

2025-2026 Supplemental Department Questions

Please answer the following questions in a word document and return to Council. The answers to these questions will be provided to council as supplemental information. While not part of the physical budget presentation to Council, departments should be prepared to answer questions Council may have on these supplemental questions. If you feel that you have provided an answer in a previous question, please don't repeat your answer, simply refer to the earlier question/answer.

Strategic Goals

1. Provide your 2025-2026 strategic goals; How are they reflected in your budget request?
 - a. Maintain current programs and ability to continue appoint timely, qualified counsel in the absence of fiscal growth. Recently, Yakima Co was sued by the ACLU of Washington for failure to appoint qualified, timely defense counsel. Losing ARPA positions, zero FTE growth, and decreased budget put Snohomish County at similar risk. OPD is working with State OPD, Snohomish County, and our contractors to advocate for State funding.

National, state and local landscape:

1. What critical issues are you facing in your department/industry, and how are you addressing them?
 - a. Caseloads Standards – Public defense caseload standards have changed. Without state or local funding we cannot address them.
 - b. Staff shortage – OPD staff has had negative FTE growth and increased work in areas unrelated to public defense. The increases in non-public defense work as well as increases in criminal public defense invoicing have creates additional work for OPD staff. We are asking staff to work more overtime.
2. Are there federal, state, and local issues/mandates that will impact your department, operationally and/or fiscally. Please address what it is, the anticipated impact, and how you plan to mitigate it.
 - a. Caseload Std – see above.
 - b. Budget cuts or no growth.

Programs

1. ARPA
 - a. With ARPA funding ending, what programs/services will be impacted and how?
 - i. Funding for programs has been reduced. SCPDA staff will be laid off or reassigned to non-county contracts. Remaining county-

funded staff are expected to take on additional work without additional compensation.

- ii. Cases have been and will be transferred from redundant lawyers. This will delay the resolution of cases and create a new backlog in public defense.
- b. What is your plan for mitigating the impacts?
 - i. Educating stakeholder about impact of public defense caseload standards.

2. NEW PROGRAMS

- a. What new programs are you proposing for 2025-2026?
 - i. None
 - b. What need or efficiency is that new program addressing? How is that program funded for sustainability? What metrics are in place to determine effectiveness?
3. Are there departmental change requests not in the Executive's Recommended Budget that you feel Council should consider including? If so, please provide the change request number and justification for the inclusion of the request.
- a. The Department supports the executive budget

Internal Operations

1. Please explain how you intended to meet the Executive's 3% Resource Alignment request.
 - a. Reducing expenditures
2. How are increasing Internal Service Rates impacting your department/programs?
 - a. The Internal Service Rate is nominal for OPD and should not impact the department.
3. To help inform Council on experiences around hiring and retention, please provide a list of all vacant position titles, position codes, FTE amount (1.0, 0.5, etc.), date vacated, and date first posted. Template spreadsheet attached for convenience and conformity; if already tracking information in another format, that is acceptable as well. Please list each vacancy separately.
 - a. No vacancies
4. When was the last time your department implemented a fee increase? Do you have any plans to increase fees? Are your current fees established based on a full cost recovery model?
 - a. Does not apply to OPD.