



## Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD)

**What is LEAD?** LEAD is a diversionary pilot program intended to get low-level drug offenders and prostitutes off the streets and into rehabilitation programs. Police officers in the LEAD program can give eligible arrestees the option to skip booking and go directly into a treatment program, thereby avoiding criminal charges.

Short-term LEAD services include food, clothing, hygiene services, medical referrals, and shelter. Long-term services, chosen for the participant based on an Individual Intervention Plan, include substance abuse treatment, mental health counseling, housing, transportation, health care, benefits, obtaining ID, vocational training, education/employment, and legal services.

Each LEAD participant who receives funding or services is required to participate in regular peer mentoring sessions in order to create a support system that fosters long-term behavior change.

**Where is LEAD being implemented?** LEAD began on October 1, 2011, in the Belltown district of Seattle and Skyway area of unincorporated King County. The four-year program will cost approximately \$950,000 per year, with all funding being secured from private foundations. If LEAD is found to be effective, the program will seek additional funding.

**LEAD Mission Statement:** “This public safety program has the potential to reduce recidivism rates for low-level drug and prostitution offenders, while preserving expensive criminal justice system resources for more serious or violent offenders.” Seattle Foundation, see link below.

### What are the Goals of LEAD?

- To improve public safety and public order;
- To reduce the criminal behavior of people who participate in the program; and
- To reduce the harm a participant causes him or herself, as well as the harm that the individual is causing the surrounding community.

### How will LEAD be Evaluated?

After two years of operation, LEAD will be evaluated to determine whether it has resulted in reductions in drug use and recidivism, whether it is more cost-effective than traditional criminal justice processing, and whether it has had a positive impact on a community’s quality of life.

### What Does this Mean for Spokane City and County?

If LEAD is shown to be effective in reducing crime, saving money, and creating a safer community, Spokane City and County should allocate resources, or attempt to secure private

foundation funds, to design and implement a LEAD program that is tailored to our community's specific needs.

**Sources and Links to More Information:**

Seattle Times-

[http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/localnews/2016486501\\_diversion13m.html](http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/localnews/2016486501_diversion13m.html)

The Seattle Foundation-

<http://www.seattlefoundation.org/npos/Pages/LawEnforcementAssistedDiversion.aspx>

LEAD King County-

<http://leadkingcounty.org/lead-evaluation/>

LEAD Program News Conference-

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FLs4B4V5-1U>

**Compiled by:**

Mary Lou Johnson, Attorney & Julie Schaffer, Attorney for Center for Justice

**For more information on the Smart Justice Campaign go to [www.smartjusticespokane.org](http://www.smartjusticespokane.org) or contact:**

Greater Spokane Progress, Anne Martin, Director, (509) 624-5657, [anne@spokaneprogess.org](mailto:anne@spokaneprogess.org)

Center for Justice, Julie Schaffer, Attorney, (509) 835-5211, [jschaffer@cforjustice.org](mailto:jschaffer@cforjustice.org)