



Prosecuting Attorney - Operations 00100.841.

Mission Statement

Seek the just result.

Function

The Criminal Division prosecutes virtually all felonies committed in Clallam County and all gross misdemeanor and misdemeanor offenses committed in unincorporated Clallam County and the incorporated Cities of Port Angeles and Sequim. Additional duties are set forth in RCW 36.27.020. The Civil Division provides legal advice to the County organization acting by and through its duly authorized constituents and appears for and represents the County in civil proceedings in which the County is a party. Additional duties are set forth in RCW 36.27.020.

The Support Staff Division is comprised of administrative professionals who assist attorneys in the delivery of legal services. Through formal education, training, and experience, support staff possess knowledge and expertise regarding the legal system and substantive and procedural law which qualify them to do work under the supervision of an attorney. Support staff are responsible for carrying out a variety of day to day functions in the office such as directly assisting attorneys, preparing pleadings and other documents, filing paperwork with the court, answering calls, scheduling appointments, and maintaining case files. Support staff multitask effectively and have strong organizational skills and attention to detail.

Trends/Events

Trends - Criminal Division

- The PAO is still contending with an attorney shortage following last year's deferment of a DPA. This attorney shortage mandates the triage of cases filed to the most serious, violent and person crimes in order to be maintained by limited DPAs.
- All agencies on the peninsula have now launched body worn cameras which leads to greater transparency and a substantially higher workload for each DPA. BWC is of great assistance to the prosecution, however, each hour must be watched.
- Mental illness continues to be inextricably intertwined with the criminal justice system. Competency evaluations are continuing to be ordered by the courts, which results in significant delays in time for trial calculations given the wait times at Western State Mental Hospital. This also impacts the delay in justice for the victims/survivors and the community. At best count, this year thus far, there have been 23 cases in the competency realm in Superior Court alone.

- Defendants coming from out of the county to commit significant crimes within our county to include burglaries, robberies, fraud against our elderly, and drug sales.
- Significant increase in strangulation (assault 2) cases. On average, at least one per week. Strangulation is one of the most lethal forms of assault and an assailant is more likely to move onto homicide once they have strangled a victim. These victims must acquire medical care as the effects of strangulation may occur months to years later if not addressed. Education of these victims/survivors takes additional time and resources. Along with the education of victims/survivors, we are having to educate the bench on the significant lethality of strangulation on a weekly basis and continually push to be heard and make a record.
- Clallam Bay prison cases have increased. The office is currently handling four (4) gang cases and four (4) riot cases from Clallam Bay.
- Increased number of large law enforcement response cases; for example, State of Washington v. Justin Cox, wherein he was a barricaded subject and the peninsula's Critical Response Team was deployed. This trend leads to multiple agencies working together and an exponential increase in police reports, body worn camera footage, and coordination with our office.
- Increased number of drive-by shootings in our County. Each drive-by shooting invariably deals with large amounts of discovery and technical evidence.
- The State Supreme Court's decision in State v. Blake has and will continue to require a re-deployment of an attorney and staff resources within the prosecuting attorney's office. We are routinely contending with petitions to vacate convictions, sentences, resentences, requests for refunds and appeals. One Deputy Prosecuting Attorney is assigned per month (in addition to their regular caseload) to handle Blake matters. To provide a sense of scale and the decrease in numbers, and by way of example only, in 2025, we've received 34 cases through June, is compared to 163 in January - June 2023.
- The Clallam County Sexual Assault and Abuse Investigation Protocols were changed last year requiring all interviews of trauma survivors, not just children, be done at the CAC or a soft interview room with a DPA present. These interviews occur at all hours and not just during the weekdays; they occur in the evenings and on weekends, when necessary. This has a direct impact on attorney workload within the prosecuting attorney's office. (Seven Deputy Prosecuting Attorneys and one Victim Witness Coordinator have been qualified as child forensic interviewers and assist law enforcement with the interviews.) By way of example only, Deputy Prosecutor Attorneys were present in person, and often times with little to no notice, for the majority of the 83 interviews conducted at the Child Advocacy Center (CAC) from July 2024 – June 2025. This does not include those interviews that were conducted at the soft interview room at SPD for which we are also present. The number above also does not capture the number of interviews that DPAs sit in on for adults pursuant to the protocols.
- State law regarding juvenile offenders has shifted, with a renewed emphasis on rehabilitation. New legislation requires re-sentencing juvenile offenders who were sentenced years ago as adults. These hearings can require extensive preparation time, notice and meetings with victims, often involve expert witnesses, and are extremely time-consuming.

- The exaggerated portrayal of forensic science on crime television shows such as CSI: Crime Scene Investigation continues to influence jurors, who have come to expect an unrealistic level of forensics in law enforcement investigations and the prosecution's case-in-chief as a pre-condition to finding guilt.
- The ever-changing capabilities of cell phones, internet, and apps continue to expand the realm of investigations through google searches, trap and traces, cell phone downloads, GPS location and the like. This is ever changing and each DPA needs to stay apprised of the changes in order to best advise law enforcement and be able to deal with all issues that may arise in trial. This also impacts computer and cloud storage and the exchange of information from law enforcement to the PAO.
- The prosecuting attorney's office continues to actively collaborate with fire departments and police departments when processing of incendiary fire scenes. Two of our Deputy Prosecuting Attorneys are now specially trained in relation to the crime of Arson. There have been two (2) arsons thus far this year that required this specialized training for law enforcement advisement.
- Personalized trauma-informed decline meetings with victims and survivors when a case is not prosecuted. These meetings do not count towards active cases but still take time for the review, which often includes hours of interviews and body worn camera review, and for the meeting to explain the reasons and make sure the victim/survivor are aware of services available even without a prosecution.
- Trauma-informed and victim-centric prosecutions continue with full awareness and support of the vicarious trauma to those working cases including, but not limited to: Deputy Prosecuting Attorneys, Legal Assistants, and Victim Witness Coordinators.
- Increase in juvenile crime and charges by the PAO. We anticipate that law enforcement referrals will exceed 300 by year's end, with a corresponding increase in charging activity. Juvenile crime is up 300% over the last four years.
- The change in the pursuit law allows for law enforcement to pursue suspects again and we are already seeing more elude cases.
- Continual rearranging of schedules of DPAs and VWCs to continue to be trauma-informed, culturally sensitive, and victim-centric.
- Increase in cases which mandate the use of a court certified interpreter whether for the victim or the defendant. Examples include Hindi, Russian, Spanish, and Ukrainian.
- Sequim has seen a significant increase in violent, complicated cases, which require more resource to prosecute.
- Increase in the need to locate defendants and return them to the State of Washington for prosecution. Examples include State of Washington vs. Singh, State of Washington vs. Douglas, and State of Washington vs. Watson. These out-of-state extraditions require coordination with law enforcement here and the other state, prosecutors' offices in both states, and jails in both states; not to mention the travel costs for law enforcement and the inmate.
- Increased targeting of our elderly population in fraudulent schemes wherein they lose their life savings. For example: State of Washington vs. Kar and State of Washington vs. Mashkova.
- Increase in tribal-related cases and coordination that goes along with multi-jurisdictional cases.

- Work with the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Persons Taskforce. The MMIP has consulted with the office on the George David homicide, the Valerie Claplanahoo homicide, and the Marley Zimmerman missing person case. The Attorney General is prosecuting Tina Alcorn for the homicide of George David. The Chief Criminal DPA is working with the MMIP and law enforcement about the other two cases.
- Increase in Attorney General assistance for a couple types of our crimes; to include fraud, timber thefts, and animal abuse. However, this assistance only occurs after we have fully reviewed the cases, including all reports, photos, interviews, and body worn camera. An example of a case that they are assisting with is the Goldrush case that has approximately 30 victims. This large case was worked by a Senior DPA prior to the AG taking over.
- Increase in defendants having multi-jurisdictional cases. The coordination required is challenging at best.
- Increase in felony level DUIs and felony Assaults.
- Increase in research requests from the Superior Court bench.
- Increase in collaboration with the bench and defense on court forms.
- Involvement and collaboration with the jail and the mental health professionals coordinating services and potential release for treatment, whether medical or mental health related.
- Assistance by the criminal division to the civil division in conviction vacate petitions, and firearm rights restorations.
- Continued firearm forfeiture work.
- New charging and disposition standards for District Court cases.
- There are a large number of new officers and deputies, which has increased the need for training on a variety of topics by the PAO.
- More victims/survivors in both charged and uncharged cases, require increased dedicated face time and efforts by the DPAs due to increased trauma and the PAO's trauma informed victim centric prosecution philosophy. Even in a referral that is declined for prosecution, the DPA must review the case and is required to conduct a decline meeting.
- The office is prosecuting more multiple victim cases. Examples for the year 2025 include:
 - Frugal's armed robbery (2 victims)
 - Dollar Tree armed robbery (2 victims)
 - Kitsap Bank robbery in Sequim with multiple victims.
 - Child sexual assault case (2 known victims)
 - State v. Cox (6 victims – all law enforcement)
 Multi-victim cases invariably include separate meetings for each, multiple meetings just to begin a case, in addition to multiple individual preparation sessions for trial.
- The Dennis Bauer triple homicide trial has returned from the Court of Appeals for a retrial. The last trial consisted of approximately 90 witnesses and over 900 exhibits. Although the retrial will invariably be a bit shorter in length, the witnesses and exhibits will largely be the same. This trial will require significant office resource to prosecute.

Events (first six months of 2025) - Criminal Division

- 244 cases referred to Superior Court (542 all last year).
- 743 cases referred to District Court I (1541 all last year).
- 51 cases referred to District Court II (142 all last year).
- 123 cases referred to Juvenile Court (295 all last year).
- Two new District Court DPAs are in the process of being trained by more experienced DPA's.

- Two Senior DPAs were selected and began mentoring the District Court division DPAs. This mentoring takes approximately 5- 7 hours per week per Sr. DPA, on top of their regular duties as a DPA. This mentoring time increases substantially when the DC DPAs are preparing for trial.

- Resolved an attempted murder case – State of Washington vs. James Luomo.
- Charged one murder case (State v. Hagens-Moore). Charged one attempted murder case (State. v. Lester).
- Provided two (2) on-site responses to officer involved shooting/homicides/hit and run/suspicious death scenes to provide real time legal support for law enforcement. These are multiple day responses that usually involve at least two Deputy Prosecuting Attorney's. Provided support on two (2) arson cases.
- Presented trainings for law enforcement and community groups on topics such as legislative updates, fraud, child forensic interviewing, lay testimony, expert witness requirements and testimony, strangulation, controlled substance homicides, court process, report and search warrant writing, and victim rights. The prosecuting attorney's office is available for trainings as requested by law enforcement, community, schools, and fire departments.

- Have been requested to present, along with OPNET and Clallam Bay Prison, on drug abuse and internet safety at a local school in September.
- Participated in multiple training to include topics such as: District Court and Superior Court prosecutions, new legislation, lab trainings on DNA, juvenile offender re-sentencings, childhood trauma, strangulations, evidence collection, Rapid DNA, body cams, U and T Visas, understanding systemic racism in the law, controlled substance homicides, fentanyl lethality, drug trends, arson, homicide, cold cases, appeals, implicit bias, victim's rights, and DV and SA prosecutions.

- Participated in six multi-disciplinary team (MDT) meetings.
- Participated in two peer reviews for child forensic interviewers.
- Participated in two quarterly STOP grant meetings.
- Provided regular appearances on local radio KONP with education about the criminal justice system.
- Participated in approximately 20 OPNET meetings and weekly attorney/VWC meetings.

- One DPA assigned to serve as our Internet Crimes against Children (ICAC) representative and advisor of law enforcement. This DPA attends training yearly, budget dependent.

- One DPA assigned to serve as the liaison for the Trueblood decision and implementation of fines imposed against the State for not complying with statutory guidelines for competency services.

- One DPA assigned to serve as liaison and working member of the Mental Health Court.
- One DPA assigned to serve as liaison and working member of the Drug Court.
- One DPA assigned to advise OPNET and prosecute OPNET cases.
- One DPA assigned to assist WSP in researching criminal history for firearm purchases.
- One DPA assigned to sit on the Zero Abuse Project.
- One DPA that facilitates the child forensic interview training for CJTC.
- Prepared 13 appeals for the Court of Appeals. 3 more appeals requiring briefs in the next couple of months. Oral argument before the Court of Appeals on 1 occasion thus far this year. Oral argument before the Supreme Court on 2 occasions thus far this year.
- Prepared and sent press releases on cases of community concern.
- Administered written annual and probationary performance evaluations.
- Provided 24/7/365 communication and collaboration with law enforcement and OPNET on investigations of most Class A felonies, adult and child sexual assaults, suspicious deaths, overdose deaths and officer involved shootings. This also includes advisement to KCIRT – Kitsap Critical Incident Response Team – law enforcement from several jurisdictions that respond to officer involved use of force and shootings.
- Prepared responses to the Indeterminate Sentence Review Board for potential release of sex offenders; included contact with survivor, locate and contact with original investigators, review of all materials and preparation of letter with recommendation.
- Prepared several responses to the Risk Review Board and Public Safety Review Panel for Western State Mental Hospital (WSH) for several not guilty by reason of insanity defendants and presented objections to the court. This included outreaching to all survivors of the homicides or assaults, contacting the original case investigators, preparing recommendations, reviewing all relevant materials and preparation for hearing.
- Continued use of electronic discovery and sharing with law enforcement and the defense bar.
- Rendered decision on officer involved shooting at the Chase Bank.

Trends - Civil Division

- There has been a significant increase in demand for legal advice from county offices, departments, boards, and commissions starting in January 2025.
- There has been a steady number of petitions for 14-day involuntary treatment (ITA) commitments in the first half of 2025. The PAO has received 13 petitions and conducted 6 contested hearings to date in 2025. Additionally, it is anticipated that the number of ITA petitions will increase exponentially when the Jamestown Tribe's 16 bed evaluation and treatment facility opens. The PAO is involved in regular planning meetings with Jamestown, and it is anticipated that the new mental health facility will come online in May or June of 2026. When this facility begins operating, it is anticipated that the civil division of the PAO will be responsible for prosecuting 10 to 12 contested mental health hearings per week. It is further anticipated that a civil prosecutor and accompanying support staff will be required to staff at least two court calendars per week.

- The number of citizens seeking to have their firearms rights restored and seeking to have prior convictions vacated has increased dramatically. The PAO has received 69 of these motions/petitions in the first half of 2025 which is roughly double the number received in all of 2024. Additionally, recent changes to RCW 9.41.040 in July 2023, contain unfunded mandates which require the PAO to locate and contact victims and parties protected by protection orders in every petition for restoration of firearm rights.
- The PAO Civil Division continues to work with DCD, CCSO, and HHS/EH on code enforcement policy, practice, and practical enforcement of the county code. Regularly attend departmental meetings, advise the relevant departments, and identify problem cases for further legal action. In addition, the PAO has regularly advised DCD and EH related to fines/penalties and liens, and the filing of injunction actions.
- The PAO civil division is attending Charter Review Commission meetings and advising the Charter Review Commission and its various subcommittees.
- The civil division continues to experience a sharp increase in legal requests from the various county departments and especially from the BoCC/Administrator. Of particular note, legal work related to the emergency operations center and Joint Public Safety Facility in the form of meetings, legal advice, document review, negotiation and document drafting, have been significant. In addition, negotiations have begun related to criminal justice contracts with the city of Port Angeles and the city of Sequim. These meetings and negotiations will require a significant amount of PAO resources in 2025.

Events (first six months of 2025) - Civil Division

- The Civil Division continues to be engaged in managing Opioid litigation responses. Recently this has required numerous executive sessions and substantial coordination of communication from outside counsel related to amendments of complaints, and responses to out-of-state litigation groups. It is anticipated that this involvement will continue for the foreseeable future.
- Responded to more than 300 requests for legal advice. Requests have been received from every Department and from several of the Boards and Committees. The Civil Division has received 299 legal action requests as of 7/14/25, which is significantly more than the 206 requests received by the same time last year. The Civil Division is on track to receive and advise on approximately 600 legal action requests in 2025. By contrast, the civil division completed 378 legal action requests in 2024.
- The consistent numbers of ITA hearings have remained steady since January of 2025 with the PAO receiving and reviewing 13 petitions for involuntary treatment and conducting 6 recent ITA hearings in Superior Court as of July 14, 2025.
- Litigation - Handled ongoing Environmental Health matters in District Court and litigation before the Clallam and Kitsap County Superior Courts. Ongoing work with outside counsel Keller Rohrbach related to increased activity in opioid litigation.

- Land use related disputes and litigation in the form of LUPA actions sharply increased in 2024 and have increased further in 2025. The civil division has responded to and represented Clallam County in at least 3 LUPA actions and currently has two active LUPA actions pending in Clallam County. Legal analysis, advice and litigation requests from DCD continue to be significant and continue to increase. This increase represents advisement of DCD related to the upcoming GMA comprehensive plan update, code enforcement actions, and LUPA litigation.
- Complex litigation is also generally on the rise. The civil division remains involved in appeals to the Board of Tax Appeals, and multiple tax appeals by commercial air carriers in support of the County Assessor as our departmental client. Additionally, the civil division currently represents the county in two separate PRA lawsuits in Clallam and Kitsap Counties in addition to support work on active litigation seeking injunction of the elected prosecutor in federal court.
- Policy Work Group continues to update County Policy.
- Presented training to Board and Committees addressing topics including but not limited to Open Public Meetings Act and Public Records Act and presentations on first amendment auditors.
- Attended Public Records Reviews with the whole public records team and conducted weekly evaluations of responses for public records staff member.
- Attended weekly Clallam County Board of County Commissioner Work Sessions and Regular Meetings
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- Attended Charter Review Commission meetings, and CRC committee meetings, and provided legal research and advise to the same.
- Administered written annual performance evaluations.

Trends - Support Staff Division

- The use of Axon Justice has expanded greatly - both internally and with external agencies. This represents a continuation of procedural changes driven by new software programs implemented in our office, through the courts, or through our partner law enforcement agencies. These changes require education for our staff and a reallocation of staff time.
- Our District Division continues to operate less one legal assistant compared to previous years. The Felony Legal Assistants continue to perform District Division assignments, in addition to their regular felony support work.
- Our Felony Legal Assistants frequently witness victim phone calls and in-person meetings while we are short-staffed in both our Victim Witness Division and legal assistant(s) in our District Division.
- Additional Legal Assistant support work continues to be required on Blake cases (34 through July) which are not tallied as new referrals or new cases charged.
- The Civil Division Legal Assistant devotes time to responding to Public Records Requests. Many of the requests are for discovery-intensive cases, which require considerable time to locate, scan and upload. In 2024, we received 120 Public Records Requests. From January - June 2025, we have received 54 Public Records Requests.

Events (first six months of 2025) - Support Staff Division

- In addition to CCSO, PAPD, and SPD, we are now receiving body cam videos, photos, audio clips, and/or reports electronically through Axon from Forks Police Department, Washington State Patrol and WA Department of Fish and Wildlife. Our office sends all video, audio, and photo discovery electronically through Axon Justice to defense attorneys, including the Clallam Public Defender's Office, who now also uses Axon Justice.
- Two Legal Assistants and the Office Manager participated in the annual WAPA Support Staff Training. One Legal Assistant participated in the annual WAPA-SEP training.
- Between January and June 2025, Legal Assistants have processed 1,162 referrals.
- Between January and June 2025, the Office Manager has located, prepared and destroyed 1454 case files that were eligible for destruction under the retention schedule.
- Administered written annual evaluations.
- Instituted new Legal Assistant Series and adjusted the Legal Assistant I range from 49 to 50.
- The Office Manager and Lead Legal Coordinator have participated in virtual meetings to prepare for the Washington State Patrol transition from SECTOR to TraCS.

Goals

Goals - Criminal Division

- Conduct timely review of all criminal referrals made to the Prosecuting Attorney's Office by law enforcement.
- Continue to gain proficiency in the use of Legal Files, and now Axon/Evidence.com, our new digital discovery platform for viewing audio/visual evidence, body cam footage and some reports.
- Update processes and procedures for monitoring and reporting statistics using Legal Files.
- Cross-train attorneys and staff within the Criminal Division.
- Staff two VWCs to assist in the three courts.
- Collaborate with strangulation experts to educate the juries and the bench on the lethality of this specific form of assault.
- Collaborate with law enforcement to submit information electronically, including the high amount of data held on cell phones and computers.
- Collaborate with defense attorneys to receive electronic discovery with the eventual goal of being virtually paperless.
- Expand the scope of Prosecuting Attorney's Office trainings afforded to all branches of tribal, federal, state and local law enforcement, as well as fire departments operating on the North Olympic Peninsula.
- Destroy all records that are beyond archive retention requirements.
- Hire and train new DPAs.
- Attract, retain, and support employees to advance career service in the Prosecuting Attorney's Office.
- More jury trials in District and Superior Court and more fact findings in Juvenile Court.

- Fully staff the District Court Division.
- Maximize trauma support for employees of the Prosecuting Attorney's Office through the challenging cases we prosecute.
- Collaborate with the county to address any budget shortfall without compromising either public safety or the quality of justice for the citizens of Clallam County.
- Continue to collaborate with law enforcement to ensure public safety and quality of justice.
- Re-evaluate compensation for all positions to ensure the office remains competitive in the labor market.

Challenges - Criminal Division

- The Criminal Division continues to be down a deferred DPA. The work of this position is being absorbed by the other DPAs within the Division.
- Remediating the backlog of criminal referrals due to attorney and staff shortages. The referrals can be reviewed but without adequate support staff resource, the cases cannot be filed as quickly as we would like to see.
- Limitation in the county's technological infrastructure has hampered our ability to convert from paper to electronic practice and combat the "CSI effect". The inability to download discovery on our computers as they run out of space routinely. The inability to handle the amount of electronic discovery forthcoming from cell phone and computer downloads is only going to increase as more and more people carry more than one phone and the amount of data pools increases. IT infrastructure such that discs, and discovery received may not work on many of the computers in the office and spending an enormous amount of time to get that rectified. Every place with surveillance has their own propriety software to play it and IT not allowing us to use that software.
- The increase in serious crime has had a disproportionate impact on attorneys and staff workload within the office's Criminal Division.
- The lack of childcare resources within the community has emerged as a significant challenge for the office.
- The increase of CAC interviews due to the changed protocols requiring a DPA at each interview of a trauma survivor regardless of age.
- The increasing difficulty to maintain a work life balance while sustaining vicarious trauma on a daily basis.
- The inability to use Victim Witness Coordinators after hours or on the weekends due to their change from salaried employees to hourly severely impacts our ability to meet victims/survivors/witnesses where they are at due to schooling, work, or other obligations.
- The inability to have more than one VWC for three court rooms.
- Body worn cameras, although significant assistance with cases, create an extraordinary amount of work for DPAs. Every agency on the peninsula has implemented body worn cameras. For example: In a small misdemeanor case with 1 BWC to review, it may make or break a case with watching one video. While, on the other hand, for complex cases, large law enforcement response, multi-jurisdictional law enforcement cases, or CRT cases, the amount of BWC footage increases exponentially. Case examples are State of Washington v. Cox, State of Washington v. Jaff, and State of Washington vs. Belford.

- The Supreme Court has adopted revised the indigent defense standards which will require additional criminal attorneys without additional DPAs creating a workforce imbalance.
- The Supreme Court finds that defense attorneys need to have a limited number of cases in order to be considered effective but not seeing fit to limit the amount of work that a prosecutor can handle to be effective.
- The Supreme Court has issued a rule that arraignment for in-custody defendants must be held within 3 days. This rule takes effect in September. This challenge will be met with adding more hearings and more time in court. Rather than having arraignments just on Fridays, they will need to occur on a daily basis.
- Lack of court certified interpreters for the multiple cases wherein a defendant requires an interpreter.
- New officers and deputies are taking a lot more time advising legally.
- Changes in case law requiring in custody defendants to appear in person and not over Zoom takes an extreme amount of time waiting for the in-custody defendants to appear in court and extends the length of dockets exponentially.
- Lack of one point of entry with magnetometers for the courthouse makes every day a challenge for security. While there are security personnel present, the people within the courthouse are not screened through a magnetometer and it is only a matter of time before something bad happens. DPAs and VWCs are not always the best liked in the criminal justice system and so are at higher risk of assault/harassment by others.
- Juvenile law has changed over the past several years, making investigation of juvenile crimes more difficult and leaving many juvenile crimes unsolved.
- Due to the attorney shortage, there have been some rearranging caseloads. Our juvenile DPA has taken on a caseload in Superior Court which necessitates her having to split her time between two courts.
- Retrying the Dennis Bauer triple murder case with an attorney, VWC, and legal assistant shortage. This retrial will take 4 additional persons from the office while they concentrate on the prep and the retrial; to include the Chief Criminal DPA, the Appellate DPA, the Superior Court VWC, and a Legal Assistant.

Goals - Civil Division

- Provide quality advice to the county and county departments on diverse legal issues that arise in all county departments.
- Improve the response time of the Civil Division. The current workload for the Civil Division is extremely high and the division is understaffed in relation to the demand for civil resources. The civil division will be actively employing strategies to maximize efficiency in an effort to improve response times.
- Take on additional work from county departments that have routinely utilized outside attorneys and firms for legal work that costs the county a significant amount of money, when the PAO can and should provide those services.
- Assist the county in updating development regulations and specifically those pertaining to storm water and shorelines and advise DCD in the comp plan update process.

- Train county staff on the ever-changing rules regarding open government and public records compliance.
- Cross-train attorneys and staff within the Civil Division.
- Review and revise county policies through participation in the Policy Work Group. Particularly, policies related to contracting, bidding, and procurement, in addition to HR related policies, are in immediate need of review and updating.

Challenges - Civil Division

- Not being alerted by clients as to the existence of a matter until after it has developed into a problem with attendant liabilities.
- Preventing and/or mediating intramural disputes between county officials and/or department heads, and between departments at a lower level.
- Negotiating the myriads of ethical dilemmas that present when intramural disputes between county officials and/or department heads occur.
- The significant increase in land use related disputes, and issues present many extremely complicated legal questions which require an inordinate amount of attorney time in research, writing, and litigation representation.
- The significant increase in demand for legal advice, document review and drafting, and negotiations for the BoCC related to large multiple partner public works/construction projects.
- The lack of childcare resources within the community has emerged as a significant challenge for the office.

Goals - Support Staff Division

- Gain approval to re-open the deferred Legal Assistant position and hire a new staff member to fill the position.
- Fill the currently open Legal Assistant position in the District Division. Train to level of confidence and competence.
- With the new Legal Assistant series in place, present promotional opportunities to support staff who qualify.
- Gain proficiency with TraCS when implemented and assist team in the same. Communicate with partner agencies using TraCS (WSP, District Court, for example) to promote a smooth transition and the best use for the group as a whole.
- Tighten up field options in legal files for best statistics tracking. Add and remove fields in order to accomplish.
- Destroy all records - paper, media, and electronic - when they reach the date eligible for destruction per the Secretary of State CORE Retention Schedule.

Challenges - Support Staff Division

- Fewer quality candidates applying for support staff positions, including legal assistant. When we do have an applicant of interest, it is not uncommon to see them withdraw at some point, due to receiving a higher paying job offer.

- Now that our District Division has full DPA staff, the division's legal assistants have fallen behind on drafting out-of custody summonses due to the deferred legal assistant and aggravated by the resignation of another legal assistant. The majority of these summonses this year have been completed by the Felony Legal Assistants, as the District Legal Assistants do not have the time for this assignment in addition to managing the demands of current open cases.
- The continued increase in discovery submitted to our office through Axon has created a new time demand on the support staff. When received, the discovery needs to be matched to a case, where both our internal system and Axon are updated. The attorney needs to be alerted to the discovery, which will subsequently need to be sent to the defense attorney. Discovery doesn't just come in at the start of the case, it can come throughout the case. Some cases have multiple law enforcement agencies responding and therefore, we have discovery sent from those multiple agencies.
- During the Bauer re-trial, one of the Felony Legal Assistants will be primarily dedicated to that case and unavailable to assist on any other legal assistant assignments for approximately two months. As Felony Legal Assistants are continuing to cover District Legal Assistant assignments, this could delay processing of out-of custody summonses and other such work.

Workload Indicators

	2023 Actual	2024 Actual	6/30/25 Actual
Criminal Division:			
Felonies Filed	324	331	168
Felony Hearings	3240	3162	1333
Felony Trials (Bench & Jury)	18	8	4
Juvenile Offenses Filed	137	160	58
Juvenile Offenses Referred	292	295	123
Juvenile Hearings	1,181	1,607	708
Juvenile Truancy Hearings	130	321	261
Juvenile Drug Court Hearings	290	475	239
District Court Crimes Filed	807	837	410
District Court Referrals	1602	1683	795
District Court Trials (Bench & Jury)	3	10	4
District Court Prefile Diversion			
District Court Prefile Diversion Completions			
Civil Division:			
Public Record Requests	118	120	54
Legal Action Requests - Excluding Public Works	370	190	253
Legal Action Requests - Public Works	40	182	29
Forfeitures	1	0	0

Grant Funding Sources

1. Washington State Legislature and Its Committees
2. Department of Justice (Federal)

Revenues

	2023 Actual	2024 Actual	6/30/25 Actual	2026 Budget
Taxes	0	0	0	0
Licenses and Permits	0	0	0	0
Intergovernmental Revenues	105,140	169,492	70,734	158,225
Charges for Goods and Services	186,242	204,511	128,082	801,352
Fines and Forfeits	1,030	8,815	6,600	5,200
Miscellaneous Revenues	1,752	1,837	1,395	2,000
Other Financing Sources	0	0	0	0
Transfers In	0	0	0	0
General Tax Support	2,446,671	2,599,618	1,425,902	2,738,425
Total	2,740,835	2,984,273	1,632,714	3,705,202

Expenditures

	2023 Actual	2024 Actual	6/30/25 Actual	2026 Budget
Salaries and Wages	1,863,672	1,971,526	1,088,700	2,572,200
Personnel Benefits	697,121	716,040	411,551	836,189
Supplies	18,396	12,269	5,336	16,762
Other Services and Charges	116,357	221,633	78,184	158,051
Intergovernmental Services	0	0	0	0
Capital Outlays	7,792	0	0	50,000
Debt Service - SBITA	37,498	62,805	48,942	72,000
Transfers Out	0	0	0	0
Total	2,740,835	2,984,273	1,632,714	3,705,202

Staffing

	2023 Actual	2024 Actual	6/30/25 Actual	2026 Budget
Full Time Equivalents	24.10	24.10	22.10	23.10