

# THURSTON COUNTY LAW & JUSTICE COUNCIL

## CHARTER

- Name:** Thurston County Law and Justice Council
- Purpose:** Provide an inter-jurisdictional forum for consideration of initiatives and resources to improve criminal justice services, enhance public safety and reduce crime throughout Thurston County.
- Authority:** In 1987, the Washington State Legislature enacted legislation to establish local law and justice councils. (RCW 72.09.300). The role of the Law and Justice Council as defined by the state statute is to develop a local law and justice plan for the county, including issues related to proportionality, rehabilitative services and community services for juvenile offenders, data collection and reporting for both adult and juvenile offenders, alternatives to incarceration and services for offenders and current and future service/facility needs for local jail population.
- Background:** In 1993, Thurston County created its Law and Justice Council (Resolution 10412) and a Law and Justice Plan was formally adopted by the Board of County Commissioners in June 1996 (Resolution 11208).
- In 1998, the Thurston County Law and Justice Council was disbanded and replaced by an inter-governmental group convened to plan a new county jail and by an internal County work group, the Jail Population Management Group.
- In spring 2007, the State Legislature enacted Senate Bill 6157, known as the "Offender Re-entry Bill," focused on reducing criminal offender recidivism by increasing access to and coordination of offender services in communities. Section 108 of SB 6157 revitalized county law and justice councils with a focus on maximizing local resources including personnel and facilities, reducing duplication of services, and sharing resources between local and state government in order to accomplish local efficiencies without diminishing effectiveness.
- In late 2008, the impacts of the U.S. national recession began to seriously impact the Washington State economy and revenues of local governments, including Thurston County. The 2009 legislative session brought many reductions in state funded services for adult offenders and changed supervision and service delivery requirements for the State Department of Corrections. At the same time, Thurston County was faced with reducing over \$7 million in County General Fund expenditures, which reduced staffing levels in the Sheriff's Office (including the county jail), the Clerk's Office, the Prosecuting Attorney's Office, the Office of Assigned Counsel, and both District and Superior Courts. The Thurston County Commissioners and the Sheriff have been working on a strategic plan to

open the new Accountability and Restitution Center in 2012. The Law & Justice Council serves as an advisory body to this effort.

**Council**  
**Responsibilities:**

There is a renewed need for county-wide coordination of law enforcement responses and services, a unified approach to state legislative changes and mandates, an increase in shared resources and technology and coordinated responses to specific crimes like gang-related crimes and electronic fraud and issues related to social services for people who come into contact with the criminal justice system.

The Thurston County Law and Justice Council will be responsible for:

- 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.

**Voting Membership:**      Thurston County Commissioner  
Thurston County Sheriff  
Thurston County Prosecuting Attorney  
Thurston County Clerk  
Thurston County Superior Court Judge  
Thurston County District Court Judge  
Municipal Court Judge - Olympia  
City Council Representative from each local jurisdiction  
Chief of Thurston County Corrections  
Municipal Police Chief Representative  
Municipal Prosecutor -designated  
Representative from Washington Department of Corrections  
Office of Assigned Counsel, Director  
Thurston County Risk Manager  
Thurston County Public Health and Social Services Director  
Thurston County Juvenile Court Administrator

**Non-Voting Members:**      A representative of the Washington Department of Juvenile  
Rehabilitation Administration  
Thurston County Coroner  
Thurston County Juvenile Court Administrator  
911 T-Com Services Director  
Nisqually Tribe representative  
Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis representative  
Military representative - JBLM

**Sub-Committees:**      The Law and Justice Council may establish regular and ad-hoc sub-  
committees as needed. Each Sub-Committee shall appoint their own  
Chair; Sub-committee chairs will attend regular Law & Justice Council  
meetings. If a Sub-committee Chair is not an appointed member to the  
Council, the Chair will be an ex-officio, non-voting member of the  
Council.

**Meetings:**      Bi-monthly.

**Governance:**      The Thurston County Law and Justice Council shall elect a Chair from  
among its members at the first meeting. The term for the Chair shall be one  
year, renewable for a maximum of three one-year terms.

**Staffing:**      Thurston County will provide staff support for the Law and Justice  
Council for 2012. Other jurisdictions may be asked to assist with staff  
support for specific projects, based on need.

**Reporting:**      The Thurston County Law and Justice Council may produce reports for  
use by all local jurisdictions in the county.