



Snohomish County

County Council

Nate Nehring, Chair
Megan Dunn, Vice-Chair
Sam Low
Jared Mead
Strom Peterson

County Executive Dave Somers

TO: Sheriff Susanna Johnson

FROM: County Council Chair and County Executive

DATE: December 3, 2025

RE: Budget Transfer Conditions

The Snohomish County Council and County Executive appreciate your continued engagement in our recent budget discussions. We recognize and value the efforts you, your leadership team, and front-line staff are making to understand the fiscal landscape of a complex system and develop thoughtful strategies to slow the department's spending.

Consistent with prior budget practices, the 2025-2026 budget included a set aside in Non-Departmental for Cost-of-Living-Adjustments (COLA) and Benefit contingency. The Council and Executive are aligned in transferring to departments their proportional share of these funds for bargaining units with finalized contracts. At this time, the Sheriff's Office law enforcement and correction's transfer will be \$1,400,000 and \$3,550,000 respectively.

We recognize that overtime, medical service costs and other operational pressures are contributing to the projected shortfall in both the Sheriff's Office law enforcement and corrections functions. The Executive and Council are committed to continuing our collaboration on these challenges and will consider additional budget transfers in late 2026. This timing allows space for the corrective actions currently underway to make the greatest possible impact on the projected over-spending.

To ensure that these efforts move us toward a more fiscally sustainable system, the transfer will be conditioned on four initiatives intended to support transparency, shared understanding, and long-term financial stability. We look forward to regular progress updates.


- 1) **Develop and implement a system of total cost recovery** for jail Interlocal Agreements, including evaluation of a potential three-tiered inmate complexity model;
- 2) **Engage an independent third-party review of Jail Operations** to identify efficiencies, risks and opportunities for improvement, initiating in 2026;
- 3) **Coordinate with Human Resources on a comprehensive hiring strategy and implementation plan** that enables the department to meet the contract threshold necessary to conclude the 2.25% overtime compensation requirement; and

- 4) **Prepare and present an Operational Plan for Patrol and Corrections** outlining additional strategies for responsibly and safely reducing costs over time.

We believe these initiatives will help strengthen system performance, increase transparency, and support long-term financial resilience. We look forward to your partnership in advancing this critical work. By continuing to work together, we can meaningfully address the budgetary pressures facing this component of the justice system.



Nate Nehring
Council Chair



Dave Somers
County Executive

cc: Vice-Chair Megan Dunn
Councilmember Sam Low
Councilmember Jared Mead
Councilmember Strom Peterson