



King County

Attachment A: Veterans Justice Outreach Coordinator Proviso Report

**Department of Community and Human Services
Mental Health, Chemical Abuse and Dependency Services Division**

March 2012

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Background

In 2009, the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (U.S. DVA) launched the Veterans Justice Outreach (VJO) Initiative; the overarching goal is to provide outreach to veterans in contact with law enforcement, jails, and courts. The purpose of the federal VJO Initiative is to avoid the unnecessary criminalization of mental illness, substance abuse, and extended incarceration among veterans by ensuring that eligible justice-involved veterans have timely access to DVA Veterans Health Administration, health care, including mental health and substance use disorder services when clinically indicated, and other DVA services and benefits as appropriate.

In 2010, King County stakeholders initiated meetings to discuss the federal VJO Initiative and how King County could maximize the federal initiative in King County. These meetings included representatives from many criminal justice partners in King County, including: King County Office of the Prosecuting Attorney, King County Office of Public Defense, public defense agencies, King County District Court, King County Superior Court, King County Council staff, private defense attorneys, community service providers, Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs, U.S. DVA, and the King County Department of Community and Human Services (DCHS). The DCHS staff facilitated and staffed the meetings.

Need

Veterans are a growing segment of the population, comprising about 7.5 percent of the population of the United States. King County has a large population of veterans due to the location of the U.S. Veterans Affairs Health Care System facility in Seattle, and the nearness of both Joint Base Lewis-McChord and the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard. There are currently 143,000 veterans in King County. Nationally, 20 percent of veterans report symptoms of a mental health disorder, while substance abuse disorders have been found to affect 1.8 million veterans. A disproportionate number of individuals who have served in the military are found in the adult homeless population (33 percent). Symptoms of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) have been found to affect 17 percent of active duty Army personnel and 25 percent of Army reservists three to six months after they have returned home. Additionally, traumatic brain injuries (TBI) account for 22 percent of all combat casualties from the Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts.

Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

The following definitions of TBI and PTSD are from the U.S. DVA fact sheet.¹

TBI: If the head is hit or violently shaken (such as from a blast or explosion), a concussion or closed head injury can result. Concussion is seldom life threatening, so doctors often use the term “mild” when the person is only dazed or confused or loses consciousness for a short time. However, concussion can result in serious symptoms.

¹ U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Quick Facts, Traumatic Brain Injury and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, April 23, 2007, VO7-1.

People who survive multiple concussions may have more serious problems. People who have had a concussion may say that they are fine, although their behavior or personality has changed. Common symptoms of brain injury include the following: difficulty organizing daily tasks; blurred vision or eyes tire easily; headaches or ringing in the ears; feeling sad, anxious, or listless; easily irritated or angered; feeling tired all the time; feeling light-headed or dizzy; trouble with memory, attention, or concentration; more sensitive to sounds, lights, or distractions; impaired decision making or problem solving; difficulty inhibiting behavior or impulsive; slowed thinking, moving, speaking or reading; easily confused, feeling easily overwhelmed; and change in sexual interest or behavior.

PTSD: A condition that develops after someone has experienced a life-threatening situation, such as combat. In PTSD, the event must have involved actual or threatened death or serious injury and caused an emotional reaction involving intense fear, hopelessness, or horror. People with PTSD have three kinds of experiences for weeks or months after the event is over, and the individual is in a safe environment.

1. Re-experience the event over and over again:

- You have repeated nightmares about the event.*
- You have vivid memories, almost like it was happening all over again.*
- You have a strong reaction when you encounter reminders, such as a car backfiring.*

2. Avoid people, places, or feelings that remind you of the event:

- You work hard at putting it out of your mind.*
- You feel numb and detached so you do not have to feel anything.*
- You avoid people or places that remind you of the event.*

3. Feel keyed up or on-edge all the time:

- You may startle easily.*
- You may be irritable or angry all the time for no apparent reason.*
- You are always looking around, hyper-vigilant of your surroundings.*
- You may have trouble relaxing or getting to sleep.*

Incarceration of Veterans

In 2007, 230,000 veterans were confined in local jails and federal prisons. National statistics show that about 15 percent of people who are incarcerated are veterans, while King County statistics only recognize that about two percent of people who are incarcerated have served in the military, due to inconsistent policies and procedures for screening for veteran status among those who have been booked into a jail in King County.

Veterans coming into contact with the criminal justice system have a number of unmet service needs across multiple domains, including behavioral health (mental health and/or co-occurring substance use), housing, and employment. By introducing and incorporating veteran justice programs, barriers to recovery can more effectively be addressed and resources can be put in place to help stabilize and support veterans as they participate in services geared toward their specific needs. These programs will work to maximize access to DVA benefits by justice-involved veterans and simultaneously minimize the use of state and locally funded programs, build a trained cadre of staff experts around veterans issues and needs including TBI/PTSD and other issues unique to veterans, create a community of veterans to foster a sense of camaraderie among its participants, position King County to more competitively compete for federal grant funding, and increase recognition regarding the service of veterans to the country and our community.

Table 1 shows the Department of Adult and Juvenile Detention (DAJD) data for military status collected for 2011.

Table 1: DAJD Data for Military Status Collected for 2011

	<i>Veteran Status</i>			Total	<i>Veteran Status</i>		
	Yes	No	Other*		Yes	No	Other
Jan-11	58	2,334	1,239	3,631	1.60%	64.28%	34.12%
Feb-11	60	1,936	962	2,958	2.03%	65.45%	32.52%
Mar-11	59	2,353	1,176	3,588	1.64%	65.58%	32.78%
Apr-11	76	2,171	984	3,231	2.35%	67.19%	30.45%
May-11	69	2,153	1,042	3,264	2.11%	65.96%	31.92%
Jun-11	77	2,250	1,125	3,452	2.23%	65.18%	32.59%
Jul-11	49	2,185	1,076	3,310	1.48%	66.01%	32.51%
Aug-11	65	2,224	1,020	3,309	1.96%	67.21%	30.83%
Sep-11	53	2,138	953	3,144	1.69%	68.00%	30.31%
Oct-11	76	1,913	976	2,965	2.56%	64.52%	32.92%
Nov-11	72	1,712	771	2,555	2.82%	67.01%	30.18%
Dec-11	59	1,834	789	2,682	2.20%	68.38%	29.42%
Total	773	25,203	12,113	38,089	2.03%	66.17%	31.80%

*“Other” column represents those individuals who were booked into a King County jail, but for whom DAJD was not able to collect military status; this represents about 33 percent of all individuals booked. This data was received from DAJD analytical and was run on January 30, 2012.

Collecting military status data at the prosecutorial, public defense, and court level will provide a better overall picture of how many veterans are being seen in our King County justice system overall, as data can be collected on those individuals not booked into a County jail facility and those not in custody for a long enough period of time for military status to be assessed. This will be a task of the VJO Coordinator to implement system wide.

An academic study of 128 veterans incarcerated in King County between April 1998 and June 1999 provides some insights into justice-involved veterans and suggests a potential correlation between PTSD and incarceration. The study screened participants for PTSD, drug and alcohol usage, and patterns of incarceration. The study sample was small and results preliminary, but study authors reported that 87 percent of the veterans surveyed had traumatic experiences and 39 percent screened positive for PTSD. When compared with veterans who screened negative for PTSD, those who screened positive reported a greater variety of traumas; more serious current legal problems; a higher lifetime use of alcohol, cocaine, and heroin; higher recent expenditures on drugs; more psychiatric symptoms; and worse general health despite more previous psychiatric and medical treatment as well as treatment for substance abuse.²

The potential correlation between PTSD and behaviors which may lead to criminal involvement suggests that veterans of the current wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, who were not included in the 1998-1999 study, may someday have more propensities for criminal involvement than their predecessors. The new veterans are more likely than their predecessors to suffer from PTSD and TBI than the rest of the veteran population. Indeed, PTSD and TBI are emerging as the signature injuries of the current conflicts because the sophistication and effectiveness of modern medical treatment results in an increasing proportion of the Afghanistan and Iraq veterans surviving wounds that would have killed their predecessors, but they do so with higher rates of mental health trauma and brain injury. The U.S. Department of Defense and the Defense and Veterans Brain Injury Center estimate that 22 percent of all combat casualties from the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan are brain injuries, compared to 12 percent of Vietnam-related combat casualties.³

Local Veterans Justice Outreach Coordinator

A local Veterans Justice Outreach (VJO) Coordinator will be hired within the Department of Community and Human Services (DCHS), Mental Health, Chemical Abuse and Dependency Services Division (MHCADSD). The MHCADSD oversees the Criminal Justice Initiatives, which includes development, management and oversight of offender justice-involved and therapeutic court programming. Adding the VJO Coordinator position to the MHCADSD will ensure direct coordination and linkage of veteran justice systems programming in King County. The VJO Coordinator responsibilities will include developing, implementing and managing the King County VJO Initiative, which includes monitoring and managing contracts associated with the VJO Initiative.

The VJO Initiative encompasses three broad areas: 1) veterans treatment courts in King County; 2) systems and services coordination; and 3) coordination with trainings about veterans and serving veterans. It will be the role of the local VJO Coordinator to coordinate, monitor, troubleshoot, and facilitate these three areas and provide a single County-level point of

² Saxon, A.J.; Davis, T.M. et al., (2001) *Trauma, Symptoms of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, and Associated Problems Among Incarcerated Veterans*, *Psychiatric Services*, 52 (7), 959-964.

³ Summerall, E.L. (2007), *Report of (VA) Consensus Conference: Practice Recommendations for Treatment of Veterans with Comorbid TBI, Pain, and PTSD*, National Center for PTSD.

coordination for the intersection of veterans, justice system, and service systems for the veterans treatment courts, veterans-specific training, and community-based providers of treatment services. Bringing together the local justice system, including courts, jails, defense, prosecutor, and law enforcement with veterans governmental and community-based providers is a new area for King County that requires a good deal of coordination across these fragmented and complex systems. This role will function within the broader King County MHCADSD Criminal Justice Initiatives, where there has been an existing foundation for cross-system criminal justice and social services coordination and collaboration since 2002.

The three broad areas of responsibility of the VJO Coordinator are:

1. Veterans Treatment Courts in King County

The VJO Coordinator will provide administration and coordination of direct service contracts to provide a mental health professional Veterans Court Liaison to serve as the clinical gatekeeper to both the City of Seattle Veterans Treatment Court and the King County District Court Regional Mental Health Court, Veterans Treatment Court pilot (2012). Following the 2012 Veterans Treatment Court pilot in King County, the VJO Coordinator will assist with the implementation of the Regional Veterans Treatment Court.

2. Systems and Services Coordination

The King County VJO Initiative involves a much needed coordination role to bring together the local justice system components, veteran services system components (governmental and community-based providers) and community-based services for veterans throughout King County. There are multiple justice partners, three governmental levels, and multiple community-based providers serving veterans involved in the criminal justice system. It is complicated for our partners to know each other and even more difficult for our veterans to navigate across these multiple service providers and justice systems, which is why this coordinator role is so critical.

- a. Justice System Components

Courts (including the 39 municipalities, King County District Court and King County Superior Court), prosecutor's offices, public defense agencies, jail health and other in-custody medical/mental health providers inside jails, community corrections (including city and county Work and Education Release and Day Reporting programs), and Department of Corrections Community Supervision units/officers.

- b. Governmental Components

U.S. DVA, specifically the Federal VJO Coordinator, Veterans Health Administration and Veterans Benefits Administration; U.S. DVA Veterans Centers; State of Washington Department of Veterans Affairs, specifically the Incarcerated Veterans

Reentry Programs, Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program, the PTSD Program; and the King County Veterans Program.

c. Community-based Providers

Veteran services organizations, community mental health agencies serving veterans and non-veterans, community-based substance abuse services serving veterans and non-veterans, community-based organizations with specialized veterans services (i.e., funded via the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), King County Veterans Levy, etc.), justice-involved programs serving veterans and justice involved individuals, homeless and housing programs serving veterans, education and employment programs serving veterans.

3. Coordination with Trainings about Veterans and Serving Veterans

The VJO Coordinator will work with existing training being provided in King County (via the King County Veterans Levy and the Veterans Training Support Center) to increase knowledge and understanding about working with justice-involved veterans in the local justice system; assist in providing a justice system context to resource navigation and provision of services for veterans, especially related to trauma and trauma informed care; assist with curriculum for Crisis Intervention Training (CIT) to local law enforcement to include specific curricula about veterans and the effects of combat-related trauma. The CIT is a model of police-based crisis intervention with community behavioral health care and advocacy partnerships. The CIT provides intensive training to law enforcement and other first responders that teaches them to effectively assist and respond to people with mental illness or substance use disorders and better equips them to help individuals access the most appropriate and least restrictive services while preserving public safety.

Proviso

King County Ordinance 17232, Section 69, Veterans and Family Levy, states that:

Of this appropriation, \$25,000 shall not be expended or encumbered until the executive transmits a report and motion that acknowledges receipt of the report that references the proviso's ordinance, section and number and the motion is adopted by the council. The report shall be on the feasibility of establishing a veterans justice outreach coordinator position in the mental health, chemical abuse and dependency services division of the department of community and human services to implement a veterans justice initiative for King County. The report shall include, but not be limited to: 1) the review and recommendation for the veterans justice outreach coordinator position by the veterans levy citizen oversight board; 2) how the position would facilitate greater collaboration on veteran's issues and veteran's programs among King County departments and agencies; 3) how the position would collaborate with the federal

*veterans justice outreach coordinator; and 4) recommendations on the potential funding sources for the position.*⁴

1. *Review and recommendation for the VJO coordinator position by the veterans levy citizen oversight board*

The MHCADSD staff presented to the Veterans Citizen Levy Oversight Board January 26, 2012 on the Veterans Justice Initiative (VJI) and sought feedback on the feasibility of establishing a VJO Coordinator position within MHCADSD. An overview of the federal VJO Initiative was provided and how the King County VJI would be modeled after the federal initiative was discussed. In addition, data on veterans involved in the criminal justice system was shared and a summary of justice-involved veteran efforts to date was discussed. The board provided feedback on the development of the Implementation Plan which was subsequently presented to the Veterans Citizen Levy Oversight Board during the February 23, 2012 meeting. The board agreed to support the Implementation Plan and moved it forward for public comment. The plan was posted for public comment on the levy website at: www.kingcounty.gov/DCHS/Levy for a two week period from February 27, 2012 through March 12, 2012. No public comments were received on the plan. The Implementation Plan (Activity 1.5: Veterans Justice, 1.5.C Emerging Programs for Justice-Involved Veterans – Veterans Court) was presented to the board according to the Veterans and Human Services Levy Service Implementation Plan procurement process. Exhibit A includes a copy of the Implementation Plan, which was voted on and approved by the Veterans Citizen Levy Oversight Board on March 15, 2012.

Comments received from board members were incorporated into the Implementation Plan and the board will receive quarterly implementation updates on the VJI from the VJO Coordinator, once implementation is underway.

2. *How the position would facilitate greater collaboration on veteran's issues and veteran's programs among King County department and agencies*

The VJO Coordinator will be responsible for the development and implementation of the King County VJO Initiative which will facilitate collaboration on veterans issues and programs among King County departments and agencies. Specifically, the VJO Coordinator position will be within the DCHS, MHCADSD Criminal Justice Initiatives (CJI) project which is supervised by the Mental Illness and Drug Dependency (MIDD) Program Manager. The overarching goal of the CJI is to help people in the criminal justice system in King County with unmet mental health or substance abuse needs connect to treatment services, justice-involved services, stable housing, and other supports as alternatives to incarceration.

Specifically, the VJO Coordinator will monitor contracts, provide technical assistance associated with the veterans incarcerated project and the veterans courts liaison project,

⁴ King County Ordinance 17232, 2011.

host and facilitate quarterly veterans justice collaboration meetings, participate in the CIT trainings for law enforcement and other first responders, train community human service providers and King County departments on justice-involved veterans issues, and be a resource for the community on justice-involved veterans issues.

3. *How the position would collaborate with the federal veterans justice outreach coordinator*

The U.S. DVA has been a partner from the start on the development of the King County VJI and has been instrumental in assisting with the development of the veteran's court proviso and helping solidify the County's relationship with the DVA on many initiatives related to veterans across the region. The federal VJO currently jointly facilitates, with MHCADSD, a monthly justice-involved veteran's stakeholder meeting. These meetings started in September 2011 with the goal of ensuring that services for justice-involved veterans are coordinated and that there are smooth links to the federal DVA, which many community and local government providers find difficult to understand and navigate.

The DCHS has proactively reached out to executive leadership at the U.S. DVA, meeting with their director, deputy director, chief of staff, chief of mental health, director of social work, and director of nursing in order to strengthen the County's partnership on multiple King County efforts that involve veterans. Two meetings have been held to date and the partnership has resulted in collaboration on the VJO Initiative, CIT training, veterans treatment courts, five year plan to end veteran homelessness, involuntary treatment, suicide prevention, and an overall better relationship between the federal and local government levels. We continue to work together to ensure that veterans are not slipping through the cracks between our two governmental systems.

4. *Recommendations on the potential funding sources for the position*

It is recommended that the position be funded by the Veterans and Human Services Levy, specifically through Activity 1.5 Veterans Justice, 1.5.C Emerging Programs for Justice-involved Veterans – Veterans Court. The Veterans and Human Services Levy Service Improvement Plan defines this activity as:

This activity supports programs related to justice-involved veterans, with the primary use of these funds supporting King County's Veterans Treatment Court. Funds may also be used for existing or new service models or additional outreach or prevention programs.

The creation of the VJO Coordinator position falls within Activity 1.5.C and through the development of the proviso response on the feasibility of establishing a VJO Coordinator position. The position concept was reviewed and approved by the Veterans Citizen Levy Oversight Board through the review and approval of the Implementation Plan. A letter from the levy board chair and co-chair (Exhibit B) was provided to affirm their support for the VJO Coordinator position and VJI.

Feasibility

Since 2008, the DCHS, MHCADSD, has embarked on a VJI for King County, beginning with hosting the first forum on veterans in the criminal justice system in King County, where community providers, justice partners and veteran serving agencies came together to learn about justice-involved veterans for the first time in a coordinated way. Four years later, the increased need for forums to move to monthly meetings; the opening of three veterans therapeutic courts in King County (King County District Court Regional Veterans Court, King County Superior Court Adult Drug Diversion Court Veterans Calendar, and Seattle Municipal Court Veterans Treatment Court); implementation of the federal VJO Initiative and VJO Coordinator; and the numerous requests for presentations and trainings regarding justice-involved veterans provided evidence of the need for the establishment of a VJO Coordinator for King County to implement a VJI.

The King County VJI and VJO Coordinator position was reviewed and feedback received from the Regional Mental Health Court Regional Veterans Court Executive Committee (comprised of District Court, probation, Prosecuting Attorney's Office, Office of Public Defense, public defense agencies, DCHS, DAJD, U.S. DVA and King County Council staff); DCHS Community Services Division Veterans and Human Services Levy board staff; U.S. DVA VJO Coordinator; members of the Seattle Veterans Treatment Court team; and local law enforcement. The feedback received was positive and supportive of the VJI and VJO Coordinator moving forward.

King County Strategic Plan

In 2010, King County adopted the King County Strategic Plan. Goals of the plan include Justice and Safety, ensuring fair and accessible justice systems; and Health and Human Potential, which includes providing opportunities for all communities and individuals to realize their full potential. The VJI and VJO Coordinator position is consistent with the Strategic Plan in these two strategic areas and will facilitate greater collaboration on veteran's issues and programs among King County departments and agencies.

Conclusion

As troops continue to be deployed to the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, it is critical that King County develop and implement a comprehensive response to veterans and their families. Time has shown that veterans with injuries such as PTSD, substance use disorder, and TBI have an increased risk for criminal justice involvement. Having a VJI in place, based on a public health model of prevention, early intervention, intervention/treatment, and modeled after the sequential intercept model, will help reduce the unnecessary criminalization of mental illness, substance use disorder, TBI, and extended incarceration among veterans by ensuring that eligible justice-involved veterans receive treatment. King County will be, as far as we know, the first in the country to replicate the federal VJO Initiative at the local level across a county-wide system. This type of commitment to preventing the unnecessary criminalization of veterans will help not only veterans, but their families and the entire community.



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IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

2012 – 2017 Veterans and Human Services Levy:

Activity 1.5: Veterans Justice: 1.5.C Emerging Programs for Justice-involved Veterans – Veterans Court

1. Goal

The primary goal of this activity is to reduce unnecessary criminal justice and emergency medical system involvement among the veteran population.

2. Strategy

The Veterans and Human Services Levy Service Improvement Plan (SIP) set a goal of *supporting veterans and their families to build stable lives and strong relationships.*

3. Activity 1.5 : Veterans Justice

Activity 1.5 Veterans Justice includes more than one activity. This Implementation Plan describes Activity 1.5.C, Emerging programs for justice-involved veterans, which involves three primary areas:

1. **Veterans Treatment Courts in King County** - The administration and coordination of direct service contracts to provide a mental health professional Veterans Court Liaison to serve as the clinical gatekeeper to both the City of Seattle Veterans Treatment Court and the King County District Court Regional Mental Health Court Veterans Treatment Court pilot (2012). Following the 2012 Veterans Treatment Court pilot, implementation of the Regional Veterans Treatment Court.
2. **Systems and Services Coordination** - The King County Veteran Justice Outreach initiative (VJO) involves a much needed coordination role to bring together the local justice system components, veterans' services system components (governmental and community-based providers) and community-based services for veterans throughout King County.
 - a. Justice System Components
Courts (including the 39 municipalities, King County District Court and King County Superior Court), **prosecutor's offices, public defense agencies, Jail Health and other in-custody medical/mental health providers inside jails, Community Corrections** (including City and

County Work and Education Release and Day Reporting programs), **Department of Corrections** Community Supervision units/officers.

b. Governmental Components

US Department of Veterans Affairs, specifically the Federal Veterans Justice Outreach Coordinator, Veterans Health Administration and Veterans Benefits Administration; **Vets Centers**; **State of Washington Department of Veterans Affairs**, specifically the Incarcerated Veterans Re-entry Programs, Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program and the Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Program; and the **King County Veterans Program**.

c. Community-based Providers

Veterans services organizations, community mental health agencies serving veterans and non-veterans, **community-based substance abuse services** serving veterans and non-veterans, community-based organizations with specialized veterans services (i.e., funded via Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), King County Veterans Levy, etc.), **re-entry programs** serving veterans and justice-involved individuals, **homeless and housing programs** serving veterans, **education and employment** programs serving veterans.

3. **Coordination with Trainings about Veterans and Serving Veterans** - Work with existing training being provided in King County (via the King County Veterans Levy and the Veterans Training Support Center) to infuse education about working with justice-involved veterans/the local justice system. Assist in providing a justice-system context to resource navigation and provision of services for veterans, especially related to trauma and trauma informed care. Assist with curriculum for Crisis Intervention Training (CIT) to local law enforcement to include specific curricula about veterans and the effects of combat-related trauma.

4. **Service Needs, Populations to be Served, and Promotion of Equity and Social Justice**

a) *Service Needs*

Veterans are a growing segment of the population, both in King County and across the country, comprising 7.5 percent of the total United States population. King County has a large population of veterans due to the location of the US Veterans Affairs Health Care System facility in Seattle, and the nearness of both Joint Base Lewis-McChord and the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard. There are currently 143,000 veterans in King County. Nationally, 20 percent of veterans report symptoms of a mental disorder while substance abuse disorders have been found to affect 1.8 million veterans. A disproportionate number of individuals who have served in the military are found in the adult homeless population (33 percent). Symptoms of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) have been found to affect 17 percent of active duty Army personnel and 25 percent of Army Reservists three to six months after they have returned home. Additionally, brain injuries account for 22 percent of all combat casualties from the Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts. In 2007, 230,000 veterans were confined in local jails and federal prisons. National statistics show that about 15 percent of people who are incarcerated are veterans, while King County statistics only recognize that about 2 percent of people who are

incarcerated have served in the military (due to inconsistent and lacking screening data for veterans who have been booked into a jail in King County).

As a result of the 2011 King County proviso (Ordinance 16984, King County Adopted 2011 Budget) to report on “the feasibility of and plans for implementation of a pilot project providing specialty court services for veterans,” many King County departments were involved in multiple discussions, which created impetus for better data collection on tracking individuals with military status across systems in King County. The Department of Adult and Juvenile Detention (DAJD) has altered how they ask about military status and is collecting related data. Public Health, Jail Health Services, is also consistently asking about military status and tracking individuals they refer to veterans related reentry services.

As a pilot veterans court become reality in King County, even better data will be attained as all veterans, whether they opt-into the specialized court or not, will be tracked. Table 1 shows the DAJD² data for military status collected for 2011:

Table 1:

	Veteran Status			Total	Veteran Status		
	Yes	No	Other		Yes	No	Other
	N	N	N		N	N	N
Jan-11	58	2,334	1,239	3,631	1.60%	64.28%	34.12%
Feb-11	60	1,936	962	2,958	2.03%	65.45%	32.52%
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Jul-11	49	2,185	1,076	3,310	1.48%	66.01%	32.51%
Aug-11	65	2,224	1,020	3,309	1.96%	67.21%	30.83%
Sep-11	53	2,138	953	3,144	1.69%	68.00%	30.31%
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The “Other” represents those individuals who were booked into a King County jail but for whom DAJD was not able to collect military status; this represents about 33 percent of all individuals booked.

²This data was received from DAJD analytical and was run on January 30, 2012.

Collecting military status data at the prosecutorial, public defense, and court levels will also provide a better overall picture of how many veterans are being seen in our King County justice system overall, as data can be collected on those individuals not booked into a county jail facility and those not in custody for a long enough period of time for military status to be assessed.

b) Populations to be Served

The combination of mental health problems and substance abuse among veterans can be potent and can trigger behaviors that draw veterans into the criminal justice system. PTSD and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) can cause violent outbursts often targeted at family members, leading to charges of domestic violence. Self-medicating with alcohol and drugs can lead to impaired driving and Driving Under the Influence (DUI) charges. As a result, domestic violence and DUI charges are common charges for veterans suffering from mental health and substance abuse issues.

Veterans Treatment Courts (VTC) are therapeutic courts in the tradition of drug and mental health courts. A team approach is used with an emphasis on connecting court clients with treatment rather than punishing them with more jail time, although jail is used as a graduated sanction when appropriate. The VTCs are distinguished from drug and mental health courts in their exclusive focus on veterans and the emphasis on utilizing treatment and benefits provided by the Veterans Affairs (VA), rather than local services. In addition, VTCs emphasize the importance of community among court participants.

A VTC in King County will carefully screen individuals for military status, Veterans Health Administration (VHA) eligibility, Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs (WDVA) services eligibility and various community-based community health agencies with specialized programs serving veterans as part of the screening criteria for court eligibility. Court eligibility screening addresses diagnostic eligibility, level of functioning and insight into mental health and/or substance abuse issues, and amenability to participate in a specialized court program and probation.

As the King County VTC will be piloted as a specialized calendar within the existing Regional Mental Health Court (RMHC), the RMHC eligibility criteria will be modified to accept a mental health diagnosis of PTSD. TBI will also be included when attached to PTSD and will be considered case by case as stand-alone diagnoses, which is quite rare. In addition, many veterans struggling with mental health issues will likely have co-occurring substance use issues and the court will be screening for this and prepared to support veterans in their recovery from both mental health and substance abuse issues.

Veterans Justice Outreach/Re-entry programs are implemented with the intent to avoid the unnecessary criminalization of mental illness and extended incarceration among veterans by ensuring that eligible justice-involved veterans have timely access to VHA services and other eligible services.

c) Promotion of Equity and Social Justice

i) Will your activity have an impact on equity?

This activity will have a positive impact on equity. The King County Equity Impact Review Tool available online at: <http://www.kingcounty.gov/exec/equity/toolsandresources.aspx> provides a list of the determinants of equity that may be affected by the activity. Of the determinants listed on page 4 of the tool, the determinant most likely to be affected by this activity is, “**A law and justice system** that provides equitable access and fair treatment for all”. “**Health and human services** that

are high quality, affordable and culturally appropriate and support the optimal well-being of all people” is another determinant that may also be affected by this activity.

- ii) *What population groups are likely to be affected by the proposal? How will communities of color, low-income communities or limited English proficiency communities be impacted?*

Based on data from DAJD captured for the month of December 2011, the breakdown by **race of those incarcerated in a King County jail** are:

Race	Secure ¹		EHD ²		WER ³	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
White	904	51.4%	36	55.4%	77	53.1%
Black	695	39.5%	21	32.9%	56	38.5%
Asian	104	5.9%	6	9.3%	10	6.7%
Native American	46	2.6%	0	-	2	1.6%
Other	8	0.4%	2	2.3%	0	-

¹ Secure detention is in a King County jail (King County Correctional Facility or Regional Justice Center)

² Electronic Home Detention

³ Work and Education Release

Based on United States census information for 2010, the **race break down of King County** is (from <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/53/53033.html>):

Race and Ethnicity, 2010	King County	Washington State
White persons	68.7%	77.3%
Black persons	6.2%	3.6%
American Indian and Alaska Native persons	0.8%	1.5%
Asian persons	14.6%	7.2%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0.8%	0.6%
Persons reporting two or more races	5.0%	4.7%
Persons of Hispanic or Latino origin	8.9%	11.2%
White persons not Hispanic	64.8%	72.5%

Upon comparison of the breakdown by King County demographics from census data and the DAJD data provided for the breakdown by race of those incarcerated in our King County jails we know that people of color and, one could deduce, veterans of color are overrepresented in the justice system. The King County Veterans and Human Services Levy already funds an existing program to provide outreach to women veterans and people of color who are veterans and will play an important role in serving oppressed and marginalized communities that are over-represented in the justice system. It will also be important for direct staff and the specialty court staff to have training and consciousness in serving people from communities who experience this disproportionality in the justice system. Often, individuals are booked due to mental health and/or substance abuse issues as well as homelessness because police feel they have no other option.

Both the CIT training and the system coordination to provide more informed training to our justice system partners will address this for our veterans who are impacted. Ensuring equitable access will be critical and incorporating training around institutional and structural racism that

does exist in King County. Direct service staff will be required to have ongoing training and every effort will be made to employ diverse staff and support from community-based agencies that have made a concentrated effort to address institutional and structural racism in their employment practices.

Overall, these programs will serve veterans who come into contact with law enforcement, jails, and courts. The goal is to provide timely access to VA services for eligible justice-involved veterans to avoid unnecessary criminalization and incarceration of veteran defendants and offenders with mental illness and/or TBI. These programs recognize and address the needs of the high number of veterans who are homeless and will work to provide supports and services to address the specific needs related to this population.

iii) What actions will be taken to enhance likely positive impacts on these communities and mitigate possible negative impacts?

Establish a Pilot Veteran Treatment Court

Address the issues of veteran defendants with needed services in a supportive, veteran-focused environment encouraging adherence to treatment.

Screen for Military Service

Ask individuals involved in their first contact with the Criminal Justice (CJ) system if they are a veteran or if they have ever served in the military. Local law enforcement (through Crisis Intervention Training), courts, prosecution, public defense and jails are already asking individuals they encounter about military service.

Provide Community Outreach/Education

Provide training and education in order to assist with connecting veterans to VA health care services (including behavioral health) and VA benefits and compensation – or state or county services depending on eligibility. This includes hiring a King County Veterans Justice Outreach Coordinator FTE to coordinate the King County VJO efforts in King County, as well as training for service providers on veteran specific issues/needs and referral and linkage process to VA and other veteran programs and resource. The Veterans Justice Outreach Coordinator will provide training and education on outreach, screening, assessment, and case management for justice-involved veterans to local courts, jails, justice system partners, and community based service providers.

5. Activity Description

Veterans coming into contact with the criminal justice system have a number of unmet service needs across multiple domains including behavioral health (mental health and/or co-occurring substance use), housing and employment. By introducing and incorporating veteran's justice programs, barriers to recovery can more effectively be addressed and resources can be put in place to help stabilize and support veterans as they participate in services geared towards their specific

needs. These programs will work to maximize access to VA benefits by justice-involved veterans and simultaneously minimize the use of state and locally funded programs, build a trained cadre of staff experts around veterans issues and needs including PTSD/TBI and other issues unique to veterans, create a community of veterans to foster a sense of camaraderie among its participants, position the county to more competitively compete for federal grant funding and increase recognition regarding the service of veterans to the country and our community.

The following research is excerpted from the Veterans Treatment Court Proviso Response by the King County Office of Performance Strategy and Budget dated June 1, 2011.

An academic study of 128 veterans incarcerated in King County between April 1998 and June 1999 provides some insights into justice-involved veterans and suggests a potential correlation between PTSD and incarceration. The study screened participants for PTSD, drug and alcohol usage, and patterns of incarceration. The study sample was small and results preliminary, but study authors reported that 87 percent of the veterans surveyed had traumatic experiences and 39 percent screened positive for PTSD. When compared with veterans who screened negative for PTSD, those who screened positive reported a greater variety of traumas; more serious current legal problems; a higher lifetime use of alcohol, cocaine, and heroin; higher recent expenditures on drugs; more psychiatric symptoms; and worse general health despite more previous psychiatric and medical treatment as well as treatment for substance abuse.⁵

The potential correlation between PTSD and behaviors which may lead to criminal involvement suggests that veterans of the current wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, who were not included in the 1998/1999 study, may someday, have more propensities for criminal involvement than their predecessors. The new veterans are more likely than their predecessors to suffer from PTSD and TBI than the rest of the veteran population. Indeed, PTSD and TBI are emerging as the “signature injuries” of the current conflicts because the sophistication and effectiveness of modern medical treatment results in an increasing proportion of the Afghan and Iraq veterans surviving wounds that would have killed their predecessors, but they do so with higher rates of mental health trauma and brain injury. The Department of Defense and the Defense and Veteran's Brain Injury Center estimate that 22 percent of all combat casualties from these conflicts are brain injuries, compared to 12 percent of Vietnam-related combat casualties.⁶

The Federal Veterans Justice Outreach Initiative

In the past decade, the Department of Defense and the VA have become increasingly active in efforts to address mental health and substance abuse issues among veterans. As part of an overall strategy to meet the needs of veterans, the VA launched the Veterans Justice Outreach Initiative in 2009. According to the VA:

⁵ Andrew J. Saxon, et. al., “Trauma, Symptoms of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder, and Associated Problems Among Incarcerated Veterans,” p. 959, (<http://www.nadcp.org/sites/default/files/nadcp/Trauma%2C%20symptoms%20pf%20PTSD.pdf>)

⁶ E. Lanier Summerall, “Report of (VA) Consensus Conference: Practice Recommendations for Treatment of Veterans with Comorbid TBI, Pain, and PTSD. <http://www.ptsd.va.gov/professional/pages/traumatic-brain-injuryptsd>

The purpose of the Veteran Justice Outreach Initiative (VJO) initiative is to avoid the unnecessary criminalization of mental illness and extended incarceration among Veterans by ensuring that eligible justice-involved Veterans have timely access to VHA [Veterans Health Administration] mental health and substance abuse services when clinically indicated, and other VA services and benefits as appropriate.⁷

Veterans Treatment Courts

History - The first veterans treatment court was founded in 2008 in Buffalo, New York, when Judge Robert Russell realized that a growing number of people in the Buffalo Drug and Mental Health Courts were veterans. Since 2008, at least 60 jurisdictions across the country have started or are starting a VTC.

VTCs are therapeutic courts in the tradition of drug courts and mental health courts. They use a team approach and emphasize connecting court clients with treatment, rather than punishing them with more jail time, although jail is used as a sanction when appropriate. VTCs, like other therapeutic courts, are opt-in models, which require that potential participants fit a defined set of criteria and then voluntarily opt in to the court by agreeing to the rules of the court and to abide by the treatment plan that has been developed. The relationship between the judge and the court client is important to provide both support and accountability.

VTCs are distinguished from drug and mental health courts in their exclusive focus on veterans and the emphasis on utilizing treatment and benefits provided by the VA, rather than local services. In addition, VTCs emphasize the importance of community among court participants, which is not always present in therapeutic courts. For example, in King County's Adult Drug Court and Regional Mental Health Court, defendants are rewarded for succeeding in the program by being placed at the beginning of the court calendar so they can check in and leave without having to wait through the entire calendar. VTC participants are encouraged and often required to stay for the entire calendar as a means of fostering camaraderie among court participants similar to what they may have experienced while in the service. King County's Family Treatment Court has a similar requirement for participants to stay for the full calendar and it has helped develop a sense of community in the court from which participants benefit.

VTCs often include a mentoring element, which is a potentially powerful way to engage veterans. Mentors could be previous participants in the court or veterans who are interested in helping a fellow veteran. "The concept of the veteran mentoring component is to re-engage the veteran defendant with a positive sense of veteran identity, as well to offer practical advice and services in addition to what the veteran receives in the context of his or her plan. RMHC has only recently initiated a mentoring program with two peers and ADC does not currently have a mentoring program. Courts designed specifically for veterans are consistent with the long history in the United States of providing preferences to veterans due to their service to their country. The federal government has launched multiple programs that provide preferences for veterans,

⁷ <http://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/VJO.asp>

including the GI Bill and federal employment preferences. King County provides a preference for veterans in the hiring process and the 2011 Washington State Legislature passed and the governor signed a law that allows private employers to voluntarily give a preference to hiring veterans and widows or widowers of veterans. The law further enables private companies to give employment preferences to spouses of certain honorably discharged veterans who become permanently disabled during their service.¹⁴ The VJO Initiative and veterans treatment courts are consistent with these efforts that recognize the service of veterans by providing specialized services.⁸

Other Veterans Treatment Courts

King County Mental Health, Chemical Abuse and Dependency Services Division (MHCADSD) staff identified 60 veterans' courts currently operating in cities and counties across the country. Although limited information is available about specific eligibility criteria and participation practices for some jurisdictions, some themes related to the context, structure, and eligibility criteria for participation emerged.

All but one VTC operates as a stand-alone court, independent from other treatment court models such as drug and mental health courts. According to the National Association of Drug Court Professionals (NADCP), stand-alone courts are the preferred model because most veterans suffer from co-occurring disorders, and require treatment and considerations specific to the consequences of military trauma. VTCs are located in circuit, superior, and district or municipal courts, depending on jurisdiction, but VTCs in major metropolitan areas are most often located in district or municipal courts.

Across jurisdictions, eligibility for participation in VTCs is based upon criminal and clinical considerations. While a growing number of states, including Colorado, Illinois, and Texas have passed legislation to support the formation of veterans treatment courts, this legislation often leaves it up to local jurisdictions to decide upon specific eligibility criteria. According to the National Association of Drug Court Professionals (NADCP), many jurisdictions have based eligibility criteria on the needs of their criminal justice-involved veterans. For example, Travis County conducted a survey of veterans booked into jail to determine how many veterans were arrested, the charges filed against them, their rate of recidivism, and whether they had received VA services; eligibility criteria for the veteran court was constructed with the characteristics and needs of this population in mind. Even with largely independent jurisdictional discretion, clinical eligibility criteria are consistent across jurisdictions. Veterans and active duty military service members diagnosed with substance abuse or mental health disorders attributed to their service, including PTSD, TBI, and in some cases sexual trauma and depression, meet clinical eligibility standards.

Criminal eligibility standards are less consistent across jurisdictions. Many jurisdictions accept veterans and active duty individuals charged with misdemeanors and non-violent felony offenses, and a smaller number of courts accept only those charged with misdemeanors. Only three courts accept only felony offenders, including Pierce County, Washington and Washoe County, Nevada. Recently, many jurisdictions have expanded or are acting to expand eligibility criteria to include veterans charged with violent offenses. PTSD and other mental health conditions that result from

⁸ Excerpt from the Veterans Treatment Court Proviso Response by the King County office of Performance Strategy and Budget, June 1, 2011.

military service often manifest themselves in the form of violent offenses, and some jurisdictions found that by not accepting violent offenders they did not receive enough referrals to sustain the court.⁹

The funding will be used for the following veteran's justice activities:

- **Local Veterans Justice Outreach (VJO) Coordinator:** a local VJO Coordinator will be hired within the Department of Community and Human Services, Mental Health, Chemical Abuse and Dependency Services Division (MHCADSD). The MHCADSD oversees the Criminal Justice Initiatives, which includes development, management and oversight of jail re-entry and therapeutic court programming; adding the VJO position to MHCADSD will ensure direct coordination and linkage of veterans' justice systems programming. The VJO Coordinator responsibilities will include developing, implementing and managing the King County VJO initiative, which includes monitoring and managing contracts associated with the VJO initiative. \$100,000.

As the VJO Initiatives encompasses the three areas addressed earlier, which are 1) **Veterans Treatment Courts in King County**; 2) **Systems and Services Coordination**; and 3) **Coordination with Trainings about Veterans and Serving Veterans**, it will be the role of this local VJO Coordinator to coordinate, monitor, troubleshoot and facilitate the these three areas and provide a single County-level point of coordination for the intersection of Veterans, justice system, and service systems for the Veterans Treatment Courts, Veterans-specific training, and community-based providers of treatment services. Bringing together the local justice system, including courts, jails, defense, prosecutor and, law enforcement with Veterans governmental and community-based providers is a brand new area for King County that requires much coordination across these fragmented and complex systems. This role will coordinate within the broader King County MHCADSD Criminal Justice Initiatives, where an existing foundation for cross-system criminal justice and social services coordination and collaboration has been occurring since 2002.

- **Veteran's Treatment Courts Liaison:** the liaison position is a contract position who will assigned to the King County Regional Mental Health Court Veterans Treatment Court and the Seattle Municipal Court Veterans Treatment Court. \$50,000.

This position works as part of the collaborative team and is responsible for the following:

- a. Screening for veterans/military status
- b. Screening for **clinical eligibility** for the veterans docket, which consists of consideration of the court's criteria and includes the clinical diagnostic criteria (mental health and substance abuse) level of functioning based on a level of functioning standardized screening tool, co-occurring mental health and substance use disorders, a trauma screening using a standardized trauma screening tool, and reviewing the veteran's treatment history in the Veterans Health Administration, the King County publicly-funded mental health system or records from other relevant healthcare providers

⁹ Excerpt from the Veterans Treatment Court Proviso Response by the King County office of Performance Strategy and Budget, June 1, 2011.

- c. Screening and Helping to Determine Amenability for the Veterans Treatment Court and requirements thereof (a MHC team-based decision with the court liaison)
 - d. Providing initial treatment plan preliminary assessment of treatment needs and work collaboratively with the Federal VJO to determine the initial treatment plan, which may involve more comprehensive trauma/PTSD assessment
- **Veterans Treatment Court:** starting in year two, following pilot implementation of the Regional Mental Health Court Veterans Treatment Court in 2012, funds will be dedicated to the therapeutic court costs of implementing the King County Veterans Treatment Court. \$155,000

Therapeutic court costs include the cost to cover the judge, court administration, prosecutors, defense and probation.

6. Funds Available

The 2012 Service Improvement Plan identified the following allocations for this activity.

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Veterans Levy	\$150,000	\$305,000	\$305,000	\$330,000	\$345,000	\$345,000
Human Services Levy	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	\$150,000	\$305,000	\$305,000	\$330,000	\$345,000	\$345,000

A total of \$150,000 is available in 2012 to implement this activity. Additional funds will be available annually through 2017 based on the results of the pilot project and recommendations for a King County Veterans Court.

7. Evidence-based or Promising Practices

Since 2008, when VTCs were first established in the United States, at least 80 jurisdictions across the country have started or are starting a VTC. In Washington, four counties have veteran specialty courts: Clark, Pierce, Spokane, and Thurston. In addition, Seattle Municipal Court launched their Veterans Treatment in September 2011. VTCs utilize the key elements of therapeutic courts, replacing the traditional court processing with a treatment problem solving model. King County has long had both a drug diversion court and a mental health court, and has recognized the benefit of treatment over incarceration in addressing public safety and providing opportunities for recovery. A focus on veterans' needs and experiences, as well as a focused collaboration with veteran-specific service agencies, allows for an environment uniquely suited for this population.

Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) training is a pre-booking approach designed to improve the outcomes of police interactions with people with mental illnesses. CIT is a critical component when working with justice-involved veterans. CIT provides law enforcement officers tools for responding safely and compassionately, as well as alternatives to arrest and incarceration, when they encounter people with mental illness. In addition, CIT improves consumers' safety as officers are able, through the use of de-escalation techniques, to help prevent a crisis from deteriorating to the point where

the use of force is likely. Individuals who encounter a CIT trained officer are more likely to stay out of jails and emergency rooms and receive treatment in the community. CIT provides training on the identification, engagement and specific needs of veterans, including identifying signs of combat-related trauma and the role of adaptive behaviors in justice system involvement.

8. Service Partnerships

As part of an overall strategy to meet the needs of veterans, the VA launched the VJO Initiative in 2009. King County is already taking advantage of the VJO Initiative in several programs including the Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) training, Mental Illness and Drug Dependency (MIDD Strategy 10a), working with jail justice-involved staff to identify incarcerated veterans and link them to services, and housing when released.

A work group that included representation from the courts, the Prosecutor, the Office of Public Defense, and the Department of Community and Human Services, agreed to pilot a veteran's track in Regional Mental Health Court. The pilot year of the treatment court will be funded within existing resources and expertise of the RMHC which is fully funded by the MIDD. The 2011 adopted budget included a proviso calling for recommendations on creating a veterans specialty court in King County.

This program also seeks to maximize access to VA treatment services and veterans benefits by concentrating justice-involved veterans to a court and court screening process, thus simultaneously minimizing use of state and locally funded programs.

In 2010, King County contracted with the Criminal Justice Training Commission to implement CIT training for law enforcement and other first responders in King County. This program is currently funded through the MIDD – strategy 10a, and was implemented in partnership with DCHS, MHCADSD, and the King County Sheriff's Office. The CIT is designed to intervene in behavioral crisis and divert individuals from jail/court into mental health and/or substance abuse treatment. There is a specific component for veterans, which includes PTSD and TBI. The CIT training is available at no cost to all police in King County, and the VA police department has been invited to participate in the training.

9. Performance Measures

Performance measures provided by the CSD Performance, Management and Evaluation Unit:

Objectives	Service Outputs/ Measures	Most Recent Performance	2012 Target(s)	Data Source
Engagement/ Assessment	• Number of veterans screened	No data	• (Seattle only)	Report Card – Services
	• Number of veterans assessed for VTC	No data	• (Seattle only)	Report Card – Services
Treatment/ Intervention	• Number of veterans opting into VTC	No Data	• (Seattle only)	Report Card – Services
	• Number of eligible veterans being referred to community based services	No data	• (Seattle only)	Report Card - Services
	• Number of veterans completing VTC (18 month – 24 month outcome)	No data	• (2014 target)	Report Card - Services
System Resources/ Capacity Building	• Development and coordination of King County Veterans Justice Outreach initiative	No data	• Veterans Justice Outreach Coordinator hired	Customized Management Report
	• Number of service partners trained (or received presentations) on justice involved veterans	No data		Customized Management Report
	• Creation of Veterans Treatment Court calendar in King County District Court (2013)	No data	• Veterans Court docket implemented at Regional Mental Health Court (2013 target)	Customized Management Report

Levy is not funding VTC in 2012, therefore target should be for 2013 and not associated with the pilot.



King County

Regional Human Services Levy Oversight Board

Veterans Citizen Levy Oversight Board

**Department of
Community and Human Services**

401 5th Avenue, Suite 510

Seattle, WA 98104

206.263.9062 FAX: 206.296.0156

TTY RELAY: 711

March 15, 2012

Dow Constantine, King County Executive
Office of the King County Executive
401 5th Avenue, Suite 800
Seattle, WA 98104

Councilmember Larry Gossett, Chair
Metropolitan King County Council
King County Courthouse
COURTHOUSE

Dear Executive Constantine and Councilmember Gossett:

We, the members of the Veteran Citizens Levy Oversight Board (VCLOB) have reviewed and support the veteran's justice initiative for King County as developed by the Mental Health, Chemical Abuse and Dependency Services Division (MHCADSD) of the Department of Community and Human Services (DCHS). The Council directed that the VCLOB review and recommend the proposal for a veteran's justice initiative for King County in Ordinance 17232. The ordinance also directed MHCADSD to develop a report on the feasibility of establishing a veteran's justice outreach coordinator position to implement a veteran's justice initiative for King County. The ordinance stated that the report due to County Council on April 26, 2012, include the review and recommendation of the veteran's justice outreach coordinator position by the VCLOB. This letter constitutes the VCLOB response to Council direction.

We have reviewed the implementation plan for Activity 1.5 C Emerging veterans justice programs – King County Veterans Court, as presented by MHCADSD staff at our February 2012 meeting. Members of the board are keenly aware of the needs of criminal justice involved veterans and asked numerous questions which MHCADSD staff members were able to fully and satisfactorily address.

The Honorable Dow Constantine and The Honorable Larry Gossett
March 15, 2012
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We support a veteran's justice outreach coordinator position in MHCADSD to implement a veteran's justice initiative for King County. The goals of the veteran's justice initiative as described in the implementation plan align with the SIP's description of Activity 1.5 C Emerging Programs for Justice Involved Veterans. The SIP allocates sufficient levy funding to cover the costs of the veterans justice initiative including this position.

Sincerely,



Douglas D. Hoople
Chair, VCLOB



Cynthia Lefever
Vice-Chair, VCLOB

cc: Metropolitan King County Councilmembers
ATTN: Mike Huddleston, Interim Chief of Staff
Anne Noris, Clerk of the Council
Joe Woods, Council Relations Manager, Office of the King County Executive (OKCE)
Alan Painter, Human Services, Health and Housing Policy Advisor, OKCE
Dwight Dively, Director, Office of Performance, Strategy and Budget, OKCE
Jackie MacLean, Director, Department of Community and Human Services (DCHS)
Linda Peterson, Division Director, Community Services Division, DCHS