LEAD SEATTLE · KING COUNTY | COLEAD

QUARTERLY REPORT

Q2 2025 • APRIL-JUNE

CITYWIDE

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SUMMARY

CITY-WIDE, YEAR-TO-DATE

1,003

CLIENTS

At the end of Q2 2025, LEAD/CoLEAD's Seattle roster contained 1,003 clients.*

13,697

SUBSTANTIVE MEETINGS

These figures blend CoLEAD and LEAD outcomes; frequency of meetings increases with CoLEAD because participants are available on site.**

323

REFERRALS

LEAD/CoLEAD received 323 referrals for individuals needing support.

Q1 Q2 Q3 Q4

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 participant and case manager increases that person's likelihood of gaining shelter or permanent supportive housing. The actual likelihood of gaining these resources depends on many factors, including the regional supply of shelter and housing.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

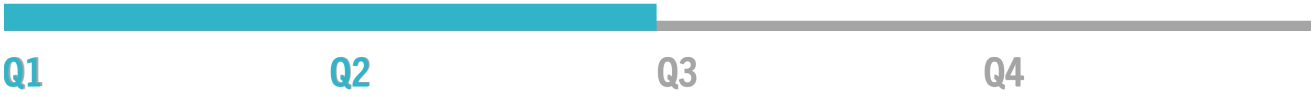
CITY-WIDE, YEAR-TO-DATE

358 Connections to behavioral health programs

1,486 Connections to substance use treatment

2,543 Connections to legal services

361 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.

ADAPTING TO FUNDING CUTS

LEAD's Q1 2025 report detailed some of the cutting edge projects that Seattle LEAD is engaged in. These projects include but are not limited to:

- close coordination between service providers and community partners in the U-District and Ballard neighborhoods
- supporting East Precinct SPD as they respond to emergent public safety concerns in Capitol Hill, and
- Organizing and providing case management for a data-driven response to public order issues on Third Ave and in the Chinatown-International District.

At the same time, Seattle LEAD has faced significant budget reductions in 2025. In Q2, Seattle LEAD downsized its workforce, which puts all of the above projects at serious risk of failure.

Having downsized its workforce, and without any immediate opportunity for new funding, Seattle LEAD was left with only a few options: increase the size of caseloads, decrease the rate of referral acceptance, and increase the rate of client discharge. In order to maintain its critical role in neighborhoods across the City, Q2 2025 saw Seattle LEAD exercising all three of these options.

Each of the above options allows LEAD to have more precise control over caseload capacity and referral influx, though none are without tradeoffs. LEAD fidelity standards are for each case manager to have a caseload of no more than 20 clients. Increasing caseload sizes above this amount allows for more clients per dollar spent, but decreases the amount of attention each client receives from their case manager, lowering the efficacy of the service. Decreasing the rate of referral acceptance can reduce the number of new clients on LEAD caseloads, but accepting fewer referrals deteriorates partners' abilities to confer with LEAD about emerging public safety concerns, leaving potential clients and communities without options. Discharging clients at a faster rate has opened up a small amount of capacity for new clients, but has a limited effect, especially considering the fact that a discharged LEAD client is, without stability or support, very likely to be re-referred to LEAD in the near future.

Despite best efforts on the part of all operational partners, there is an upper ceiling to LEAD's ability to outperform serious funding constraints. Simply put: without the ability to provide long-term case management for existing clients and continue to take on new referrals from its expansive array of trusted partners, LEAD cannot perform the role for which it was designed. As LEAD looks forward to the remainder of 2025, our plan is to maintain efficacy for as long as possible in hopes of restored 2026 funding — and for the sake of its mission, Seattle LEAD's workforce is prepared to double efforts in order to preserve the critical public safety efforts that they support.

LEAD LEGAL SERVICES

A UNIQUE RESOURCE WITH TANGIBLE BENEFITS FOR LEAD CLIENTS

As LEAD clients work towards more stable, healthy lives, LEAD case managers help them overcome obstacles in their way. When these obstacles require a lawyer's assistance, LEAD case managers reach out to LEAD Legal Services. LEAD Legal Services is a small but mighty team of five attorneys and two paralegals, which adds value to the LEAD model by filling the gaps in the legal services available to clients.

Because of the wide variety of client legal needs, LEAD Legal has an extensive practice area, including family law, immigration, debt relief, landlord-tenant matters, post-conviction relief, appeals of benefit denials, and more. The legal team also works closely with LEAD case managers to assist in criminal legal coordination in non-LEAD courts, including strategizing and advising regarding quashing warrants in those courts and providing representation at quash hearings, when necessary.

Because the outside legal services available to LEAD clients are in constant flux, LEAD Legal are often the only resource capable of filling the gap. For example, in Q1 2025, the Housing Justice Project, an organization that provides eviction defense to low income people in King County, became overrun with cases. This meant that most LEAD clients lost access to this critical support. LEAD Legal quickly identified this issue, worked with outside partners to gain competency in that area of the law, and is now able to represent all LEAD clients facing eviction. LEAD Legal also obtained funding from the Office of Civil Legal Aid (OCLA) for eviction-defense work, which means that this added benefit to LEAD clients came at no additional expense to existing LEAD funds.

78 MATTERS OPENED IN 2025

3 EVICTIONS PREVENTED
*SINCE STARTING EVICTION PREVENTION WORK IN Q2 2025

$97,028.63 LEAD CLIENT DEBT REMITTED IN 2025
INCLUDING LEGAL FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS, CIVIL FINES, AND OTHER DEBT

19 WARRANTS QUASHED IN 2025

LEAD LEGAL IN ACTION

REVERSING COSTLY ERRORS

Melissa is a 34-year-old woman whose parental rights to her teenage son were legally terminated 7 years ago, before she entered LEAD. But the Department of Child Support (DCS) continued to charge her monthly child support anyway, garnishing her wages and tax returns. All in all, Melissa was erroneously charged more than $12,000 in child support that she never should have had to pay.

A LEAD Legal attorney discovered this mistake and brought it to the attention of DCS. DCS admitted the error but refused to refund the money to Melissa. LEAD Legal brought an administrative action against DCS and won, resulting in a refund of the $12,000 to the client. That refund came at a very fortuitous time because Melissa had just been served with an eviction notice due to missed rent payments. Instead, she was able to use the money to obtain other housing and avoid a return to homelessness.*

Having gained and maintained housing stability, Melissa's son is living in her care again. LEAD Legal continues to work with her towards her goals, representing her in a legal action pursuing reinstatement of her parental rights.

*Note: although LEAD Legal's work likely preserved Melissa's tenancy, this action and others like it are not counted in the "Evictions Prevented" data above. In order to maintain objectivity, "Evictions Prevented" only includes scenarios where clients face formal evictions cases in court.

PROTECTING A LEAD CLIENT'S HOUSING

Carrie had finally entered inpatient treatment with the support of her LEAD case manager when she learned that she was facing eviction. Carrie was surprised because she had informed her landlord that she was vacating her apartment when she started treatment. But squatters had taken up occupancy in her former unit and her landlord sought to put the responsibility on Carrie to have them removed.

The eviction case put Carrie's housing voucher at risk because an eviction would make her ineligible to retain that voucher. Without her voucher, Carrie would have left inpatient treatment without any housing options, which would seriously undermine her recovery.

At her eviction hearing, a LEAD Legal attorney successfully advocated for Carrie. Ultimately, the court dismissed the action against her and granted an Order of Limited Dissemination, which protects her rental record. Today, Carrie's SHA voucher remains intact. The LEAD Legal attorney was able to undertake this representation while Carrie was in inpatient treatment, meeting with her at the treatment facility to strategize and to assist her in attending virtual court hearings, without disrupting her treatment.

LEAD Legal is now pursuing a motion for attorney's fees and costs against Carrie's former landlord. If granted, those funds would offset the cost of LEAD Legal's work in Carrie's case.



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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KING COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
KING COUNTY EXECUTIVE'S OFFICE
KING COUNTY BEHAVIORAL HEALTH & RECOVERY DIVISION
RECOVERY NAVIGATOR PROGRAM
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