

Public Safety Sales Tax

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Seattle Mayor's Office



City of Seattle

Background



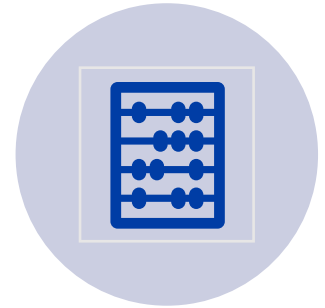
LEGISLATURE AUTHORIZED
JURISDICTIONS TO ADOPT A
0.1% SALES TAX.



REQUIRES COMPLIANCE
WITH NUMBER OF POLICE
REFORM AND
ACCOUNTABILITY
MEASURES



ESTIMATED TO GENERATE
\$39 MILLION OF REVENUE
IN 2026, AND CITY HAS
ACCESS TO \$100M IN STATE
GRANTS IN 2026



PROCEEDS MUST BE USED
FOR “CRIMINAL JUSTICE
PURPOSES” UNDER STATE
LAW



Resolution

In July, Council President Nelson sponsored, and the Full Council unanimously adopted, Resolution 32174, which has two sections:

- 1. The City Council resolved, as part of the 2026 budget process, to consider legislation increasing the sales tax by 0.1% for criminal justice purposes, as recently authorized by the State Legislature.**

➤ *The Mayor formally transmitted legislation to the Council for consideration on September 10, ahead of the rest of the budget.*

Resolution: Section 2

2. That up to 25% of revenues should be used for addiction, recovery, and diversion services, as outlined in Section 2:

“The investments should be aimed at creating a pathway to recovery for individuals experiencing chronic homelessness and individuals diverted from the criminal legal system, including:

- A. Expand access to on-demand residential and intensive outpatient substance use disorder treatment...;
- B. Enhance access to recovery housing, as consistent with the clinically proven Continuum of Care model...;
- C. Ensure capacity for low-barrier shelter, case management, aftercare, and legal coordination for people living unsheltered...;
- D. Coordinate with King County to increase the number of Designated Crisis Responders (DCRs) operating within Seattle ...;
- E. Innovative approaches to addressing Stimulant Use Disorder and expanding the provision of long-lasting buprenorphine...;
- F. Enhance access to job training and job placement services for residents of transitional and permanent supportive housing;
- G. Stabilizing diversion services such as Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD) long-term case management capacity...; and
- H. Capital investments to support the facilities where treatment services are provided...”

➤ *The Mayor's Proposed budget deploys **more than 30%** of projected revenues in the investment areas listed in Section 2 of the Resolution.*

Holistic Approach to Safety

This represents our comprehensive approach to investing in both public safety and public health as two sides of the same coin, interconnected and not in conflict.



Mayor's Spending Overview

Utilizing the 0.1% Public Safety Sales Tax, the Mayor's proposed budget funds:

- **Support for an expansion of diversified response programs**
 - \$6.9 million – Double CARE Crisis Responders
 - \$2.6 million – Add Additional 9-1-1 Call-Takers
 - \$15 million – Stabilize Ongoing CARE Operations
- **Increased first responder staffing**
 - \$2.1 million – 20 Additional Seattle Fire Department Recruits
- **Treatment and diversion programs for substance use disorders**
 - \$7.4 million – Expand SFD Post-Overdose Team, DESC POD Program, and Add Community Treatment Beds and Staffing
 - \$5 million – Bolster LEAD Diversion Program Capacity



Investments in CARE & First Responders

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City of Seattle

CARE Department: Crisis Response

- CARE Community Crisis Responders have responded to **over 6,000 events** since Fall 2023 such as helping people in crisis and referring people to services.
- This investment of **\$6.9 million** will double the size of the CARE team (24 CCR to 48 CCRs, 6 supervisors, 1 manager) and doubling hours of operations, citywide.
- Our objective for CARE in 2026 is for responders to be directly dispatched to help people in need with appropriate and safe low-acuity crisis calls throughout Seattle.



CARE Department: 9-1-1 Call Center

CARE is the primary 9-1-1 call center in Seattle, operates 24/7, 365 days a year. In 2024, they handled **over 890,000** calls.

This proposal adds:

- **\$2.6 million** for 12 additional 9-1-1 call takers, 3 training/quality staff, and 3 business support staff.
- **\$15 million** to provide ongoing, stable funding for CARE.



Fire Recruits

SFD has a strong record of fire prevention resulting in fewer fires than the **national average** and of other cities with similar populations.

This proposal adds **\$2 million** in funding for hiring and training 20 additional recruits in 2026, bringing the total funded recruits to 100.



Photo by John Odegard



Investments in Substance Use Programming

September 25, 2025

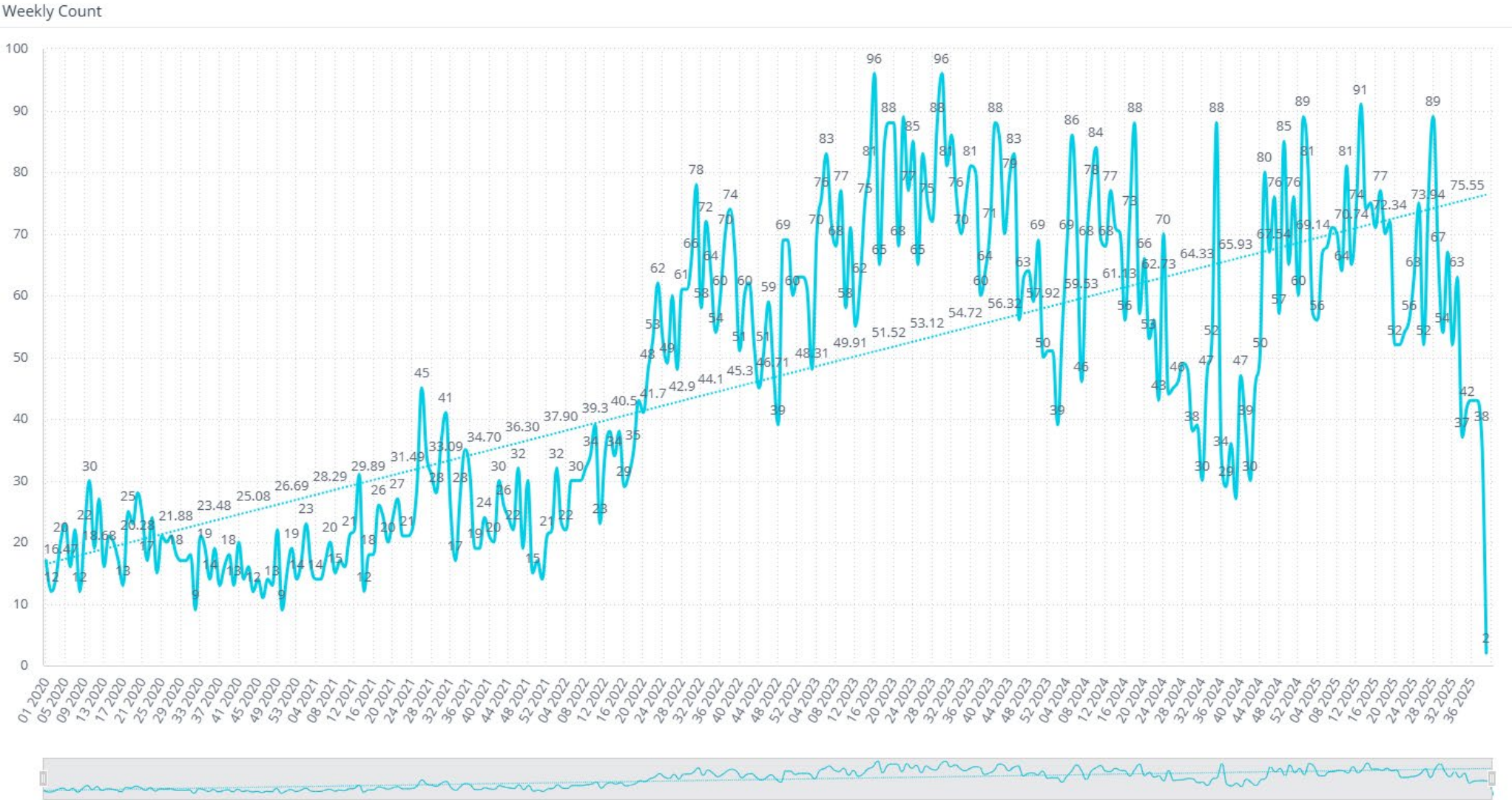
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Opioid Overdose In Seattle:

Weekly probable opioid overdoses, all SFD. Source: ESO Records



SFD Post Overdose Team (H99)

With this proposal we are investing **\$1.5 million** in the Seattle Fire Department's Post Overdose Team to expand service to 7 days a week.

This team originally launched in July 2023 with the goal of rapidly responding to overdoses in the City and connecting individuals with necessary referrals.

This team has responded to:

- 1,400 overdose responses, 738 non-duplicated clients
- 250 follow-up visits
- EMTs began giving Bupe in November 2024 – the 1st in USA





SFD + ORCA - An Overdose Care Ecosystem



H99

- Real-time OD response
- Rapport building, warm handoff
- ED diversion
- Field bupe
- ORCA/clinic/crisis center transport
- SFD liaisons

H98/POD

- System navigation
- Short-term case management
- Harm reduction / prevention
- Primary care connections
- Inpatient referrals
- Field-based outreach

DESC Orca

- Post-OD stabilization
Bupe/ methadone initiation
- Long-Acting Induction starts (in ORCA and field)
- 24-hour monitoring/eval
- Resource connections, discharge planning
- Peer services



Treatment

- **\$1.2 million** to expand the Downtown Emergency Service Center (DESC)'s **ORCA Patient Outreach Division (POD)**. This investment will grow the capacity of Registered Nurses providing critical engagement and medication services for people with opioid use disorders in Permanent Supportive Housing and shelters throughout Seattle.
- **\$2.84 million** to be used for a competitive selection for **detox and/or inpatient treatment bed/programs** in 2026.
- **\$1.8 million** supports the reopening of the Seattle Indian Health Board's **Thunderbird Treatment Center**, a 92-bed residential treatment facility offering expanded behavioral health services, including dedicated beds for pregnant and parenting adults.



Treatment / Diversion - LEAD



After losses of state and federal funding, this proposal invests an additional **\$5 million** of on-going funds to the LEAD program budget to maintain critical capacity needed to help divert people from the criminal legal system and help them access services to improve safety; this brings the total LEAD investment to nearly **\$14 million** in 2026.

Long-term case management for LEAD clients

- Addressing criminal legal involvement and other systemic involvement
- Housing navigation
- Overall health

Questions?

For full detail, see the Mayor's Proposed Budget at seattle.gov/budget

