LEAD SEATTLE · KING COUNTY | COLEAD

QUARTERLY REPORT

Q1 2025 • JANUARY - MARCH

CITYWIDE

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SUMMARY

CITYWIDE, YEAR-TO-DATE

1,287 CLIENTS

At the end of Q3 2024, LEAD/CoLEAD's Seattle roster contains 1,287 clients.*

3,836 SUBSTANTIVE MEETINGS

LEAD case managers conducted 3,836 meetings with LEAD clients to address unmet needs and work towards client goals.**

160 REFERRALS

LEAD/CoLEAD received 160 referrals for individuals needing support.



A CLOSER LOOK

* This includes active clients who are working with case managers on goals, as well as a smaller number of outreach clients who are in a rapport-building process with case managers. It also includes a small number of alumni clients who may be largely stabilized and self-sufficient, but for whom continued case manager support is beneficial as they set up their lives — even if it's just a few check-ins per year.

** LEAD has undergone a series of performance evaluations to test client outcomes, recidivism, and other metrics. One study found that each meeting between a LEAD client and LEAD case manager increases that client's likelihood of gaining shelter by 2%, and their likelihood of gaining permanent housing by 5%. The actual likelihood of gaining these resources depends on many factors, including the regional supply of shelter and housing.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

CITYWIDE, YEAR-TO-DATE

203 Connections to behavioral health programs

830 Connections to substance use treatment

1,236 Connections to legal services

145 Steps taken toward financial self-sufficiency



A CLOSER LOOK

For some LEAD clients, any substantive engagement with a case manager is a huge win. For all LEAD clients, every substantive meeting with a case manager is one step closer to stability.

LEAD clients often face additional barriers to housing, shelter, and other resources. For many LEAD clients, a LEAD case manager is the first form of interpersonal support in years. As a result, LEAD case managers are often required to engage in the slow task of building rapport and trust with LEAD clients before the arduous work of resource acquisition begins.

MAKING PLANS FOR PEOPLE

LEAD'S ROLE IN PUBLIC SAFETY

In order to create a positive felt impact in Seattle's downtown, we need to create plans for the people who are currently most visible and impactful. Through data collection, analysis, and advanced coordination between We Deliver Care (WDC) and LEAD, we have a uniquely powerful tool with which to accomplish this.

In the third quarter of 2024, we reported on data gathered through the Third Ave Project (TAP) regarding unique individuals encountered in the project area, and the number of encounters each individual had with the WDC team. From the first quarter of 2023 through the first quarter of 2025, TAP teams have now encountered about 1750 unique individuals in the TAP area. Under 100 people, or about 5% of the total encountered population, comprise the majority of the encounters. This matches an analysis published by the Seattle Times in 2024: when encampments are removed, or people are otherwise pushed out of other areas of the City, they come downtown. They come to find people, meet their needs, and then often leave. Some people stay; these are the people that LEAD is working to identify, understand, and case manage.

As of the first quarter of 2025, LEAD has been able to begin case management for over 70% of that 5% population, or the people most frequently encountered in the TAP area. This is a subsection of the population that is not only the most visible downtown, but who often faces the highest barriers to stabilizing services, and whose stability is most contingent on receiving intensive case management via LEAD. Now that WDC is also newly working in the Chinatown-International District (CID), we'll be able to gather data from the CID to add to what we already have from the TAP area. Anecdotally, we know that there is consistent migration between the downtown area and the CID. With the WDC team up and running in the CID, LEAD looks forward to understanding and wrapping around the population that frequents both the CID and Third Ave areas.

The catch: LEAD faces significant budget reductions in 2025. LEAD has never had the capacity to work with all eligible individuals, but has recently needed to downsize its workforce, and faces the possibility of additional downsizing this year. This could put future collaboration with WDC and other partners throughout the City on pause. Without LEAD, downtown efforts would lack the intensive case management services that allow the most complex, impactful, and vulnerable individuals a path forward. Looking ahead to 2025, LEAD hopes to sustain its critical contribution to the resolution of priority issues throughout Seattle's neighborhoods.

ONE CLIENT'S JOURNEY

In 2019, Charlotte, a 56-year-old Alaska Native woman, was living in a high-profile SODO encampment. Charlotte stayed in the encampment because it was her community, despite the surrounding neighborhood perceiving the encampment as a dangerous place. Several significant fires, along with frequent incidents of violence drew constant police attention. This soon resulted in an SPD officer meeting Charlotte and referring her with LEAD.

As Charlotte began working with LEAD, her LEAD Case Manager met with her consistently, showing up even when she did not want to work on anything. They began working on Charlotte's interests, supporting her in acquiring an ID and finding books she enjoyed. As trust developed between the two, Charlotte began to work on a bigger goal: keeping herself and her cats safe – a goal that blossomed into striving towards housing stability.

A year later, Charlotte got housed, which presented new challenges. Her survival behaviors, developed while living outside, were triggered during interactions with fellow building tenants. As time went on, she was arrested several times for assault while her case manager worked to help her get into different housing placements. This culminated in her losing her housing shortly after being released from jail. From there, she ended up in yet another high-profile encampment.

> "Sundays often find her on a yoga mat, a regular at a weekly class. At home, she's created a life with a dog, a kitten, and a credit score that's now approaching 700.

Charlotte's LEAD case manager supported her throughout her continuously changing circumstances. Fortunately, Charlotte's circumstances took a turn for the better when she was placed into supportive housing through the WA State's Right of Way Encampment Resolution Program. Charlotte felt that she was able to find community in her new housing, which was through Chief Seattle Club. While housed, she and her LEAD case manager worked together to help address her criminal legal system obligations, including completing her Community Center for Alternative Programs (CCAP) and CCAP Enhanced. While her case manager supported her, Charlotte did all the heavy lifting; she was looking for a hand up, not a handout.

Since then, things have continued to improve for Charlotte. By spring of 2025, she had completed her first year working at Chief Seattle Club as a Peer Support Specialist – a role that allows her to give back in ways that feel deeply meaningful.



ABOUT LEAD & COLEAD

Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD) is a widely replicated community-based, pre-booking diversion model that was designed and first implemented in Seattle/King County. CoLEAD utilizes the model and lessons learned from LEAD to provide temporary lodging and intensive case management.

PARTNERS

LEAD is governed under an interjurisdictional memorandum of understanding by a Policy Coordinating Group (PCG), to which the project management team reports. The PCG sets policy and approves all operational protocols for LEAD work.

PDA provides project management for Seattle LEAD and subcontracts with REACH, a program of Evergreen Treatment Services, to provide LEAD's outreach and case management services.

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