

Please see below for details on the implementation status of these recommendations.

**King County**

## Recommendation 1 — PROGRESS

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

STATUS UPDATE: As of the previous audit follow-up in August 2020, KCSO reported it had engaged with its time and labor system vendor to determine how to merge off-duty data into the ATLAS system. However, this work was not started. Instead, KCSO's technical focus shifted to implementing the bi-weekly pay model. KCSO management indicates it is now planning to start this work in second quarter of 2022 but needs to determine and identify the resources required to manage off-duty hours in-house.

WHAT REMAINS: Include all off-duty work hours in the scheduling system.

## Recommendation 2 — PROGRESS

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

STATUS UPDATE: Completion of this recommendation depends, in part, on implementation of Recommendations 1 and 3, such that the overtime assignment system should automatically consider and calculate overtime and off-duty work in determining which officers are eligible for overtime shifts. KCSO could update ATLAS to apply these calculations for overtime limits based on Recommendation 3, below, but KCSO managers reported doing so must wait until bi-weekly pay is implemented in early 2022. As with Recommendation 1, they plan to commence this work in second quarter, 2022.

WHAT REMAINS: Include overtime and off-duty work in the scheduling system's automated overtime assignment procedures.

## Recommendation 3 — DONE

**The King County Sheriff's Office should implement a policy to limit how much overtime an individual can work, for example, capping total hours worked or changing the prioritization structure of the overtime assignment system.**

STATUS UPDATE: KCSO reached a memorandum of agreement with the King County Police Officer's Guild updating the process for assignment of overtime shifts. The agreement sets a 16-hour limit on the amount of total work allowed per 24 hours and the limit specifically includes overtime and off-duty work. It also includes language that prioritizes overtime shifts, after current patrol assignment, to officers who have worked the fewest hours in the calendar year to date.

IMPACT: Although a 16-hour limit is arguably high in comparison to other law enforcement agencies, the agreement establishes a policy limit for the first time and includes all hours—regular, overtime, and off-duty work—in that limit. Both are critical steps for mitigating the risks

of officer overwork and fatigue. By reaching the agreement, KCSO can now implement these limits into its time and labor system.

## Recommendation 4                                    PROGRESS  ⋯

**The King County Sheriff's Office should reduce how often unincorporated patrol schedules rotate to create more days with overlapping squads on duty.**

STATUS UPDATE: KCSO hired a consultant to perform an analysis of KCSO's workload; during the previous audit follow-up (August 2020), KCSO managers reported they planned to use the consultant work to inform their patrol scheduling. Unfortunately, the results were insufficient for KCSO to consider alternative patrol staffing models for unincorporated King County. KCSO, however, implemented a pilot program for 4–10 shift scheduling in Precinct 4, to be completed in early December 2021. KCSO managers anticipate that the pilot will show less mandatory overtime resulting from the scheduling change, positively impacting unscheduled overtime and deputy wellness.

WHAT REMAINS: To complete this recommendation, KCSO should consider and apply the results of the Precinct 4 pilot, when complete, to unincorporated patrol staffing. As explained in the audit, providing some level of overlapping schedules allows for greater flexibility in planning for non-patrol tasks, such as training, which in turn can reduce overall overtime demands. The results should also help inform KCSO on how to manage shift scheduling to optimize the timing of squad overlaps.

## Recommendation 5                    On April 1, 2019  DONE  ✓

## Recommendation 6                                    PROGRESS  ⋯

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

STATUS UPDATE: As with Recommendation 4, KCSO consultant work was intended to assist the Sheriff's Office with evaluating calls for service, such that it could apply that work to help determine patrol minimums. However, based on this effort, KCSO concluded that its computer-aided dispatch (CAD) system data could not provide the level of detail needed for this analysis. KCSO managers plan to revisit this work following implementation of bi-weekly pay in second quarter of 2022, but the data limitations remain. In addition, ongoing staffing vacancies may be great enough that the current ad hoc patrol minimums are, at times, not met.

WHAT REMAINS: To complete this recommendation, KCSO should identify the basis for staffing minimums and then calculate the relief factor needed to meet them. There is general understanding within KCSO that operational factors for patrol zones drive the assumed minimums, but these are not documented anywhere. For example, KCSO managers articulate that officers need backup, and that the workload of different zones in unincorporated King County can

vary greatly depending on location and time of day. These factors are not standardized, however. By expressly identifying patrol minimums, KCSO managers can then test assumptions around those minimums, including the relief factor necessary to ensure those minimums are staffed. Doing so would help enable KCSO to clearly explain its actual patrol resource needs to decision-makers.

| Recommendation 7 | PROGRESS ⋯ |
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**The King County Sheriff's Office should create a staffing model for unincorporated patrol that accurately reflects both current and future staffing needs, the actual number of deputies that can be deployed to meet patrol minimums, and opportunities to reduce backfill overtime through strategic scheduling.**

STATUS UPDATE: As with Recommendations 4 and 6, above, KCSO previously had intended to apply consultant work to help develop a more robust staffing model. During this audit follow-up, KCSO managers stated that they had not made any progress on this recommendation. Although developing a detailed staffing model may seem less important in the face of ongoing staffing and COVID-related challenges, gaining a more informed understanding of staffing needs would help KCSO address those challenges, especially in managing overtime and best use of patrol resources.

WHAT REMAINS: Establish a staffing model based on a calculation of actual patrol staffing needs, including documented patrol minimums, consideration of deployable patrol deputies, and drivers of overtime. The model should evaluate the accuracy of the relief factor used and include overlapping squad shifts to help maximize effective overtime use.

| Recommendation 8 | On April 1, 2019 | CLOSED ✓ |
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| Recommendation 9 | | PENDING |
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| Recommendation 10 | On April 1, 2019 | DONE ✓ |
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| Recommendation 11 | On April 1, 2019 | DONE ✓ |
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| Recommendation 12 | On April 1, 2019 | DONE ✓ |
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| Recommendation 13 | On August 3, 2020 | DONE ✓ |
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| Recommendation 14 | PENDING |
| Recommendation 15 | PENDING |
| Recommendation 16 | PENDING |
| Recommendation 17 | PENDING |
| Recommendation 18 | PENDING |
| Recommendation 19 | PENDING |
| Recommendation 20 | PENDING |

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