

Law & Justice Council

Data Subcommittee Proposal

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Introduction

The Thurston County Law & Justice Council exists to “provide an inter-jurisdictional form for consideration of initiatives and resources to improve criminal justice services, enhance public safety and reduce crime” in Thurston County.

The council is responsible for the following:

1. Monitoring impacts of changes in law enforcement staffing levels, countywide, on public safety;
2. Monitoring impacts of changes in State Department of Corrections services to/supervision of parolees and making recommendations to local jurisdictions regarding appropriate responses;
3. Monitoring the availability and effectiveness of community services and supports for Thurston County as those services impact crime and crime prevention;
4. Reviewing crime trends and suggesting interagency approaches as needed;
5. Serving as the oversight committee for multi-jurisdictional law and justice projects with an intent to reduce duplication of services and recommend cost containment and service efficiencies;
6. Reviewing inter-agency communication and technology needs and making recommendations to local law enforcement agencies as appropriate;
7. Advising the Board of County Commissioners and City Councils on county-wide public safety issues;
8. Seeking resources and “best practice” approaches to addressing emerging public safety and law & justice issues (consider consolidation of other inter-jurisdictional law & justice work groups/task forces);
9. Developing an agenda of items to be considered by the Washington State Legislature as needed;
10. Fulfilling the requirements of RCW 72.09.300.

To best meet the goals of monitoring various impacts, reviewing crime trends, and using best practice approaches, the Thurston County Law & Justice Council should consider creating a Data Subcommittee. This document serves as an initial proposal for this subcommittee, and what its initial work may look like.

Data subcommittee proposal

The Data Subcommittee can be proposed at the October 2021 Law & Justice Council Meeting. The following approach to the subcommittee and its work is recommended.

Phase one

Thurston County lacks one data source that houses all criminal justice data. In addition, many criminal justice stakeholders who collect data have outdated systems that make data sharing more difficult. These issues create a barrier to using our own data to reach goals, such as informing potential policy improvements, or analyzing success of programs.

In phase one, the subcommittee should work to improve data systems and data collection among its stakeholders.

Subcommittee Membership

Subcommittee members are those who may contribute data to a future criminal justice data warehouse as well as those who may provide system oversight. Recommended subcommittee members include:

- Lacey Police Department
- Olympia Police Department
- Tenino Police Department
- Thurston County Board of County Commissioners
- Thurston County Criminal Justice Regional Program Manager
- Thurston County District Court
- Thurston County Jail
- Thurston County Pretrial Services
- Thurston County Prosecuting Attorney's Office
- Thurston County Public Defense
- Thurston County Sheriff's Office
- Thurston County Superior Court
- Treatment Sales Tax
- Tumwater Police Department
- Yelm Police Department

Improving data systems

1. Once formed, the subcommittee should review best practices for criminal justice data collection and compare this to the current state of data in the county. Areas for improvement, as well as areas where stakeholders excel, should be identified.
2. Once areas for improvement in current data systems have been identified, the subcommittee should support stakeholders in their work towards aligning data collection with best practice. For example, if it is determined that an agency does not collect a

certain variable that would be beneficial, the subcommittee should help the agency determine how they can begin collecting this in the future.

3. The subcommittee should also support the improvement of data systems and software. For those stakeholders that have outdated systems, the subcommittee should help identify what improvements can be made to those systems or if new software is needed.

Phase two

Once data collection and the various systems have been improved, the subcommittee can focus on creating a county-wide criminal justice data warehouse and the subcommittee can become the warehouse's Data Governance Council.

Criminal justice data warehouse

Once the data systems have been improved, the subcommittee should create a proposal for the creation of a county-wide criminal justice data warehouse. This would be one location managed by the county that stakeholders regularly contribute data to. Data would come from each stakeholder and be uploaded to the data warehouse where it is matched to other data sources. Once matching is completed, a de-identified data set that allows you to track one individual across their time in the criminal justice system is established.

Data governance council

With the creation of a criminal justice warehouse comes the need for a Data Governance Council. The council would have one representative from each stakeholder group that contributes data to the warehouse, as well as a representative from the Law & Justice Council, and the Board of County Commissioners. The council may be facilitated by the Criminal Justice Regional Program Manager.

The purpose of the council is to monitor the criminal justice data warehouse and approve data use. Knowing that data contributed to the warehouse may be used for research purposes, the council would create a data governance manual that includes approved uses for the data. The manual should be written by the group and approved by a majority. Any requests for use of the data will come to the council for review and approval and must receive support from most council members to move forward.