



**LAW ENFORCEMENT
ASSISTED DIVERSION**
Let Everyone Advance with Dignity

Diversion & LEAD utilization since Seattle drug ordinance adoption (October 2023)

City Council Public Safety Committee

April 28, 2026

LEAD overview

- LEAD recovery services model of care aligns with **SAMHSA recovery framework** pillars (a safe place to live, access to medical & behavioral health care, relationship/connection, & well-founded hope for a meaningful life)
- Long term case management + legal services + legal system coordination
- Long term case management itself is a core recovery services intervention under WA law; case managers are skilled in supporting behavior change through motivational interviewing, broker other benefits & services, provide housing navigation & legal system coordination, & connect to clinically appropriate treatment resources



Evaluation & research

58%

Independent UW researchers funded by Laura & John Arnold Foundation found LEAD reduced recidivism for all crimes by 58%, reduced felony charges by 39%, resulted in 41 fewer days in jail per person annually, and lowered the odds of entering prison by 88%.

89%

Participants' odds of being housed increased 89% & odds of being on employment continuum increased 46% over status at entry

King County Auditor (2022) found LEAD Seattle/King County unique among local diversion programs in commitment to rigorous evaluation & using data to make program adjustments

DIVERSION & REFERRAL PATHWAYS

ARREST DIVERSION

Post-arrest referral
by law enforcement
("arrest referrals")



SOCIAL CONTACT REFERRAL

Proactive referral by
first responders
outside context of
arrest ("social contact
referrals")



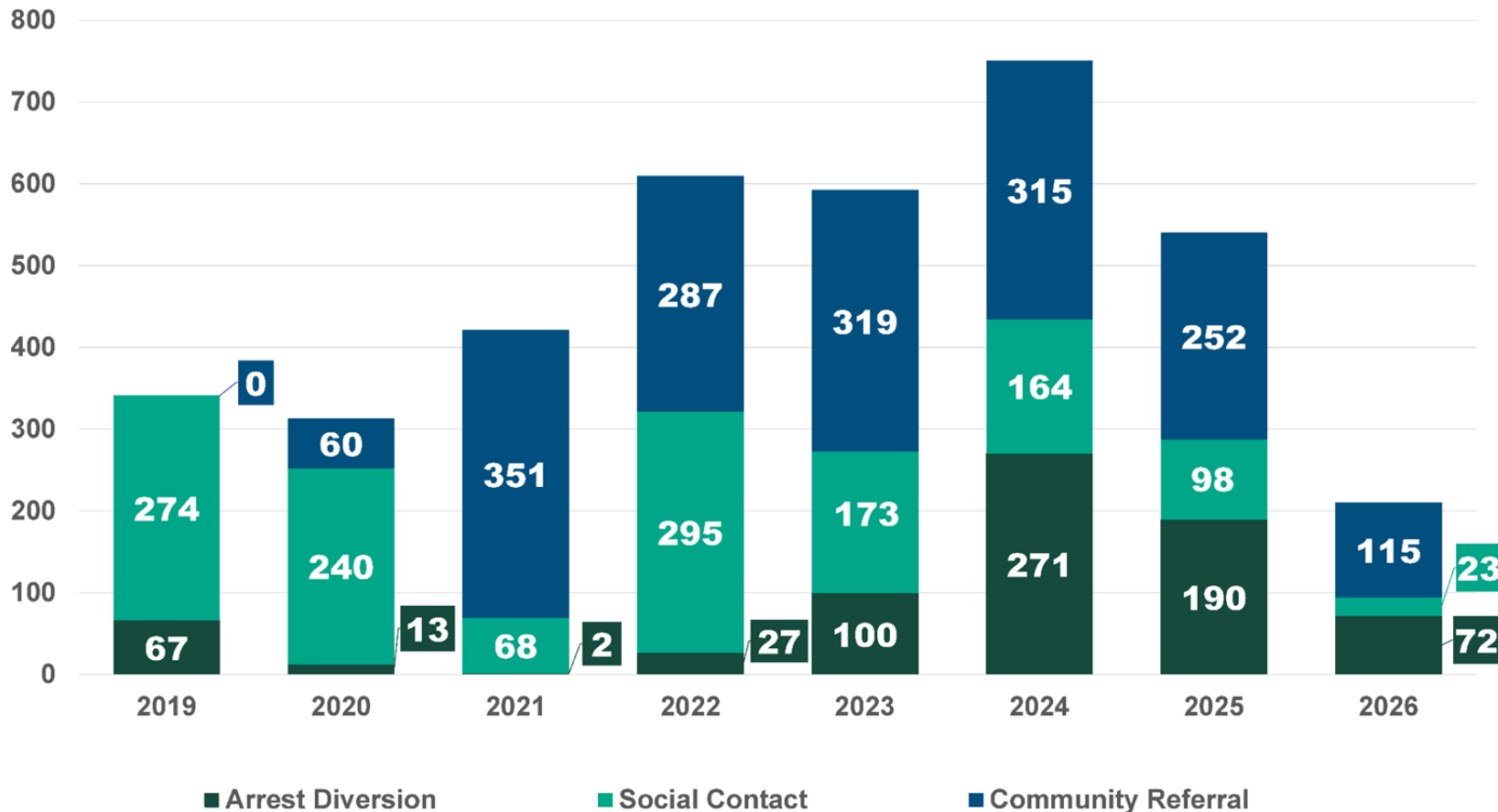
COMMUNITY REFERRAL

Community referrals
without need to pass
through emergency
response systems.
(Includes pre-filing
referrals from SCAO.)



SEATTLE REFERRALS BY TYPE - 2019 THRU MARCH 2026 - YEARLY

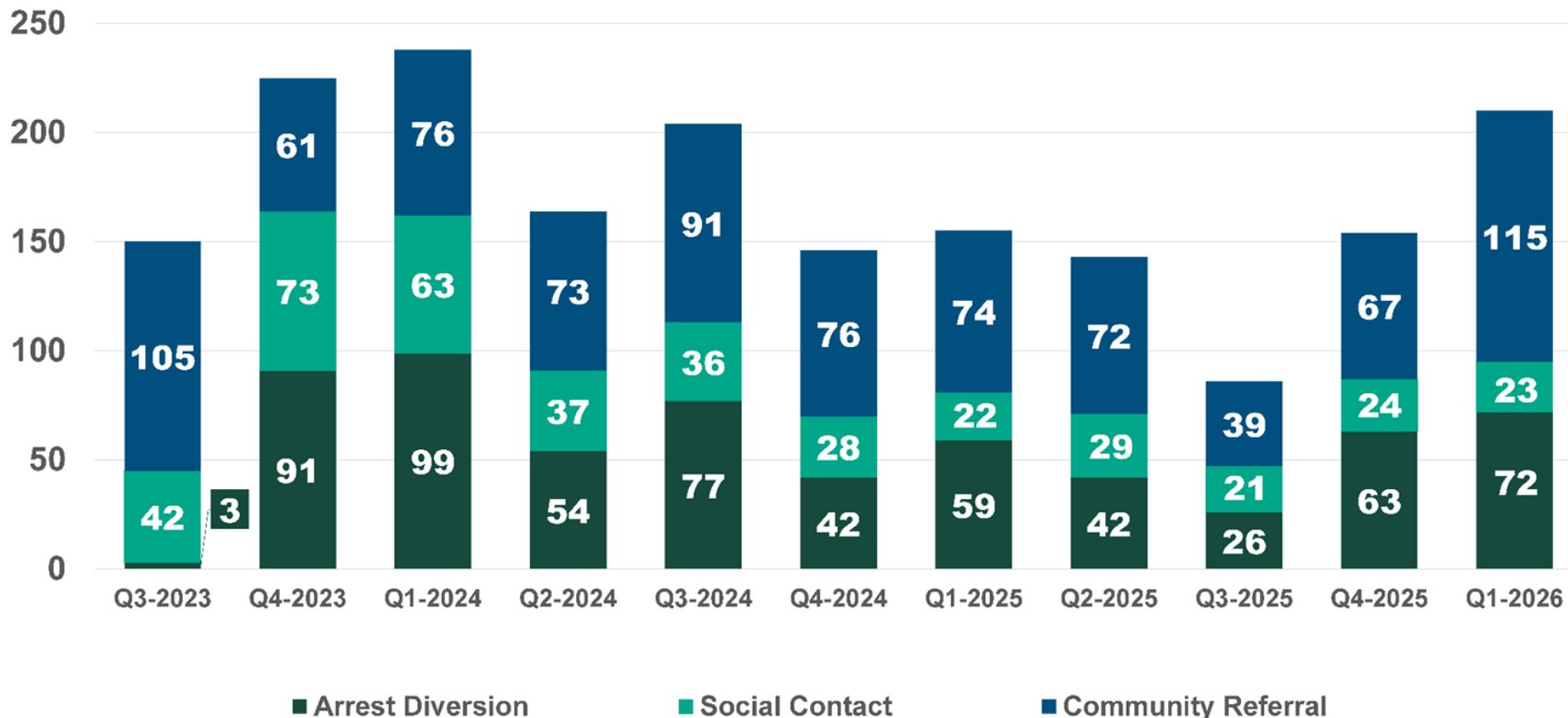
(Referrals Approved for CoLEAD are Not Included In these figures)



*Note: includes handful of arrest diversions for other offenses

SEATTLE REFERRALS BY TYPE - Q3 2023 THRU Q1 2026

(Referrals Approved for CoLEAD are Not Included In these figures)



*Note: includes handful of arrest diversions for other offenses

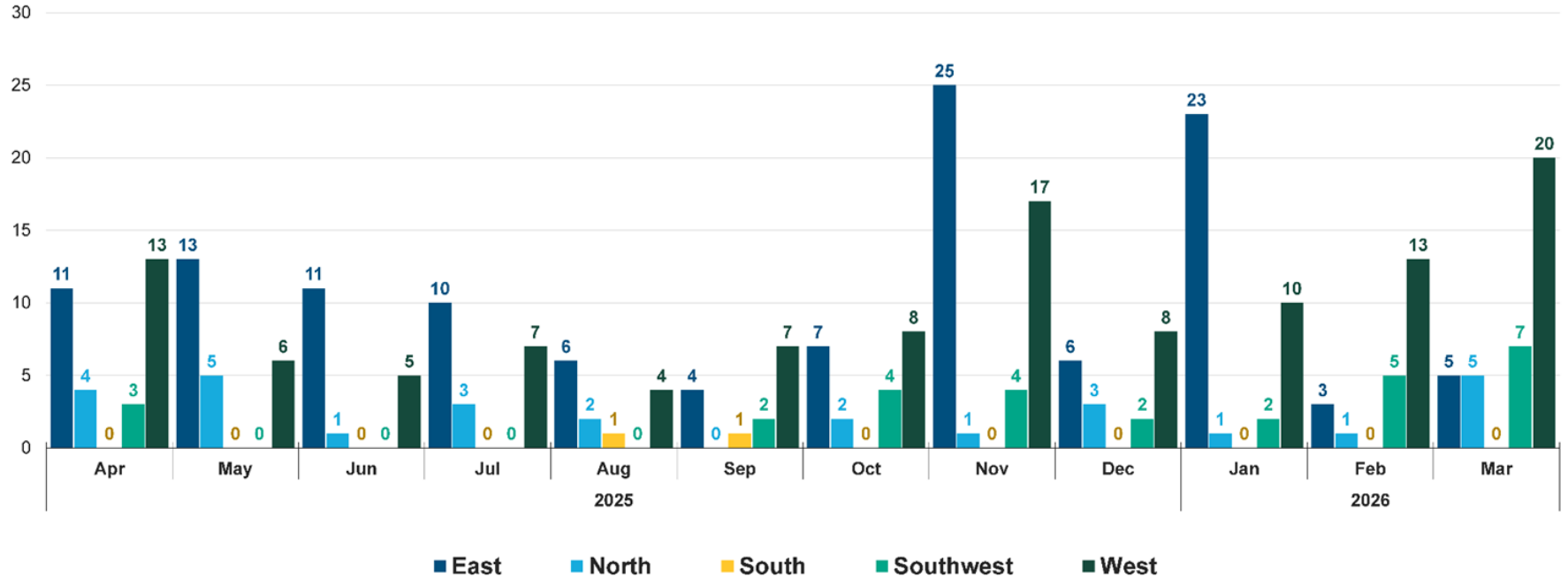
Projected 2026 referrals

- 380 SPD referrals (even without planned e-learning & roll call trainings)
 - 288 post-arrest referrals
 - 92 social contact referrals
- CARE referrals TDB (launching spring 2026)
- 460 community referrals* (includes pre-filing referrals from SCAO)
 - ... based on Q1 referral data (will not be a straight line in real life conditions)

*With a community awareness campaign, this number would be much higher—community referral sources have proven very capable of identifying people with chronic law violations related to behavioral health and poverty, without needed to route those through emergency response systems.



SEATTLE LAW ENFORCEMENT REFERRALS PER MONTH BY PRECINCT - APRIL 2025 THRU MARCH 2026



Oversight & Accountability

- LEAD is overseen by a governing body that includes Mayor, City Council Public Safety Chair, SPD Chief, City Attorney, King Co. Executive, King County Council Law & Justice Chair, Sheriff & King County Prosecutor
- City of Seattle funding has been audited annually by HSD including client file review, rigorous financial practices auditing, & contract compliance site visit
- LEAD identified by King County Auditor as unique among local diversion programs for its commitment to rigorous evaluation & use of data for systematic program improvement



2026 LEAD Re-boot Initiatives

[These steps could not be undertaken until stabilization funding was confirmed in 2025 budget process:]

- all-SPD e-learning module on LEAD to be released Spring 2026
- roll call trainings to resume (had been suspended due to lack of capacity to take new referrals)
- Operational Workgroups (case conferencing with officers) to recommence starting in North Precinct
- data integration project to debut (see next slide)



SPD & LEAD Data Integration Roadmap

Where we are and where we are headed...

CURRENT STATE

Where We Are

Active

- **CAPABILITY**
Officers can see in real time basic demographic and case management information in SPD systems (pursuant to LEAD Release of Information)
- **METHOD**
On-demand pull request from LEAD database via API (Application Programming Interface).
- **GOAL**
Match LEAD records with Mark43 records to verify program participation.

MID-LATE-2026

Phase 2 Expansion

Preliminary Planning

- **FOCUS**
Direct notifications to LEAD CRM from Mark43 dispatch about arrest diversions initiated in-field.
- **TECHNICAL**
Add common identifier to CRM linking subject records to LEAD participant records.
- **OBJECTIVE**
Align arrest diversion data between both systems, speed screening & intake and potentially auto-generate LEAD coversheet.

2027?

Phase 3

Integrated Case Management

- **VISION**
Direct notification of all police contact with any active LEAD participant.
- **OUTCOME**
Empowers participant case management team(s) to inform a quick and supportive response to upticks in police engagement.
- **IMPACT**
Continuity of care partnership with law enforcement. Quicker response for crisis stabilization.