

# Seattle Municipal Court

## 2021 Proposed Budget Overview

Presenters:

Hon. Willie Gregory, Presiding Judge

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Seattle City Council Select Budget Committee

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**City of Seattle**

# OPENING REMARKS – Hon. Willie Gregory, Presiding Judge

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## Seattle Municipal Court Guiding Principles:

1. Engage the community to guide court programs
2. Eliminate disproportional impacts upon Black, Indigenous, and People of Color
3. Collaborate with our stakeholders to transform the system and improve outcomes

# OPENING REMARKS – Hon. Willie Gregory, Presiding Judge

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## The Seattle Municipal Court

- Acknowledges our role in the inequity & ongoing struggles people of color face in the criminal legal system
- Commits to authentic community engagement focused on community-based solutions
- Made all warrants issued on Community Court eligible charges (non-DV, non-DUI) eligible for personal recognizance release. People will not sit in jail for low-level misdemeanor warrants.
- Eliminated all discretionary criminal fees including probation fees
- Looks forward to working with Council, Mayor, system stakeholders and our diverse communities to create a new system of justice for all

# OPENING REMARKS – Hon. Willie Gregory, Presiding Judge

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## The proposed 2021 SMC budget will:

- Transform Probation Services & decrease division's budget control level by 25%
- Focus smaller, restructured probation on case management for statutorily-mandated domestic violence (DV) and driving under the influence (DUI) cases, and critical Mental Health Court clients
- Reform pretrial justice with Seattle Community Court—a new collaborative approach to reduce system-based harm—for all other charge types
- Collaborate with organizations to build future community-based intervention system where judges can refer individuals to obtain critical support and services

# BUDGET SUMMARY

	2020 Adopted	2020 Revised		2021 Proposed	
<b>General Fund Appropriation</b>	<b>\$36,306,601</b>	<b>\$36,419,948</b>		<b>\$38,377,201</b>	
Change from 2020 Adopted		\$113,347	0.3%	\$2,070,600	5.7%
Change from 2020 Revised				\$1,957,253	5.4%
<b>Other Appropriation</b>	<b>\$0-</b>	<b>\$0-</b>		<b>\$0-</b>	
Change from 2020 Adopted		\$0-	0%	\$0-	0%
Change from 2020 Revised				\$0-	0%
<b>Full-time Equivalents (FTEs)</b>	<b>215.10</b>	<b>215.10</b>		<b>205.85</b>	
Change from 2020 Adopted		-	0%	(-9.25)	(-4.3%)
Change from 2020 Revised				(-9.25)	(-4.3%)

## ADDS, REDUCTIONS & COST SAVING MEASURES

#	Program	Fund	Appropriation Change (from 2020 Adopted)		FTE Change	Council Priority
1	Transform Probation Services (New Programs & Services)	GF Reduction	<b>(\$1.4 million)</b>	(25% of Probation; 4% of Court's budget)	<b>(12.75 FTE)</b>	
<p>In 2019, the Court independently sought an evaluation from the Vera Institute of Justice. In response to Vera's recommendations, the Court commits to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus resources to statutorily-mandated domestic violence (DV) &amp; driving under the influence (DUI) cases, and critical Mental Health Court clients, adopting a service model encompassing community feedback and aligning with principles in Vera report</li> <li>• Collaborate with community stakeholders to identify interventions that adequately support needs of justice involved persons</li> <li>• Realign Pretrial staffing and services to allow for expansion of Seattle Community Court —a new collaborative approach to reduce harm</li> <li>• Phase out day reporting program by 12/31/2020</li> </ul>						

## ADDS, REDUCTIONS & COST SAVING MEASURES

#	Program	Fund	Appropriation Change (from 2020 Adopted)		FTE Change	Council Priority
2	Connect Community Court with Agencies	GF (one time add)	\$100,000		0	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the redesigned Seattle Community Court—a pretrial release program that will reduce incarceration and rapidly resolve low-level, non-violent cases by connecting participants to community resources</li> <li>• Work with a non-profit to provide culturally appropriate case management services and make referrals to community-based agencies to support clients, with the goal of self-sufficiency outside the court system</li> </ul>						

## ADDS, REDUCTIONS & COST SAVING MEASURES

#	Program	Fund	Appropriation Change (from 2020 Adopted)		FTE Change	Council Priority
3	<b>Eliminate Information Technology Position</b>	<b>GF Reduction</b>	<b>(\$140,000)</b>		<b>(1.0)</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cut an IT position and funding in the Court Technology division</li> <li>• Absorb work with existing staff</li> </ul>						
4	<b>Reduce Computer Equipment</b>	<b>GF Reduction</b>	<b>(\$260,000)</b>		<b>0</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce computer and equipment purchases</li> <li>• Temporarily rely on Trial Court Improvement Account funding (TCIA) for replacement of IT equipment</li> </ul>						

\*Program Related to City's COVID Response

## TECHNICAL ADJUSTMENTS

#	Program	Fund	Appropriation Change (from 2020 Adopted)		FTE Change	Council Priority
5	Standard Cost	GF Baseline	\$3,144,974	8.5%	0	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adjust rates related to FAS, SITD, SDHR, and insurances</li> </ul>					
6	AWI	GF Baseline	\$653,588	1.6%	0	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adjust annual wage increase</li> </ul>					
7	Central Cost	GF Baseline	\$(27,962)	(0.05%)	0	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adjust baseline to the 2020 Central Cost Manual</li> </ul>					

\*Program Related to City's COVID Response

# RACIAL EQUITY

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## **Proposed Budget—Transform Probation Services**

Vera Evaluation of Probation Services identified disparate impacts on Black and female probation clients, and identified ways to provide more equitable case management and reduce overall system involvement

- Shift to a goal-based supervision approach, focused on short term engagement aligned with client treatment needs and community-based supportive services
- Ensure meaningful client interactions and use incentives for early release
- Engage stakeholders to reduce race and gender inequities in probation

# RACIAL EQUITY

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**New Seattle Community Court (SCC)** reduces system involvement and racial disproportionality by ensuring that all individuals charged with low-level misdemeanors, regardless of criminal history, will be eligible to participate

- As of July 2020, 26% of open SCC-eligible charges were for Black individuals
- Individuals are immediately released from jail and connected to services
- Embedding a contract social worker in the Community Resource Center to provide case management service including referrals to community-based services and agencies

# RACIAL EQUITY

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**Phase out previous Day Reporting** program by 12/31/2020, which inequitably impacted people of color

- In 2018, 34% of those assigned Day Reporting were Black, 7% higher than the overall percentage of Black individuals charged at SMC
- Program typically served low-income, high-needs individuals, and frequent in-person reporting has been a barrier to success
- Completion rate of Day Reporting program was very low—in 2018, only 22% successfully completed
- Moving toward Pretrial Services model that supports client success
- Beginning this fall, working with Harvard Kennedy School of Government National Bail Reform project to further reduce disproportionate impact at the bail decision intercept

# RACIAL EQUITY

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## **Economic Equity: Elimination of Discretionary Fees in Criminal Cases**

- The Court has eliminated all discretionary fines and fees imposed in criminal cases:
  - probation supervision fee
  - records check fee
  - work crew fee
  - community service set up fee
- Probation and records check fees most often amount to \$600 and \$240 fees per person
- The Court expects this will benefit over 1,000 individuals per year
- This will reduce an average of \$268,000 annually to the City's General Fund

# RACIAL EQUITY

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## Diverse and Inclusive Workforce

- Court continues to designate funding for RSJ training and mandates RSJ trainings for all court staff
- In collaboration with the SMC RSJI Change Team:
  - ✓ Revising job qualifications to address high experience/educational hiring thresholds
  - ✓ Updated recruitment, interview and hiring processes
  - ✓ Reviewing and updating recruitment guidelines through an RSJI lens

# RACIAL EQUITY

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## Diverse and Inclusive Workforce

- Expanding opportunities for advancement within the organization
- Implementing professional development and *Interview with Confidence* programs for court employees
- Piloted new approach to anti-harassment, anti-discrimination training in partnership with SDHR
  - ✓ *Responsive Workplace Culture* training moves from avoiding liability to building trust

# RACIAL EQUITY

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## **Potential Council funding to further reduce racial inequity in the criminal legal system:**

- Dedicated housing resource to address court clients' immediate needs, particularly in the Seattle Community Court

# QUESTIONS?

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