

SEATTLE CITY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE ANNUAL REPORT - 2017

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CIVIL DIVISION

The Seattle City Attorney's Office Civil Division is the City's law firm. Daily, the 60-plus lawyers in the Division provide legal advice and representation on a wide range of issues, from constitutional law to affordable housing, from police reform to environmental cleanups, from collective bargaining rights to bond financing. As the City's in-house law firm, the Civil Division provides high quality legal advice and litigation services without the high price tag of a private law firm.

Civil Division attorneys also recover money for the City in taxes, damages, and enforcement penalties. In 2017, the Division's collections attorney recovered \$688,601 owed to the City. Division attorneys represented the City's Finance & Administrative Services department in disputed tax assessments resulting in the collection of over \$3.1 million in disputed taxes. And the Regulatory Enforcement and Economic Justice Section obtained over \$1.2 million in judgments, and collected \$242,922 in penalties and fees for civil code violations.

The Civil Division is divided into seven sections, each dedicated to a key area of legal responsibility for the City. The sections are: Contracts and Utilities, Employment, Environmental Protection, Government Affairs, Land Use, Regulatory Enforcement and Economic Justice, and Torts. A representative sampling of the cases and projects handled by each section in 2017 follows.

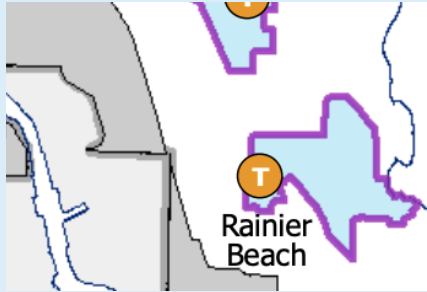
CONTRACTS & UTILITIES

When a City Department pursues capital projects, property transactions, or purchasing agreements, the Contracts & Utilities Section steps in to draft agreements and legislation, provide legal advice, and handle any resulting litigation.



KEYARENA REDEVELOPMENT

C&U played a significant role in the privately-financed project to redevelop KeyArena into a world-class civic arena for sports and entertainment. Section attorneys were engaged throughout, including negotiations and the drafting of a memorandum of agreement which was approved by City Council in December 2017.



EQUITABLE DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE

The City's Equitable Development Initiative is a program meant to mitigate displacement and increase access to opportunity for Seattle's marginalized communities. Section attorneys assisted the Office of Planning and Community Development in developing legislation to authorize the program and negotiated agreements for implementation.



ALASKAN WAY VIADUCT REPLACEMENT

Section attorneys advised SDOT and the utilities as they negotiated the City-State Viaduct demolition contract, including cost responsibilities, demolition criteria, and utility relocation. Further, C&U has filed a lawsuit against WSDOT and its contractor Seattle Tunnel Partners for damage to water mains below Western Avenue.

LAND USE

The Land Use Section provides legal advice and litigates on issues including growth and development, land use permits, zoning, building codes, historic preservation, and low-income housing.



FUNDING LOW-INCOME HOUSING

When Mercy Housing sought funding for nearly 150 apartments for working families and small households in the former Naval Air Station barracks at Sand Point, a Land Use Section attorney helped untangle a thicket of legal issues to ensure the City could play an active role. Renovations are now underway.



DEFENDING CITY REGULATORY AUTHORITY

The University of Washington sued the City to try to prove the City lacks authority to impose its landmarks and other land use laws on State institutions. The Washington State Supreme Court unanimously found that state universities are not exempt from local historic preservation laws or other development regulations. Local governments will continue to have a say in how these important institutions fit into the fabric of their communities.



ADVANCING MANDATORY HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

Mandatory Housing Affordability (MHA) involves rezoning areas of the city to provide more housing capacity, while also requiring new commercial and multifamily buildings to provide for affordable housing. Land Use Section attorneys are defending against a legal challenge and have been involved in every step of the proposal's progress.

TORTS

The Torts Section pursues large claims on behalf of the City for damages due to the negligence of others. The section also defends the City against lawsuits brought by plaintiffs who allege the City or its employees caused personal injury or property damage and seek money damages. The Torts Section advises City departments on liability issues and provides training to departments on risk management techniques, meant to reduce lawsuits and liability exposure, not just in terms of settlements or judgments but in overall litigation costs.



CLEARCUT TREES IN WEST SEATTLE

Attorneys from the Torts and REEJ sections sued landowners and tree cutters for cutting 66 trees in the publicly-owned West Duwamish Greenbelt. The case settled after the landowners agreed to pay the City \$440,000.



CURB RAMP INSTALLATIONS

This case involves allegations that the City is in violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Plaintiffs allege that the City has insufficient numbers of curb ramps on its sidewalks. The City Attorney's Office helped resolve this case with the assistance of outside counsel. Under the settlement agreement, 22,500 curb ramps will be installed or remediated over the next 18 years.



RIDE THE DUCKS COLLISION ON THE SR99 AURORA BRIDGE

Many injuries and several deaths resulted from the tragic accident between a Ride the Duck vehicle and a motor coach containing college students. Most of the lawsuits, in addition to suing Ride the Duck Seattle and Ride the Duck International, also include allegations against the State of Washington and the City of Seattle raising road design issues.

EMPLOYMENT

The Employment Section helps navigate employment laws, collective bargaining agreements, civil service regulations and City policies that apply to nearly 13,000 City employees. Section attorneys also defend the City (and sometimes its employees), advise departments, and litigate when necessary.



UTILITY BILL MODIFICATION

Seven City employees were disciplined for modifying the utility accounts of themselves or of friends and family. The employees, however, claimed that discrimination was the actual motivating factor for disciplinary action. The jury ultimately agreed with the City, and the disciplined employees lost their appeal.



WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Employment attorneys managed Workers' Compensation cases to ensure that employees get the benefits to which they are entitled. We implemented a new "structured settlement" process for the first time in 2017, taking advantage of recent changes to the Workers' Comp laws (RCW Title 51), leading to a satisfactory outcome for all parties.



EMPLOYMENT ADVICE

Attorneys strive to provide solid, pragmatic legal advice that allows City operations to proceed efficiently and fairly. Section attorneys call upon their expertise on such topics as the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Washington Law Against Discrimination, wage and hour laws, collective bargaining acts, personnel rules, and more.

GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS

When the Mayor or City Council develop new legislation, the Government Affairs Section provides legal guidance and review. When the City's laws face legal challenges, Government Affairs litigates cases concerning a wide range of issues.



HOTEL WORKERS INITIATIVE

Section attorneys successfully defended a facial challenge to Initiative 124, the City's hotel worker initiative, in King County Superior Court. Voters overwhelmingly approved of the initiative which provides hotel workers with protection from assaults and sexual harassment, and provides health care and job security. Plaintiffs have appealed the decision.



DEMOCRACY VOUCHERS

Section lawyers successfully defended Seattle first-of-its-kind campaign public financing program. After Seattle voters overwhelmingly approved an initiative allowing for the public financing of elections in the City, Government Affairs successfully defended the program against a claim the program violated the First Amendment. Plaintiffs have filed an appeal.



FIREARMS & AMMUNITION TAX

In 2015, Government Affairs attorneys assisted in drafting an ordinance imposing a business tax of \$25 for every firearm sold and \$0.05 for every round of ammunition sold. The National Rifle Association and others sued the City. Section attorneys and outside counsel defended the lawsuit and, in December 2015, defeated the NRA's challenge at King County Superior Court. The NRA appealed directly to the Washington Supreme Court, and in August 2017, the Supreme Court upheld the tax in all respects.

PUBLIC RECORDS

The City received over 12,000 public records requests in 2017. Section attorneys provided legal advice and helped manage these requests. Section attorneys spearheaded the training of all City Public Disclosure Officers with an eye toward keeping the City in compliance with the Washington Public Records Act to ensure transparency in government. Section attorneys assisted in the implementation of 2017 amendments to the Public Records Act regarding electronic records, copying costs and reporting requirements. Attorneys also drafted and advised on new Citywide rules for compliance with the Public Records Act and advised regarding privacy implications of numerous significant projects, technology purchases, and data collection for vulnerable populations including homeless and immigrants.



REGULATORY ENFORCEMENT AND ECONOMIC JUSTICE

The Regulatory Enforcement and Economic Justice ("REEJ") Section enforces City regulations, provides legal advice, reviews and drafts enforcement ordinances, and collaborates with other City departments on overlapping public safety issues. REEJ attorneys also represents SPD when officers seize and forfeit property from drug traffickers (currently litigating 56 forfeiture cases).



LAND USE CODE COMPLIANCE

REEJ attorneys litigated 73 cases involving violations of City land use codes, including cases in which work was performed without proper permits, vacant buildings were open to entry, buildings that were unfit for human habitation, illegal tree cutting and maintenance of nuisance properties. In 2017, REEJ obtained judgments in the amount of \$603,089.



ENFORCING WORKER PROTECTION LAWS

REEJ attorneys enforce Labor Standards Ordinances including the Minimum Wage, Paid Sick and Safe Time, Wage Theft and Scheduling ordinances, and provide advice regarding proposed rules and related ordinances. In 2017, REEJ litigated 10 labor standard cases and obtained judgments and/or settlements that totaled \$241,516.



CIVIL RIGHTS ENFORCEMENT

REEJ attorneys provide advice to the Office of Civil Rights and enforces the City's discrimination ordinances, including the Housing, Employment and Public Accommodation ordinances. In 2017, REEJ handled 13 discrimination cases and resolved 10. Resolution included payment of damages to the injured parties, penalties and anti-discrimination training.

FEATURED EXAMPLE:

In the South Park neighborhood, a residence had sewage and garbage dumping into the yard, erected unpermitted structures, and allowed people to sleep in vehicles on the property. REEJ persuaded the Court to declare the building unfit for human habitation and ordered the residence to be vacated and closed or repaired. The owner chose to sell the house (after paying \$25,000 in civil penalties and fines), and neighbors are thrilled the property is now clean and fenced.



BEFORE



AFTER

POLICE ACTION

Police action litigation was mostly brought in-house at the City Attorney's Office in 2011 and continues to prove successful by saving taxpayer dollars and streamlining work between the Seattle Police Department (SPD) and CAO. In 2017, the Police Action team members worked closely with SPD to coordinate efforts on litigation, client advice, subpoena responses, and the Consent Decree.

CONSENT DECREE

Police Action attorneys assisted SPD and other City departments as the City continued its progress under the consent decree with the U.S. Department of Justice. 2017 marked a major transition in federal oversight: the federal monitor concluded the last of its ten "systemic assessments" of SPD's progress under the Consent Decree. CAO attorneys also assisted in fine tuning SPD policies implemented under the decree, including a policy on the viewing of body-worn video by police officers in use of force incidents.

CAO attorneys turned their attention to a motion to find the City in "full and effective compliance" with the Consent Decree, a declaration that would mark the end of the first phase of federal oversight, and usher in a period in which SPD and the City must demonstrate their sustained compliance before the decree (and federal oversight) can terminate. The federal court granted that motion in early 2018.



POLICE ACTION CASES

In 2017, Police Action succeeded in disposing of cases through dismissals and advantageous settlements. 14 cases were dismissed without payment, two cases were affirmed on appeal, and five cases were settled. To avoid potential conflicts, the office continues to retain outside counsel to handle inquests into officer-involved incidents. During 2017 outside counsel handled one inquest into a shooting death. The inquest did not result in any materially adverse findings against officers.

Case of Interest - Mahoney

A group of SPD employees challenged the Department's comprehensive use of force policy on the grounds that it violated their constitutional rights under the Second, Fourth, and Fourteenth Amendments. The case was dismissed with prejudice in 2014 and appealed to the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals which affirmed the Order dismissing the plaintiffs' lawsuit. Plaintiffs petitioned the U.S. Supreme Court and their petition is pending.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

The Environmental Protection Section helps steward a clean Seattle by working with City departments to enforce our laws, negotiating environmental provisions in contracts and regulations, training staff on environmental regulations, and stepping in to litigate when necessary.



CITY V. MONSANTO

The City continues its lawsuit against the Monsanto agrochemical company due to PCB contamination in the Lower Duwamish waterway. In 2017 the City won a major victory by defeating Monsanto's Motion to Dismiss the City's claims. We now await a schedule for trial.



CONTAMINATION ENFORCEMENT

Section attorneys work closely with inspectors at Seattle Public Utilities to help them enforce environmental regulations, including an incident where inspectors discovered a paint company was allowing contaminated stormwater to flow off its property.



NEGOTIATIONS

When the City buys or sells property, there often are questions about contamination on the site. Environmental Protection section attorneys negotiate or help City staff negotiate environmental provisions in contracts, regulations and orders.

CRIMINAL DIVISION

THE CRIMINAL DIVISION CHIEF'S YEAR IN REVIEW - BY DIVISION CHIEF KELLY HARRIS

In 2017, the Criminal Division of the Seattle City Attorney's Office continued to grow both in numbers and in the ways in which we serve our community. The Criminal Division is committed to prosecuting cases faster and more efficiently, but always with fairness and compassion. The Division fully embarked on some new and exciting programs that helped us to better serve and protect victims of domestic violence, and to more effectively and thoughtfully deal with young offenders who commit low-level crimes.

While 2016 was marked by changes the Division made internally, 2017 seemed to be highlighted by external changes that the Division had to adjust to. Our Trial Team Unit has prosecuted some cases never seen in the City's municipal courts, as modern technology creates new ways to commit crime, while also dealing with the closure of Community Court, and the effect it had on the significant increase of new trial settings. The Specialty Court Unit, also greatly affected by the Court's decision to move away from Community Court, has worked to strengthen and bolster our Mental Health and Veterans Treatment Court programs, while absorbing our new Restorative Justice Programs under its direction. Our Filing Unit made many adjustments throughout the year, dealing both with a defense bar resistant to the improvements we attempted to make, and with changing strategies to attack the backlog of cases to review.

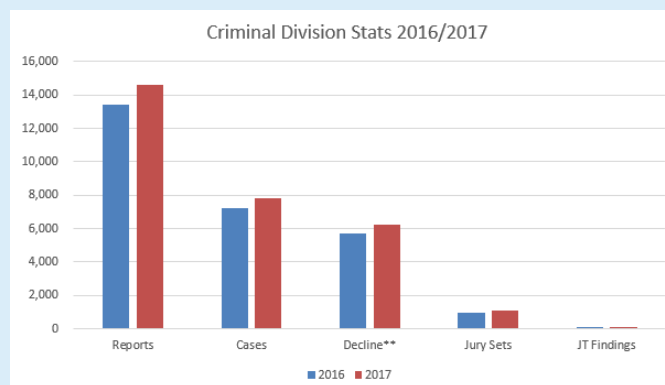
From attorneys to support staff, unit supervisors to line Assistant City Prosecutors, the Division remains energized, full of talent and potential. We will continue to act with enthusiasm and an eye toward pursuing justice with empathy, creativity, and impartiality.

The dedicated, hardworking attorneys and staff in our Criminal Division accomplished a great deal in 2017. The Division dealt with many external changes with the utmost in adaptability and professionalism, including a substantial turnover in staff, an increased trial load, and significant programmatic additions. We embark on a new year with considerably more stability in our staff, and hopefully fewer large scale changes to adjust to. I am confident that we will accomplish even more this year. As Chief, I am very proud of how the Division adapted, persevered, and overcame the challenges of 2017, and look forward to what we plan to accomplish in the coming year.

2017 - BY THE NUMBERS

In 2017 the Criminal Division received 14,600 reports from SPD for consideration of criminal charges. Of those reports, 7,827 cases were filed in Seattle Municipal Court (SMC).

Breaking down those numbers, the division received 3,409 domestic violence (DV) reports and filed DV charges on 1,362 cases and received 1,146 DUI reports and filed charges on 1,118 cases. (Note: Some reports may have been received in 2016 but not filed until 2017).



2016 Reports Received	13451
2017 Reports Received	14600
% Change	9%
2016 Cases Filed	7239
2017 Cases Filed	7827
% Change	8%
2016 % Reports Received were Declined	42%
2017 % Reports Received were Declined	43%
2016 Avg. # Days From Date Rec'd to Disposition	368
2017 Avg. # Days From Date Rec'd to Disposition	233
2016 Jury Trial Settings	976
2017 Jury Trial Settings	1071
% Change	10%
2016 Jury Trials with Finding	103
2017 Jury Trials with Finding	128
% Change	24%

EARLY PLEA UNIT

The purpose of the Early Plea Unit (EPU) is to dedicate sufficient prosecutor resources towards the filing and negotiation of all non-domestic violence cases up to the point they are set for trial. EPU has an eye towards the quick and efficient (i.e., early) resolution of as many cases as possible, thereby reducing the number of cases needed for trial.

EPU SPECIALIZATION

In 2017, the unit reorganized so EPU prosecutors would specialize on either filing or negotiations. Prior they handled both duties, which often resulted in negotiations taking precedence, due to their more immediate nature. The reorganization sought to make sure sufficient dedicated resources were being applied to review of police reports, with an eye towards making filing decisions on cases including Assaults, Harassments, DUIs, Thefts, Hit and Runs, Trespass cases, Licensing cases, and Domestic Violence cases.



TRIAL TEAM UNIT

The Trial Team Unit (TTU) handles all the trials set in Seattle Municipal Court not assigned to the Domestic Violence Unit. The team prosecutes criminal traffic cases (including DUIs), persons crimes (like Assault and Harassment), property crimes (like Property Destruction and Criminal Trespass), and other offenses (including Sexual Exploitation and Animal Cruelty). TTU prosecutors work diligently to see justice is pursued in each of their cases, balancing the need for accountability with the desire to promote rehabilitation.

CASE OF INTEREST: CITY OF SEATTLE V. PAUL SKINNER

On June 28, 2015, Alison Maier was attending Seattle's annual LGBTQ Pride Parade in downtown Seattle when she was struck in the head by a falling camera-mounted 4-rotor drone. Ms. Maier suffered a cut to her head and possible concussion. An investigation found Mr. Skinner had lost control of the drone, so the City filed a charge of Reckless Endangerment.

As one of the first, if not *the* first, criminal cases in the country dealing with the use of drones, trial was delayed so both sides could properly prepare. Professor Greg McNeal, expert witness, essentially testified that there are three rules that responsible drone operators must always comply with:

- 1) Never fly a drone outside of the operator's line of sight
- 2) Never fly a drone near buildings, and
- 3) Never fly a drone over people.

The City was able to present evidence that the Mr. Skinner had done all three of these things while operating the drone that struck Ms. Maier. The jury found the defendant Guilty of reckless endangerment and was sentenced to serve 30 days in jail, as well as paying for restitution for the injuries to Ms. Maier.



DOMESTIC VIOLENCE UNIT

MISDEMEANOR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROSECUTION

The DV Unit added an additional trial prosecutor to help manage the 1,362 domestic violence cases filed in 2017, which was an overall 10% increase in filed cases from 2016 and a 31% increase in filed domestic violence order violations. The Unit also prosecuted all the assaults with sexual motivation, stranger stalking, cyberstalking and cases involving child victims. The additional prosecutor reduced caseloads 20% per prosecutor from 340 to 272 cases per year, providing them needed capacity to work on their high-risk cases and evidence-based prosecutions. The DV Unit has worked tirelessly this year to improve on practice, to triage the most dangerous offenders, and to keep victims of domestic violence safe by holding offenders accountable and providing advocacy and services to victims of domestic violence. In 2017 there was a 10% reduction in cases dismissed for a lack of victim or witness participation.



VICTIM ADVOCATES

Prior to filing criminal charges, the nine Victim Advocates in the Domestic Violence Unit make multiple attempts contact victims to provide safety planning and gather a victim's input regarding the impact prosecution would have on his or her situation. The Advocates work closely with prosecutors to respond to almost 3,400 reports of intimate partner violence, parent/adult child violence, [stalking](#) (regardless of relationship) and sexual assault (regardless of relationship) annually.

It is Assistant City Prosecutors' decision whether to prosecute based on public and victim safety, and they take that responsibility very seriously. If charges are not filed, Advocates offer support and referral to community and legal services. If charges are filed, Advocates will work with the victim throughout the pendency of the case, which can be anywhere from two months to two years. Prosecutors and Advocates work together closely to ensure that the goals of victim safety and offender accountability are balanced throughout the process.



DOMESTIC VIOLENCE INTERVENTION PROGRAM

After a person has been convicted of committing domestic violence, the Court often orders them into a treatment program. In 2017, a local task force developed an innovative new research-informed intervention program designed to focus on an offender's individualized needs instead of a traditional one-size-fits-all batterers treatment program.

FIREARMS ENFORCEMENT UNIT

The Regional Domestic Violence Firearms Enforcement Unit is dedicated to enforcing Court Orders to surrender firearms issued out of domestic violence protection orders, extreme risk protection orders and criminal no-contact orders. The goal is to ensure immediate surrender of firearms, concealed pistol licenses and other deadly weapons through swift and certain enforcement of firearms laws.

Now fully operational, the Unit recovered more firearms from domestic abusers in the first three and a half months of 2017 than were recovered in all of 2016.

The Unit is responsible for proactively assisting with the service of court orders, immediate removal of firearms based on those orders to reduce risk, and for criminally charging those who fail to comply or who otherwise possess firearms unlawfully. Partnering with the King County Prosecuting Attorney's Office, Seattle Police Department, and the King County Sheriff's Office, harm reduction is the foundation of the Unit's work.

APPELLATE UNIT



The Appellate Unit argued 59 appeals and writs in 2017, which was almost identical to the number for 2016. Another 24 appeals and writs were withdrawn or dismissed by the defendant. The number of appeals and writs filed, 81, was almost identical to that in 2016. The most notable change in the Appellate Unit was having the response brief written and the appeal argued by the attorney who tried the case. This new procedure is intended to improve the writing and legal research skills of the trial attorneys, promote their professional development, expose them to argument before a Superior Court Judge and make them better trial lawyers. This new procedure resulted in 10 attorneys arguing appeals in addition to the Unit supervisor.



DRIVING UNDER THE INFLUENCE

In 2017, CAO prosecuted multiple offenders with five or more lifetime DUIs. After immense trial preparation and prevailing on legal motions, several cases resolved prior to trial. Of the cases that did proceed to trial, all offenders were held accountable.

Example: Michael Iverson, a sixth time DUI offender, was sentenced to over 600 days in jail. Mr. Iverson was driving a motor vehicle without the required ignition interlock, driving while his license was suspended in the first degree and with a blood alcohol content of 0.22 g/100 mL. Mr. Iverson drove into someone's house, fled the scene, t-boned another car after running a stop sign, and was later apprehended by police officers.

The Draeger is a new replacement DUI breath test detection instrument, deployed statewide. The instrument uses dual technologies to detect and measure breath alcohol, which will limit many defenses regarding interferants. CAO anticipates challenges to the Draeger testing in 2018, but we welcome those challenges with the help of neighboring jurisdictions who have already heavily litigated the issues.

HIGH RISK VICTIMS



Prosecutors continued efforts to end commercial sexual exploitation and human trafficking in our city and region. The effort is twofold: holding sex buyers accountable for the harm they cause to both their victims and our neighborhoods, and helping victims exit from prostitution. To implement this strategy, CAO worked collaboratively with multiple organizations, including law enforcement and non-governmental organizations to pursue diverse strategies to address both immediate issues and underlying causes, including:

- Local prostitution survivor agencies joined together to expand services.
- The Seattle Police Department conducted a major operation for the second consecutive year, arresting 140 people for sexual exploitation.
- Major technological solutions were employed to disrupt and prevent buying.
- Education efforts to change the cultural norms which allow commercial sexual exploitation to flourish were expanded.
- Efforts to increase penalties for sexual exploitation continued.

SPECIALTY COURT UNIT (SCU)



MENTAL HEALTH COURT

Seattle Mental Health Court (MHC) works to improve public safety, reduce jail use and interaction with the criminal justice system for persons with mental illness, and connect participating defendants to mental health services. MHC can be an effective tool in assisting mentally ill defendants to stay on medications and stay engaged with community mental health services. MHC is a voluntary program in which defendants must be willing and competent to comply with conditions set out by the Court.

MHC also continues to resolve all competency issues. When a defendant is found incompetent to stand trial because of mental disease or defect, the city cannot proceed with the criminal charges. Some cases qualify for the defendants to be transferred to Western State Hospital for inpatient treatment. In most cases, however, the charges are dismissed. To ensure the safety of both the community and defendant, defendants are referred to mental health professionals to determine whether civil commitment is appropriate prior to release.



VETERANS TREATMENT COURT

Seattle Veterans Treatment Court (VTC) was created to serve the needs of veterans negatively impacted by their military service. It is a voluntary court-monitored therapeutic treatment program that balances the mental health and/or substance abuse needs of the veteran defendants with the need for public safety.

VTC operates differently than traditional courts. Following the mental health court model, veteran defendants must attend treatment, maintain abstinence from alcohol and non-prescribed drugs, and attend frequent court reviews. Graduated sanctions are employed to encourage compliance, with termination from the program as the last resort. The most significant difference from a traditional court is the cohort effect achieved by having veterans assemble as a group for the hearing. Rather than leaving court when their hearings are finished, veterans must stay for the entire calendar, so they observe the struggles and accomplishments of their fellow veteran defendants.



INFRACTIONS UNIT

The Infractions Unit handled 4968 cases in 2017 (approximately 95 a week). The contested hearings resulted in revenue in the amount of \$627,066 (an increase of \$62,496 from 2016) and the dismissal rate dropped from 980 in 2015 and 617 in 2016 to 329 in 2017. The Court worked with CAO to add a "disposition/review" calendar for cases where the defendants simply want to negotiate their cases. This has saved time and resources, especially regarding unnecessary subpoenas for civilian witnesses. The Unit began a practice of sending a "cheat sheet" to officers with common mistakes in hopes of lowering the number of tickets sent to the CAO for correction (944 tickets required correction in 2017).

SPECIALTY COURT UNIT (SCU)



PRE-FILING DIVERSION

CAO has begun providing pre-filing diversion opportunities for young adults accused of committing certain misdemeanors. After a robust phase of community engagement, the CAO partnered with a Seattle area non-profit, Choose 180, on a mainstream pilot program to offer community-based diversion for young adults aged 18 to 24.

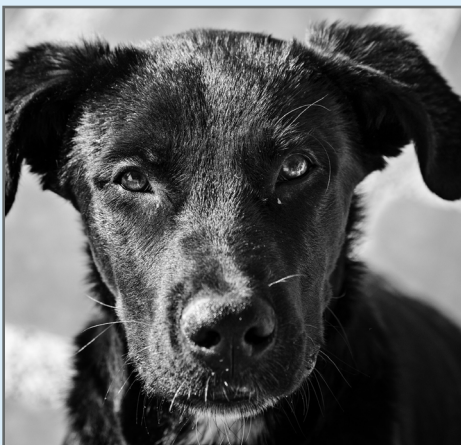
Participation in the Young Adult Choose 180 workshop diverts young people from the traditional criminal justice system into a community-developed and -supported program. Participants avoid the collateral consequences and stigma of ever having been charged with the crime. The workshop creates the space for participants to hear from people with shared backgrounds and experiences and encourages participants to identify the behaviors that have led them to their current circumstances, what has kept them from making positive change, and envision the path to make change. The workshop helps identify support services and available opportunities. In four months, eighty-eight young adults were diverted on 98 cases that would have resulted in criminal charges.



LEAD

The Seattle City Attorney's Office maintains a strong commitment to its partnership with the Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD) Program. LEAD provides an opportunity for police officers to divert low-level offenders engaged in drug or prostitution activity to a trauma-informed intensive case management program, instead of jail and prosecution. Once enrolled in the program, CAO and other community partners work closely with case managers to ensure all contact with LEAD participants going forward, including new offenses, are coordinated to maximize the opportunity for the participant to achieve behavioral change.

In 2017, a dedicated CAO prosecutorial liaison position was created to track and manage non-diverted LEAD charges/cases. All filing decisions, negotiations, and hearings for LEAD participants are handled by the CAO liaison. Having a dedicated CAO liaison to track and manage LEAD offenses has increased the effectiveness of these programs in Seattle Municipal Court and resulted in better outcomes for engaged participants.



OTHER SPECIALTY COURT UNIT MATTERS

The SCU continues to work with other City departments in reviewing incident reports for less common charges in SMC. In 2017, CAO worked closely with the Animal Control to review and file cases for neglect and cruelty, and negligent control of animals.

CAO also worked with the Code Compliance and Consumer Protection unit of Finance and Administrative Services to review cases for criminal charges when business owners repeatedly failed to comply with business license and tax requirements.

ADMINISTRATION DIVISION

The Administration Division provides executive leadership, communications and operational support for the 200-employee department as well as numerous interns and volunteers. The division is comprised of the City Attorney, his immediate staff and the Accounting/Finance, Human Resources and Information Technology sections.



BUDGET & FINANCE

The Administration Division was instrumental in helping the office achieve its budget goals in 2017, adding multiple new positions to address a variety of needs:

- One attorney to provide legal advice and enforcement related to Office of Labor Standards work on minimum wage, paid sick and safe leave, and more;
- One IT Business Analyst to develop an IT strategic plan for the department and assist with processes to manage public records requests and e-discovery;
- Increased one part-time land use Civil Division attorney to full-time;
- One additional precinct liaison position, resulting in one attorney in every Seattle police precinct;
- One grant-funded Traffic Safety Resource Prosecutor, funded by the Washington Traffic Safety Commission;
- One senior paralegal to process a large volume of additional video footage resulting from SPD's Body-Worn Cameras Project;
- Two prosecutors to develop a pilot for a new Pre-Filing Diversion Program in the Criminal Division;
- Two positions plus consultant funding to support a new regional task force to implement and enforce the surrender of firearms from prohibited possessors;
- One prosecutor in the Criminal Division dedicated to the LEAD program to divert participants into community-based support services.

The four-person accounting team dedicated countless hours to planning and training for the City's Summit Re-Implementation Project, an update to the City's accounting and payroll systems which launched on January 2, 2018.



INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

On a daily basis, CAO's IT staff supports 210 desktop computers, 20 laptops and four department-specific servers for staff in Columbia Center, Seattle Municipal Court, Seattle Police Department headquarters, and five Seattle police precincts.

Office-wide Projects:

In mid-2017, the office had consumed nearly all its electronic file storage. With planning and in-house expertise, the IT team moved all data to new storage, nearly doubling our capacity and providing a simplified process of increasing storage as needed.

Civil Division:

The Civil Division went live with a new legal document management system in July 2016, but issues remained with efficiently ingesting and producing discovery documents. Throughout 2017, the IT team worked with paralegals and Seattle IT to fine-tune the business processes, resulting in improved performance and a more streamlined process.

Criminal Division:

In 2017, the IT team installed new computers for the entire Criminal Division. This replacement was part of the City's 5-year hardware replacement cycle. The new hardware increased efficiency and was a welcome upgrade from the older, slower computers.

HUMAN RESOURCES



Human Resources staff continued its commitment to the City's Race and Social Justice Initiative (RSJI) in 2017 by posting job announcements for attorney and paralegal positions with local minority bar associations. Employees were encouraged to attend a variety of RSJI trainings and office-sponsored activities.

The safety, security, and well-being of the staff remains one of our top priorities. Administration personnel organized multiple emergency preparedness trainings, including a tour of the City's Emergency Operations Center, defibrillator training, emergency apps for smart phones, and fire and earthquake drills.