



## 2015/2016 KING COUNTY EXECUTIVE PROPOSED BIENNIAL BUDGET

King County

### In Brief:

- Justice and Safety agencies<sup>1</sup> identified \$34 million in efficiency savings, new and expanded revenue, and program reductions in the 2015/2016 Proposed Budget
- Notable changes include:
  - Capping the jail population (discussed in separate white paper)
  - Reducing the Work and Education Release program by approximately half
  - Discontinuing filing Driving While License Suspended 3 violations
  - Converting an entrance to the King County Courthouse to employees only
  - Efficiency savings in multiple agencies
- \$10 million of investments in critical technology infrastructure

### WORK AND EDUCATION RELEASE (WER) REDUCED BY APPROXIMATELY HALF

The WER program is run by the Community Corrections Division of the Department of Adult and Juvenile Detention (DAJD) as an alternative to secure detention that allows people to maintain their jobs or continue with school or treatment while awaiting trial or serving a sentence. Participants are allowed to leave the facility for work, school, or treatment, but must return at their scheduled times and are subject to drug and alcohol testing pursuant to court order. The program has a capacity of about 150 men and is operated out of the King County Courthouse. Currently, roughly half of the people in WER have jobs, while one quarter do not have jobs and are not in school or treatment and do not leave the facility. Restricting WER to only those with jobs or who are in Adult Drug Court will reduce the program by half and save \$1.2 million. The remaining participants will go to secure detention.

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<sup>1</sup> Justice and Safety agencies include: the Department of Adult and Juvenile Detention, the Department of Judicial Administration, Department of Public Defense, District Court, Jail Health Services, Prosecuting Attorney's Office, Sheriff's Office and Superior Court. Combined, these agencies constitute roughly 75 percent of the General Fund.

## NO LONGER FILING DRIVING WHILE LICENSE SUSPENDED 3 (DWLS#) CASES

Effective August 1, 2014, the King County Prosecuting Attorney stopped filing DWLS 3 cases. In Washington, failure to pay fines associated with moving violations, such as speeding tickets, can lead to suspension of a driver's license. If an individual drives with a suspended license, he or she may be charged with DWLS 3, a misdemeanor crime with a penalty of up to ninety days in jail and a \$1,000 fine. DWLS 3 is often referred to as "Driving While Poor" and disproportionately affects low-income individuals, people of color and those living in South King County. No longer filing these cases will have a positive equity and social justice (ESJ) impact and save \$1.5 million by reducing the need for four defense attorneys and three support staff in DPD.

## CONVERTING AN ENTRANCE TO THE KING COUNTY COURTHOUSE TO EMPLOYEES ONLY

King County currently provides higher levels of screening of employees entering its courthouses than do other jurisdictions in the state and will spend nearly \$13.5 million in 2015/2016 on weapons screening if no changes are made. As a means to reduce costs without affecting the level of service to the public, the Executive proposes converting the tunnel entrance to the King County Courthouse to an employee only, key-card access entrance, effective July 1, 2015. This change will entail a capital project of nearly \$500,000 to install keycard readers and turnstiles that allow only one person through at a time and will save \$605,000 in operating costs for the 2015/2016 biennium, with ongoing savings exceeding \$800,000 in the 2017/2018 biennium.

## OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCIES

All Justice and Safety agencies have been actively seeking out ways to improve operating practices to increase efficiency and generate savings without reducing the quality or quantity of work provided to the public. The 2015/2016 Proposed Budget includes savings from several efficiency efforts:

- **Department of Judicial Administration (DJA) Staffing Model:** Working strategically with its staff and labor partners, DJA has been able to increase flexibility and improve efficiency in its staffing model by creating a new job classification that combines the responsibilities of courtroom and office clerks into one. The new job classification ensures DJA employees have a full array of competencies that allow them to be assigned to cover court matters when needed and work in the office when not assigned to court. The new position classification provides improved opportunities for employee professional development and allows DJA to reduce its staffing and save \$442,000 over the biennium, with continued efficiencies expected over the long term.

- **Superior Court Court Reporters:** For the past decade Superior Court has expanded and refined its use of technology to record proceedings in courtrooms and has been able to reduce the number of court reporters on staff as a result. The Court has developed a method for deploying the remaining court reporters to ensure that they are allocated to case types that require their services and records other proceedings electronically. The 2015/2016 Proposed Budget reduces eight court reporter positions and saves \$1.8 million over the biennium.
- **Jail Health Services Lean Practices:** JHS was an early adopter of the Lean philosophy for finding operating efficiencies and has had great success in finding ways to reduce costs and improve the quality of care it provides to inmate-patients in the County's adult jails. In the 2015/2016 Proposed Budget, JHS has committed to finding \$1 million in savings from improved operational efficiency. Staff reductions will be achieved through attrition and not layoffs. Beginning in 2014, JHS will pilot two projects to address patient needs in less time and with fewer resources at the first point of contact, and will train staff to recognize process inefficiencies/waste and initiate improvements with the goal of becoming a Lean organization.
- **DAJD Operating Efficiencies:** In addition to the population cap and WER reduction, DAJD has reviewed its operations to capture efficiency savings where it can. As a result, it will eliminate 13.78 positions throughout its divisions and consolidate operations where possible to save nearly \$3 million over the biennium.

## TECHNOLOGY INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENTS

The State Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) runs the two case management systems used statewide by Superior Courts and courts of limited jurisdiction, such as King County District Court. The Superior Court Management Information System (SCOMIS) and the District Court Information System (DISCIS) are both over 30 years old and well past their useful lives. While AOC plans to replace both of these systems in the next five years, both King County courts have decided to implement their own case management systems that will then interface with the State systems. This was a difficult decision for King County, but one that was deemed necessary due to delays in the State's development of new systems and concerns that the systems would not meet King County's needs. The 2015/2016 Proposed Budget includes \$3.96 million for DJA's SCOMIS replacement project and \$7.6 million for District Court's Case Management System. Both DJA and District Court are working to design systems that will consolidate a host of side systems that have been built to accommodate the SCOMIS and DISCIS and meet the unique needs of King County. All Justice and Safety agencies are participating in a process to define their collective data needs and develop a system and protocols that will enable all system participants to better share data across silos.