

KING COUNTY HUMAN SERVICE MILESTONES

1852

- Oregon Territorial Assembly creates King County on December 22, 1852.

1853

- Washington Territory is separated from Oregon Territory.

1854

- Washington Territorial Legislature passes "An Act relating to the support of the poor," which delegates to county governments the responsibility for "every poor person who shall be unable to earn a livelihood in consequence of bodily infirmity, idiocy, lunacy or other cause." The Act notes that relatives have primary responsibility for people in need, and grants county governments the right to fine them for non-support. Counties are also authorized to build workhouses, to contract for the care of adults, and to apprentice poor children.

1855

- While counties were expected to pay for the care of the poor, no territorial funds were dedicated to this purpose. King County appeals to Washington Territory for reimbursement for the care of a destitute sailor found wandering and disoriented on a beach near Seattle, but the territorial legislature declines to pay, the first "unfunded mandate."
- First property taxes are collected in King County.

1860: *King County population 305*

1870: *King County population 2,120*

1873

- Board of County Commissioners creates the office of "overseer of the poor."

1877

- Sisters of Providence convert a two-story frame house into the county hospital at the King County Poor Farm on the Duwamish River.

1880: *King County population 6,910*

1889

- Washington becomes the 42nd state in the Union on November 11, 1889.
- King County hires its first full-time public health officer.

1890: *King County population 63,989*

1900: *King County population 110,053*

1904

- Private and church-sponsored charities create a state coalition. The first Washington Conference of Charities and Corrections is held at Plymouth Congregational Church in Seattle, billed as a "public conference for the purpose of discussing the problems of caring for our weaker citizens in state and county institutions and by means of private philanthropy, and for encouraging remedial legislation."

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1905

- County charity commissioner is appointed to screen applicants for public aid.

1910: *King County population 285,638*

1920: *King County population 389,273*

1921

- King County starts to provide financial assistance to veterans under a State law requiring counties to collect property tax millage for this purpose.

1930: *King County population 463,500*

- First countywide public relief program begins.

1935

- Federal public works program established to address severe unemployment problems of the Great Depression.
- Alcoholic's Anonymous is founded.

1940: *King County population 505,000*

1948

- 21st amendment to the state constitution is ratified, granting counties the right to home rule.

1950: *King County population 733,000*

1960: *King County population 935,000 (unincorporated 288,000 – 30.8%)*

1960's

- Community health clinics begin opening in Seattle/King County (continues into the 70's).

1963

- Landmark US Supreme Court case Gideon v. Wainwright establishes the right of poor people charged with a felony crime to have a lawyer paid for by the state.
- Federal government passes the Community Mental Health Act (PL 88-164), which directs deinstitutionalization of people with mental illness and establishes a federally funded community mental health system nationwide.

1964

- King County adopts its first Comprehensive Plan to manage growth in unincorporated areas.

1965

- Seattle-King County Health Department becomes the first public health department to be accredited by the US Public Health Service.

1966

- King County receives a federal grant to start a Neighborhood Youth Corps Program for at-risk youth.

1967

- Washington State passes the Community Mental Health Services Act (RCW 71.24).

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1968

- King County Work Training Program is established to educate and train people for self-sufficiency.

1968

- Cedar Hills Addiction Treatment Facility, a 208-bed residential drug and alcohol treatment program, opens in Maple Valley to serve as a corrections facility for people incarcerated for alcohol-related offenses.

1969

- King County adopts a "home rule" charter, establishing a nine-member county council and county executive form of government.
- King County Mental Health Board is created in state law (71.24) and county code (2.32.010). The Board for Developmental Disabilities is created in state law (71.20) and county code (2.32.020). The Mental Health-Mental Retardation Program is established to develop and administer state funds provided to counties for community mental health programs. The director of the Mental Health-Mental Retardation Program and the Mental Health Board report directly to then-King County Executive John Spellman.

1970: *King County population 1,159,400 (unincorporated 411,800 – 35.6%)*

- King County establishes the Public Defense Program to guarantee indigent defendants' right to legal counsel.

1973

- State passes the Involuntary Treatment Act (RCW 71.05) to protect public safety and the civil rights of people with mental illness, further shifting treatment from the state to the community. King County establishes the Division of Involuntary Treatment, not as part of the Mental Health-Mental Retardation Program but reporting to King County Superior Court.
- First interlocal agreement between King County, the City of Seattle and United Way establishes the Area Agency on Aging to administer federal Older American Act funding in King County.

1974

- The Division of Human Services is created in the Health Department and includes Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and the Drug Commission.
- The "Uniform Alcoholism and Intoxication Treatment Act" (RCW 70.96A) is passed by the State Legislature, which decriminalizes public drunkenness and shifts responsibility for the treatment of persons found to be intoxicated in public to county governments.
- King County creates the Division of Alcohol and Substance Abuse Services (DASAS) in the Health Department and starts coordinating treatment services.
- The King County Alcoholism Treatment Facility (also known as the King County Detoxification Center) opens.
- Passage of the federal Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, which establishes the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program and provides formula funding for the nation's central cities and urban counties.

1975

- The King County Housing and Community Development section is created, prompted by the passage of the federal Housing and Community Development Act of 1974.

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- In response to the increased demand for services created by the closure of Northern State Hospital in 1971, the King County Mental Health Board adopts policy definitions to prioritize services for persons with the most severe mental illnesses.
- King County Emergency Service Patrol is established to provide transportation to incarcerated persons to hospitals, sobering and other services.

1977

- Division of Human Services moves from the Health Department to the Department of Rehabilitative Services at the King County Jail. County Designated Mental Health Professionals (CDMHPs) are added to the Division.

1978

- King County establishes the Women's Advisory Board and the Women's Program. Both mandate the fostering of "programs, legislation, and policies for the benefit of women throughout King County."
- King County establishes the Office on Aging in the Budget and Program Development Department.
- King County partners with the University of Washington in the first federal demonstration grant for supported employment for persons with developmental disabilities.

1980: *King County population 1,270,000 (unincorporated 503,000 - 39.6%)*

- First countywide assessment of women's needs is conducted. Findings include the need for "more government funded services, improved accessibility of services with multilingual and culturally sensitive staff."

1981

- Office on Aging moves to the Human Services Division.

1982

- State Legislature revises the Community Mental Health Services Act (RCW 71.24) to define priority populations and establishing community support services as the service of choice.
- King County Department of Human Resources is created. The Division of Human Services moves to the new department (from Rehabilitation Services); other programs are moved as well (Veterans, Women's, Youth Service Bureaus, Public Defense).

1983

- Aging Program Funding Policy and Allocation Plan is adopted, establishing the county's role as a local funder for senior centers and programs in unincorporated areas and small cities, augmenting certain services for vulnerable elderly residents of unincorporated and small cities that were previously considered the responsibility of the Area Agency on Aging. Aging Program joins the Department of Human Resources.
- Drug Commission moves from Human Resources to the Health Department.

1984

- Funding policy of the youth and family service network agencies is approved under which King County provides higher level of funding for unincorporated areas than for cities (three to one). Expectation is that as cities incorporate, they should assume responsibility for funding this service for the youth in their communities.

1987

- Federal government passes Steward B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act (PL 100-77).

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- King County Mental Health Program contracts are revised to require service provision to acutely mentally ill, chronically mentally ill and seriously disturbed individuals as priority populations based on 1986 amendments to state Community Mental Health Services Act.

1988

- King County begins planning to restructure the mental health system into a community support system for persons with acute and chronic mental illness. The King County Mental Health Board approves a subregional system for delivering mental health services.
- King County voters approve a local option sales tax in unincorporated areas. The Council "sets aside" 23% of the proceeds to fund health and human services and adopts funding policies. The Health and Human Services Fund (now known as the Children & Family Services Set-aside), is used to support the youth and family service network agencies; maternal and pediatric care programs/teen parents; child care; domestic violence services; and youth shelters. By 1992, the cost of the funded programs exceeds available revenues. The council adds the revenues from county parking facilities to the fund.
- King County starts a supported employment program for people with developmental disabilities in the King County Parks Department.
- King County develops a five-year Domestic Violence Comprehensive Plan to address the growing crisis of domestic violence in the community.

1989

- Washington State again amends the Community Mental Health Services Act (Senate Bill 5400) and shifts responsibility for services from the state to county-based entities called Regional Support Networks (RSNs). King County becomes the RSN in order to assume local control and management of community-based care targeted to the needs of the county's population.
- King County Child Care Program is established in response to the needs assessment conducted by the Women's Program in 1987. In addition to providing child care subsidies to lower income families, the program provides funding for child care through homeless shelters and sparks the creation of Child Care Resources, an agency that provides child care referrals throughout the region.
- King County Aging Program begins to support adult day health programs operated by senior centers receiving county funding.
- King County awarded a federal grant to establish program to address drug/substance abuse and violence prevention using a community mobilization model of prevention (Community Organizing Program).
- King County, Seattle, United Way and a number of suburban cities form the Human Services Roundtable to promote joint planning and development of human services.

1990: *King County population 1,507,000 (unincorporated 513,300 – 34%)*

- King County Department of Human Resources is renamed the King County Department of Human Services (DHS) with four divisions: Office of Public Defense; Community Services Division, which includes Aging, Women's Program, Cooperative Extension, Child Care Program, Youth Service Bureaus, Veterans, and Work Training Program); Office of Aging, Developmental Disabilities and Fiscal Management; and the Mental Health Division.
- King County Regional Support Network (RSN) is established and managed by the new Mental Health Division. As the RSN, the county assumes responsibility for planning, coordinating and authorizing residential and community support services for people with acute and chronic mental illnesses. The restructured mental health system includes expanded crisis and residential services and a subregional case management system.

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- King County voters approve Proposition 2 authorizing a 0.1 percent increase in sales tax for criminal justice purposes. The proposition was placed on the ballot in response to increasing costs and unmet needs in the criminal justice system.
- A portion of Motor Vehicle Excise Tax (MVET) revenues are directed to fund local criminal justice activities, including domestic violence victim services.
- As part of a coordinated effort via the Human Services Roundtable, King County, the City of Seattle, and several other cities agree to allocate a portion of sales and MVET tax revenues to expansion of services for domestic violence survivors.
- The King County Housing Opportunity Fund (HOF) is established to help provide housing for special needs populations for which the county has responsibility (e.g., mental health, drug/alcohol, etc) as well as homeless and very low-income families.
- Amendments to the federal McKinney Act creates 1) the Shelter Plus Care program to provide housing assistance to homeless people with mental illness, chemical dependency, disabilities, AIDS; 2) the Health Care for the Homeless Program to provide primary health care and outreach to at-risk homeless children; and 3) Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness (PATH).
- State Legislature passes the Growth Management Act (GMA) to address negative impacts of unprecedented population growth and suburban sprawl and requires all cities and counties to develop comprehensive land use plans. King County and its cities develop the King County Countywide Planning Policies to meet GMA requirements and to coordinate planning among all jurisdictions.

1991

- Then-King County Executive Tim Hill appoints a Task Force on Children and Families to examine children and family services in King County and recommend future program priorities in a policy plan to include mental health, legal issues, health care, education and family support.

1992

- King County Children and Family Commission is established, with a mission to promote improved services and funding to demonstrate innovative prevention and intervention programs.
- Women's shelters for domestic violence victims open in east and south King County.
- McKinney Act amended again to create "safe havens" for very low cost shelter for persons who are unwilling or unable to participate in supportive services; and ACCESS demonstration projects to integrate services for people with mental illness.

1993

- King County joins the City of Seattle and local nonprofit agencies to form the King County Consortium to create a single, strong continuum of care for homeless services and respond to new federal regulations requiring the coordination of applications for federal funding for homeless services (McKinney grants) in King County.

1994

- Metro and King County merge.
- King County Council approves Safe Communities, an initiative in response to youth violence that identifies five strategies to help address the root causes of violence and help communities help themselves. Several youth employment and juvenile justice interventions are funded including Stay in School; Reaching Back, Giving Back; YouthWorks and youth interns.

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- *Substance Abuse Master Plan: Chronic Public Inebriates* is released detailing the array of services needed for chronic public inebriates and identifying priority gaps.
- King County and suburban cities form the King County Community Development Block Grant Consortium and agree to set aside a portion of the annual CDBG entitlement to fund the Housing Stability Project to provide regional homelessness prevention services.
- Then-King County Executive Gary Locke signs the Citizen Participation Initiative to create opportunities for stronger community involvement for residents of the county's unincorporated areas and calling for recognition of unincorporated area councils, establishment of Community Service Centers, and designation of Community Service Representatives (Department of Human Services staff) to serve as liaisons between the county and the unincorporated communities.
- Updated Comprehensive Plan begins to look at broader issues of regional parks, roads and other services (including human services).

1995

- King County Regional Support Network assumes capitated risk responsibility as a Medicaid prepaid health plan (PHP) for outpatient mental health services, replacing the fee-for-service system with a managed care system. The PHP is formed in response to a federal waiver granted to the state to establish regionalized administration of the Medicaid program. It is designed to increase access to care, client satisfaction, administrative efficiency, and create greater accountability for outcomes and quality.
- State disallows the use of Real Estate Excise Tax (REET) for affordable housing; county responds by providing general fund dollars to support the Housing Opportunity Fund (HOF).
- Housing and Community Development Program moves from Parks, Planning and Resources to the Department of Human Services.

1996

- King County Department of Human Services is renamed the Department of Community and Human Services (DCHS) to reflect its expanded mission following the addition of Housing and Community Development Program.
- Then-King County Councilmember Ron Sims forms the Chronic Public Inebriate System Solution Workgroup to address the health, safety and human service needs of homeless chronic inebriates.
- King County Council approves an ordinance to decree that all surplus property parcels be reviewed for suitability for development as affordable housing.
- King County assumes responsibility as the local lead agency for early intervention services for infants and toddlers (birth to age 3) with developmental delays.
- The Veterans Program initiates treatment services for veterans incarcerated in the King County jail in a new program called the Veterans Incarcerated Project, which very quickly impacts recidivism rates. The project will later receive the Governor's Quality Initiative Award. In response to cutbacks at the VA, the Veterans Program initiates counseling services for family members of veterans affected by post traumatic stress disorder.
- The King County Community Services Division begins a two-year comprehensive subregional planning process to identify and address human service priorities for each region of the county, called the CSD Strategic Plan.

1997

- Regional Justice Center in Kent opens on March 14, 1997.
- King County Executive Ron Sims convenes the Mentally Ill Offender Task Force to address issues related to involuntary commitment laws and collaboration between mental health and corrections in order to improve public safety and access and coordination of care following

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the tragic death of a Seattle firefighter killed by a man with a history of mental illness and repeated incarcerations.

1998

- King County, City of Seattle and suburban cities undertake an effort to critically look at Regional Governance and Finance Planning. The Regional Finance and Governance Oversight Committee established as a subcommittee of the Growth Management Planning Council, evaluates government service delivery in King County, including human services. Considerable work is done but no final agreement or financing approach is adopted.
- King County Council increases the marriage license fee by \$15 per license and the funds are dedicated to family support programs, administered by the King County Children and Family Commission.
- Juvenile Justice Operational Master Plan (JJOMP) Phase I report is published with recommendations for the creation of prevention and community projects to divert youth in the justice system to meaningful treatment and community service alternatives to detention. The overall goal is to avoid the need to build an additional juvenile detention center in King County.
- King County Jobs Initiative is created as a response to welfare reform.
- King County Credit Enhancement Program is created to lend the financial backing of the county to affordable housing project financing, thereby lowering a project's cost at no additional cost to the county and creating an incentive for developers to include more affordable housing in their projects.
- King County Crisis Triage Unit at Harborview Hospital opens to improve access to care for people with drug/alcohol, mental health or developmental disabilities-related crisis needs.
- King County Mentally Ill Offender Community Treatment Program is implemented following passage of state legislation creating funding for a pilot to study effective means to safely return to the community offenders with mental illness from state prisons. The state legislation is in response to recommendations of the Mentally Ill Offender Task Force.

1999

- King County Council adopts the *King County Framework Policies for Human Services* designed to clarify the county's roles as a local and regional government partner in the human service system and set broad priorities for the use of discretionary current expense funds in the area of human services. The document establishes five community goal areas where human services will be focused: Goal 1 – Food to eat and a roof overhead; Goal 2 – Supportive relationships within families, neighborhoods and communities; Goal 3 – A safe haven from all forms of violence and abuse; Goal 4 – Health care to be physically and mentally fit as possible; and Goal 5 – Education and job skills to lead an independent life. The report also establishes the priorities for expenditure of county current expense and criminal justice funding: 1) provide access to a basic array of human services for residents of unincorporated King County; 2) help assure access to a basic array of human services for persons most in need, regardless of where they live; and 3) provide services that reduce the impacts on the county's juvenile justice and criminal justice systems.
- King County Executive Ron Sims calls for the merger of treatment services from Public Health's Division of Alcohol and Substance Abuse Services with the DCHS Mental Health Division to create the Mental Health, Chemical Abuse and Dependency Services Division.
- King County Mental Health Court opens to help eligible misdemeanor defendants connect to mental health and other supportive services in lieu of incarceration.
- The Human Services Roundtable is disbanded and subregional groups begin to become the forums for cooperative planning in south, east, and north King County.

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- The 2000 budget includes reductions in general fund support for human services as the county's fiscal situation deteriorates due to the impact of annexations, incorporations, and tax growth limitations. Cuts proposed are based on the priorities defined in the Framework Policies.

2000: King County population 1,737,000 (unincorporated 352,800 – 20.3%)

- King County assumes responsibility for operation of the federally funded Dislocated Worker Program and WorkSource Renton when the Private Industry Council is disbanded.
- As a result of a Homeless Children's lawsuit, the State starts to fund transitional housing for families with children and King County starts to administer these funds for the region.
- Childcare Wage Incentive Project ordinance is passed by King County Council.
- Healthy Aging Partnership is formed and a senior information campaign is launched to promote a new telephone service, 1-888-4ELDERS providing a wealth of referral information and resources for elders and their families and caregivers. King County is a partner.
- Juvenile Justice Operational Master Plan (JJOMP) Phase II recommendations are published, noting the early success in reducing the numbers of youth in juvenile detention since these efforts began in 1998 and calling for additional alternative programs for youth, with particular attention to the issue of disproportionality of youth of color involved in the juvenile justice system. Programs for At Risk Youth/Child In Need of Services and other programs to link youth with drug/alcohol and mental health services are strengthened.
- King County Council authorizes the work plan, staffing and funding of the development of an Adult Justice Operational Master Plan (AJOMP).

2001

- King County participates in planning and provides matching funds for the Sound Families Program - a \$40 million commitment by the partners to provide 3,000 units of transitional housing in King, Pierce and Snohomish counties, initiated by the Gates Foundation.

2002

- State Legislature passes Substitute House Bill 2060 creating a dedicated funding source, a document recording fee, to fund low-income housing.
- King County Regional Policy Committee (RPC), one of the three regional committees of the King County Council, adopts a Health and Human Services Work Plan with three tasks identified for focus. In light of the county's continuing severe budget crisis, Task 1 sets out to prioritize the human services that are of critical importance to the region and calls for those services to be funded in the county's 2003 budget. The King County Council adopts and funds the service priorities recommended by the RPC.
- The RPC endorses a set of regional human services identified as the foundation for the development of a countywide partnership (Task 2, RPC Health and Human Services Work Plan). The list is consistent with the King County Framework Policies already adopted by the council and in line with the five community goals adopted by King County, United Way, and several cities. Funding mechanisms for the services are not addressed in this work.
- Adult Justice Operational Master Plan (AJOMP) recommendations are released. The report calls for development and expansion of community treatment alternatives in lieu of incarceration, as appropriate; closure of expensive and aging county facilities (Cedar Hills Addiction Treatment Facility and the North Rehabilitation Facility); establishment of a Day Reporting Center; and exploration of other areas of criminal justice for efficiencies. The overall goal is to avoid the need to build another jail in King County. AJOMP recommendations are included in the 2003 final budget, resulting in increases in general fund support for mental health and substance abuse treatment for those involved in the criminal justice system.

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- Cedar Hills Addiction Treatment Facility closes when the county cannot continue to fund the difference between the state reimbursement for services and the actual operating costs. The aging North Rehabilitation Facility is closed as well.
- The King County Child Care Program closes.
- King County enters into an agreement with the City of Seattle, United Way and others to create the Committee to End Homelessness. They are charged to develop a 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness in King County by 2014.

2003

- King County, the City of Seattle, and the Suburban Cities enter into an interlocal agreement to create the Regional Affordable Housing Program to distribute the low-income housing funds generated by SHB 2060 passed in 2002. All of King County's cities agree to participate, creating an opportunity for truly regional communication and collaboration on affordable housing issues and funding.
- Human service providers and advocates ask King County Executive Ron Sims to convene a citizen task force on human services to find long-term solutions to the instability of regional human service funding.
- King County Executive Ron Sims proposes to dedicate \$7 million from new payments from the Solid Waste Division to the county current expense fund for the use of the Cedar Hills solid waste facility, and dedicates that revenue to support county-funded human services. No reductions to human services funding are proposed in the Executive's 2004 budget.
- *Human Services Recommendations Report 2004-2006* is published (as required in the King County Framework Policies for Human Services) to report on the changing human services environment, evaluate progress in achieving the five community goals, identify areas for specific focus, and present recommendations for program and system improvements. The report focuses significantly on the development of programs and services for juveniles and adults in the criminal justice systems and the positive impacts of those programs on reducing incarcerations and detentions. Among the report's recommendations is the call to convene a human services advisory task force to look at future programs and identify long-term stable sources of funding. The KCC adopts the report, including its recommendation for a task force.
- King County Council adopts the Executive's 2004 budget proposal, including the solid waste payment proposal.

2004

- King County Executive convenes the Task Force on Regional Human Services, a volunteer citizen advisory group to examine the current Regional Health and Human Services system and provide practical and strategic recommendations for stabilizing, improving and maintaining the regional human service system for the future.