

2022

# ANNUAL REPORT



**King County District Court** 



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# King County District Court Mission Statement

To serve the public by:

- Providing an accessible forum for the fair, efficient and understandable resolution of civil and criminal cases; and
  - Maintaining an atmosphere of respect for the dignity of all individuals.
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# CHIEF PRESIDING JUDGE'S MESSAGE

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King County District Court provides a place for peaceful resolution of conflicts and due process of law. These are pillars of what allows our representative democracy to function. I would like to highlight three areas the Court focused on in 2022 as we strived to fulfill our mission of providing an accessible forum for the fair, efficient and understandable resolution of civil and criminal cases; and for maintaining an atmosphere of respect for the dignity of all individuals.

## **Restoring operations and services post-pandemic**

This past year the Court worked diligently to resolve a substantial backlog of small claims and infractions cases that had resulted from the COVID-19 Pandemic. With several judicial appointments by the King County Council in 2021, the Court had a full bench of 25 judges in 2022, and with the help of two court commissioners, we were able to clear the COVID case backlog. Now that the worst of the Pandemic is behind us, the Court also has worked to restore services that had been suspended, including resuming accepting applications for U.S. passports and returning to in-person operations at our community resource centers.

## **Advancing diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) in the justice system**

In 2022, the Court faced a painful reckoning as a former Presiding Judge was found to have used racist language. While the Court has been actively focused for years on working to create a safe and welcoming environment for all people, that incident showed how much work we still need to do.

In response, the District Court judges re-affirmed our commitment to take the lead in eradicating racism from the judicial system. One of the essential actions we took in 2022 was to formally establish under the Court's Local Rules, a standing DEI Committee of judges and staff to make recommendations to the Court's Executive Committee regarding all diversity, equity and inclusion matters. Other actions included microaggression awareness training for all judges, and presentations for staff and judges on topics ranging from gender equity to challenges faced by LGBTQIA+, Latinx and Indigenous peoples. Additional details on our ongoing DEI work can be found on pages 6 & 7 of this 2022 Annual Report.

## **Enhancing safety in our courthouse locations**

To help ensure the Court continues to be a safe environment for court users, employees and judges, the Court's Security Committee continued its work on implementing the goals and standards set out in Washington State Courts General Rule 36, *Trial Court Security*. This included hosting training on how to respond to active lethal threats; conducting security audits for all District Court locations; and engaging with staff and the public regarding their security concerns.

I am deeply grateful to the District Court staff and judges for all they do every day to serve the people of King County, and I look forward to working with all of them and our city partners and local policy makers in the coming year to further advance the Court's work.

*Judge Matthew York*  
January 2023

# COURT OVERVIEW & SERVICES

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Twenty-five elected and appointed judges serve the public at nine King County District Court locations throughout the County (see map on page 3). The Court is one of the busiest courts in Washington, and is a leader in many areas involving public safety and access to justice.

## Judicial Services Provided

King County District Court handles **infraction** and **misdemeanor** cases filed by King County and the State of Washington, and is contracted to provide **municipal court services** for 14 cities throughout the County (see map on page 4).

The Court's judges hold **felony first appearance hearings** at the King County Correctional Facility (downtown Seattle Jail) and at the Maleng Regional Justice Center (MRJC) in Kent. The court also accepts petitions for a range of **protective orders** and handles a variety of **civil matters**, including **small claims** cases.

King County District Court operates several **therapeutic courts**, including King County Regional Mental Health Court (RMHC), King County Regional Veterans Court (RVC) and community courts in Auburn, Redmond and Shoreline (see "Therapeutic Courts" on page 11 of this 2022 Annual Report).

As a court of limited jurisdiction, King County District Court is responsible for the following types of matters:

- Civil litigation matters up to \$100,000 per claimant
- Small claims matters up to \$10,000
- Nuisance violations
- False alarm hearings
- Vehicle tow and impound hearings
- Anti-harassment orders
- Domestic violence protection orders
- Name changes
- Infractions (traffic, non-traffic and parking)
- Misdemeanor and gross misdemeanor criminal cases
- Felony expedited cases
- Felony preliminary hearings
- Search warrants
- Garnishments and other supplemental proceedings
- Lien foreclosure and forfeiture hearings

## Funding

Funding for the Court is primarily through the King County General Fund, which is supported by property and sales taxes. The Court's therapeutic courts are funded by the King County MIDD Behavioral Health Sales Tax Fund and the King County Veterans, Seniors and Human Services Levy (VSHSL).



# COURTHOUSE LOCATIONS

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King County District Court serves the public at eight courthouse locations throughout the County, along with holding court in the King County Jail in downtown Seattle and once per month on Vashon Island.



# CONTRACTING CITIES

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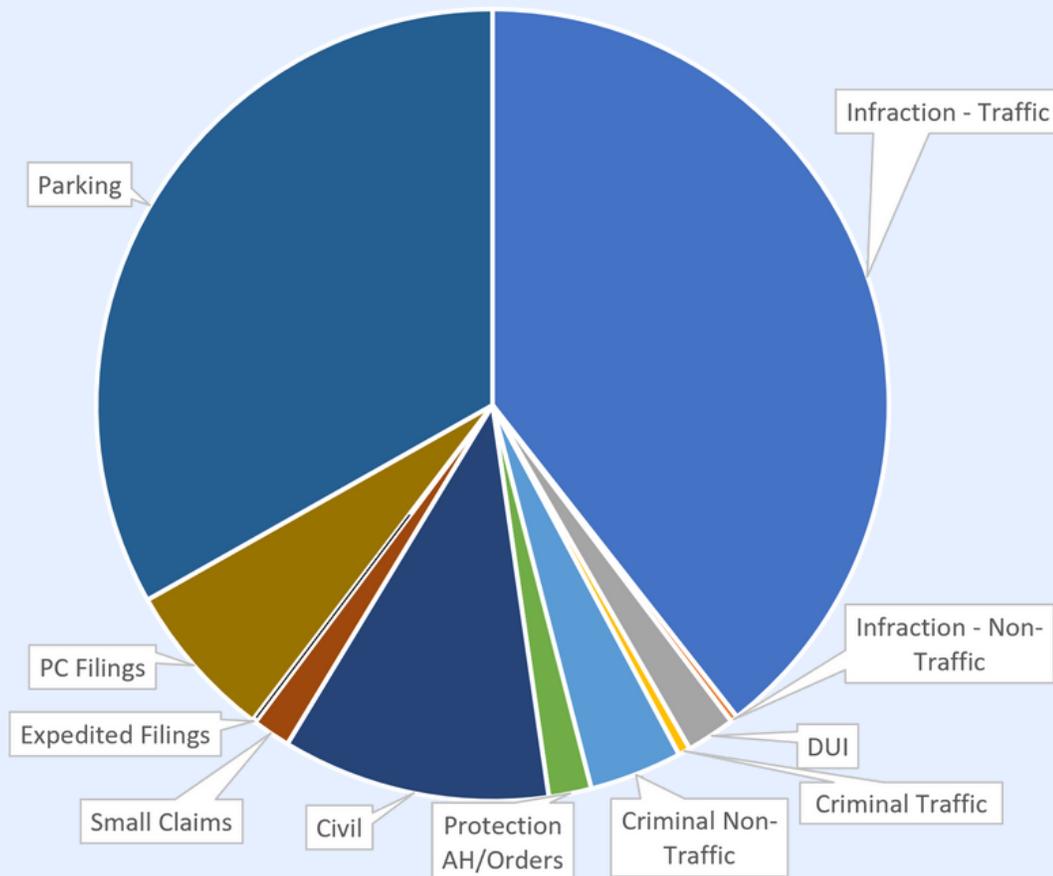
Fourteen cities throughout King County contract with King County District Court to provide their municipal court services.



# 2022 CASELOAD

## 137,485

### Total Cases Filed\*



Case type	# of cases	Percent of total
Infraction - Traffic	54,201	39.4%
Infraction - Non-Traffic	404	0.3%
DUI	2,746	2.0%
Criminal Traffic	671	0.5%
Criminal Non-Traffic	5,203	3.8%
Protection AH/Orders	2,395	1.7%
Civil	15,031	10.9%
Small Claims	2,141	1.6%
Expedited Filings	188	0.1%
PC Filings	8,887	6.5%
Parking	45,618	33.2%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>137,485</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

\* Data on this page do not include December 2022 filings for the Cities of Algona and Pacific, which are anticipated to be less than 100 filings. Those data will be available in February 2023.

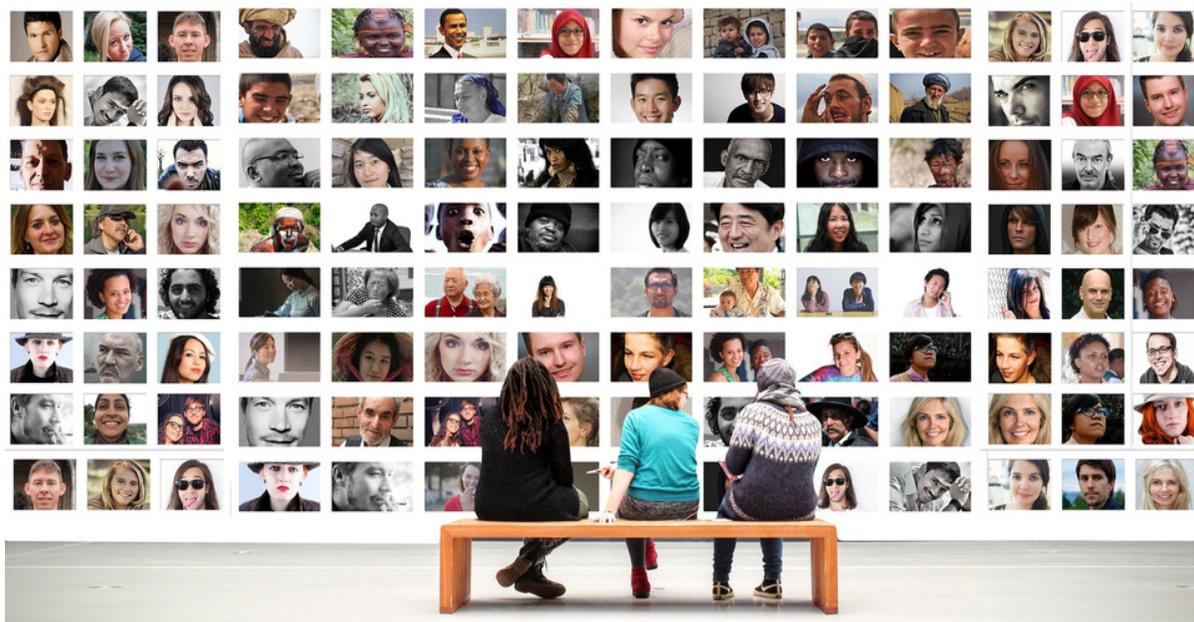
# DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION (DEI)

King County District Court is committed to providing an accessible forum for the fair, efficient and understandable resolution of civil and criminal cases; and maintaining an atmosphere of respect for the dignity of all individuals. To help deliver on these promises, the Court is active in advancing diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) initiatives throughout the justice system.

## 2022 Highlights

- **DEI Committee formally established** – The Court’s judges adopted changes to Local Rule LARLJ 0.8 to convert the Court’s long-standing Equity & Social Justice Committee (ESJ) into a Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) Committee. The officially established DEI Committee’s scope was expanded to “(develop) policies regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion that affect King County District Court, the communities it serves, the people working in the Divisions, other courts and public and private sector entities.” The DEI Committee is comprised of judges, directors, managers, and court and probation staff.
- **Microaggression awareness training** – The Court’s judges completed microaggression awareness training to better understand the experiences of marginalized groups of people and to reduce implicit bias. The Court will be expanding the training to staff and managers in 2023.

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# DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION (DEI)

## *(continued)*

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- **Anti-Racist Courtroom Training** - Two King County District Court judges and the Chief Administrative Officer and Deputy Chief Administrative Officer completed a four-day course, "The Anti-Racist Courtroom: Theory and Practice," put on by the National Judicial College. Training on this topic will be provided to all District Court judges and staff in 2023.
- **Leadership in bringing trauma-informed training to Washington courts** - As courts often serve people from diverse backgrounds who have experienced a wide range of traumas, District Court's DEI Committee and Therapeutic Courts Team led a multi-organization effort to successfully obtain a grant to attend U.S. Dept of Health & Human Services (DHHS) training on "How Being Trauma-Informed Improves Criminal Justice System Responses." See the "Therapeutic Courts" section on page 12 of this 2022 Annual Report for additional details.
- **National Drug Court Institute Equity & Inclusion training** - The Court's Therapeutic Courts Team members attended Equity & Inclusion training offered by the National Drug Court Institute (NDCI). The training focused on addressing racial disparities and bias to ensure equivalent access, retention, treatment, incentives and sanctions and dispositions in order to improve outcomes in treatment court programs. Court staff attended the training to help ensure that people's access to and experience in King County District Court therapeutic courts does not differ based on race.
- **Presentations on challenges faced by marginalized groups** - The Court's DEI Committee arranged and presented the following programs to staff and judges in 2022:
  - Gender Equity - "Unseen, Unheard, but not Forgotten"
  - LGBTQIA+ Pride Month - "Prejudice, Pride and Progress"
  - Latinx Heritage Month - "Hear Our Voices"
  - Indigenous Peoples - "State v. Shopbell/Paul - Countervailing Law Enforcement Bias"
- **Funding secured for DEI training in 2023 and 2024** - As part of the County's 2023/2024 biennial budget, the King County Council provided the Court with \$250,00 in funding to support its diversity, equity and inclusion training for judges and staff over the next two years.

# JUDICIAL CHANGES

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## Newly Elected Judges

King County voters elected two new District Court judges in the November 2022 General Election to replace departing judges.



**Judge Karama H. Hawkins**  
*Shoreline Electoral District*



**Judge Andrea S. Jarmon**  
*Southwest Electoral District*

## Newly Appointed Judge

The King County Council appointed one new District Court judge in January 2023 to fill a judicial vacancy.



**Judge Raul Martinez**  
*Shoreline Electoral District*

## Departing Judges

- **Judge Marcine Anderson** (*left the Court at end of the 2022 judicial term*)
- **Judge Joseph Campagna** (*appointed to King County Superior Court in 2022*)
- **Judge Susan Mahoney** (*left the Court at end of the 2022 judicial term*)



# NEW ONLINE JURY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

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To make it easier for jurors to respond to summons and to serve on a jury, King County District Court launched a new online Jury Management System in 2022. The new system provides jurors and Court staff with one convenient web-based platform to accomplish all jury-related tasks.

The Court's new Juror Portal was designed to make the entire jury process simpler and more intuitive for people who have been summoned. It allows them to confirm if they are qualified and able to serve; to request to be excused; to reschedule their service and accomplish other tasks - all online, using their computer or mobile device.

The system also streamlines the jury process for Court staff to better serve the public, while making the most efficient use of public resources.



# THERAPEUTIC COURTS

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King County District Court operates several therapeutic courts, including King County Regional Mental Health Court (RMHC), King County Regional Veterans Court (RVC) and Community Courts in Auburn, Redmond and Shoreline. These innovative courts help people address the challenges in their lives that can contribute to criminal behavior. The goal is improved well-being for individuals and a safer King County overall.

## **Regional Mental Health Court (RMHC)**

RMHC's mission is to engage, support and facilitate the sustained stability of individuals with mental health disorders within the criminal justice system, while reducing recidivism and increasing community safety.

RMHC has been proven to reduce criminal recidivism by 26 percent and increase participation in substance use disorder treatment by 37 percentage points, according to an in-depth study conducted by the Washington State Dept. of Social and Health Services (DSHS).

### 2022 Statistics

- 37 participants graduated from the program
- 87 active participants are continuing in the program, as of Dec. 31, 2022

## **Regional Veterans Court (RVC)**

King County District Court recognizes that veterans in the justice system may be suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and other service-related disabilities. RVC seeks to increase effective cooperation between federal, state, and local veterans service agencies and the criminal justice system in order to address the underlying issues that resulted in the veteran being referred to the criminal justice system.

### 2022 Statistics

- 17 participants graduated from the program
- 16 active participants are continuing in the program, as of Dec. 31, 2022



*Regional Veterans Court celebrated its 10th anniversary in June 2022 with a special event honoring program graduates and recognizing the many team members who make RVC successful, including King County District Court, King County Prosecutors Office, King County Dept. of Public Defense, Public Health – Seattle & King County, and U.S. Veterans Administration (VA).*

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# THERAPEUTIC COURTS

## (CONTINUED)

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### Community Courts

Community courts provide services and accountability for people who are eligible and choose to participate. An assessment is conducted for all community court participants to identify their challenges and strengths. The assessment provides information to help determine what follow-up steps an individual community court participant will be required to take, such as community service. King County District Court operates three Community Courts: Auburn, Redmond and Shoreline.

The Community Resource Centers that are an essential part of the three Community Courts resumed in-person operations in 2022, as the COVID-19 Pandemic wanes. The Court also continues to offer the Virtual Resource Center (VRC) it launched during the pandemic to provide convenient community-wide access online and via telephone to a wide range of social service providers.

#### 2022 Statistics

Total for Auburn, Redmond and Shoreline

- 45 participants graduated from the program
- 101 active participants are continuing in the program, as of Dec. 31, 2022

“Community court has given me that extra push I needed to get clean and get into outpatient, like I had been trying to do for two years. Now I’m sober for like the first time in 15 years.” ~ *Camia, a 2022 Community Court in Auburn Graduate*

### Trauma-Informed Training

To help raise awareness of the importance of trauma-informed care within the Washington state criminal justice system, King County District Court led a multi-organization effort to successfully obtain a grant to attend a U.S. Dept of Health & Human Services (DHHS) training event in spring 2022 on “How Being Trauma-Informed Improves Criminal Justice System Responses.”

The King County District Court Therapeutic Courts Team and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Committee partnered with these organizations to obtain the DHHS grant:

- Washington State Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC)
- District and Municipal Court Management Association (DMCMA)
- Misdemeanor Probation Association (MPA)

Twenty staff from King County District Court and these organizations completed a “Train-the-Trainer” event to provide trauma-informed care training to the Court’s staff and judges, as well as to other criminal justice system employees throughout Washington.

### National Drug Court Institute Equity & Inclusion Training: Therapeutic Courts Team

See the “Diversity, Equity & Inclusion” section on page 7 of this 2022 Annual Report.

# JUDGES & COURT LEADERSHIP

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## Leadership

- Judge Matthew York, Chief Presiding Judge
- Judge Corinna Harn, Assistant Chief Presiding Judge
- Judge Lisa O'Toole, East Division Presiding Judge
- Judge Rebecca C. Robertson, West Division Presiding Judge
- Judge Brian Todd, South Division Presiding Judge
  
- Othniel Palomino, Chief Administrative Officer
- Tina Gill, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer
- Yanna Filippidis, Operations Director - Cities
- Patrick Wells, Operations Director - State
- Regina Alexander, Probation Director
- Heather Dean, Budget Director
- Kanani Johnson, Central Services Director
- Enrique Kuttemplon, Information Technology Director
- Kevin Whitley, Human Resources Director

## Judges

- Judge Virginia M. Amato
- Judge Kuljinder Dhillon
- Judge Michael Finkle
- Judge Michelle Gehlsen
- Judge Laurel Gibson
- Judge Nathaniel Green
- Judge Corinna Harn
- Judge Karama H. Hawkins
- Judge Gregg Hirakawa
- Judge Andrea S. Jarmon
- Judge Jill Klinge
- Judge Rhonda Laumann
- Judge Raul Martinez
  
- Judge Fa'amomoi Masaniai
- Judge Marcus Naylor
- Judge Lisa O'Toole
- Judge Lisa Paglisotti
- Judge Kevin Peck
- Judge E. Rania Rampersad
- Judge Rebecca C. Robertson
- Judge Kristin Shotwell
- Judge Elizabeth D. Stephenson
- Judge Leah Taguba
- Judge Brian Todd
- Judge Matthew York