

Community Safety and Communications Center

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<https://www.seattle.gov/police/about-us/about-policing/csc>

Department Overview

The Community Safety and Communications Center (CSCC) was established as a new department in 2021 to provide timely, accurate, and vital information to the City’s first responders, city service providers, and to the public. [Ordinance 126237](#) transferred the primary 911 center from SPD to CSCC effective June 1, 2021. Since the transition, the department has continued working to establish itself as a new/independent city department, to identify internal ongoing needs, and to explore the integration of non-uniformed and alternate resources for dispatch CSCC is home to the primary Seattle 911 call center and is the largest of its kind in the Pacific Northwest, both by staff size and volume of calls received. The center employs between 148 employees who work 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

In 2021, CSCC began working with the Mayor’s office and City Council to explore alternatives to traditional police/fire response to many 911 calls. The effort has sought to identify if other resources might be better equipped to respond to select categories of calls (e.g. mental health, those seeking shelter). Two identified and legislated programs included 1) additional capacity in the 911 center for identifying and triaging such calls and 2) the identification of, and/or creation of non-uniform (e.g. police/fire) resources available to respond to select low acuity 911 calls.

To better identify and triage potential alternate-response calls, CSCC began the process of securing and implementing a protocol-based interrogation dispatch system. This project will help the 911 center standardize operational structures to call taking, reduce bias among call takers, and provide a basis to operationalize dispatching of non-uniformed and alternative response resources to 911 calls for service.

In addition, CSCC continues working closely with the Mayor’s Office to identify if there are select police/fire call types where alternative resources may be available and able to provide more efficient delivery of services.

CSCC continues to develop as a new department. To support operations as an independent department, the 2022 Adopted Budget included staffing to help stand up staffing for Administrative and Management support for this stand-alone department, to include Human Resources, Finance, Accounting, Technology Integration, Public Information, Public Disclosure, a Director, and Deputy Director. This administrative support was previously provided by SPD, and due to the size of the 911 center, requires its own internal team to handle these functions.

Budget Snapshot

	2021 Actuals	2022 Adopted	2023 Adopted	2024 Endorsed
Department Support				
General Fund Support	11,351,511	22,161,206	20,522,661	21,682,645
Total Operations	11,351,511	22,161,206	20,522,661	21,682,645
Total Appropriations	11,351,511	22,161,206	20,522,661	21,682,645
Full-Time Equivalents Total*	1.00	173.00	150.00	150.00

* FTE totals are provided for informational purposes only. Changes in FTEs resulting from City Council or Human Resources Director actions outside of the budget process may not be detailed here

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Budget Overview

The City of Seattle continues to maintain its commitments to public safety investments in the budget. In 2022, like many industries around the nation, staffing shortages have impacted public safety departments including CSCC. While the department has begun to see improvements in recruitment and retention, it has not reached full staffing of its 127 designated call taker, dispatcher, and supervisor positions. Overall, the department continues to see improvements in call response metrics including improving answering time for non-emergency line.

Due to the City's economic forecast, CSCC strives to control spending while maintaining the best services for residents. CSCC's budget recognizes vacancy savings to meet reduction targets and to align resources with their forecasted staffing. CSCC continues to be a part of the ongoing alternative response conversations with the Mayor's Office and the City Council. In 2024, CSCC will implement two projects associated with the computer-aided dispatch system (CAD), to improve compatibility with SPD's record management system (RMS) and SFD's CAD system.

City Council Changes to the Proposed Budget

- Add \$717,000 GF (2024) to CSCC to implement dual dispatch program and impose a proviso to ensure continued investment in expanding 911 emergency response.
- Add 2.0 FTE 911 Emergency Communications Dispatcher II in 2023 to enhance call takers' ability to answer the City's 911 emergency line.

Incremental Budget Changes

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	Dollars	FTE
2022 Adopted Budget	22,161,206	174.00
Baseline		
Citywide Adjustments for Standard Cost Changes	(470,339)	-
Appropriations for 2022 Annual Wage Increase (AWI)	647,938	-
Reduce one-time funding for Low Acuity 911 response	(400,000)	-
Reduce one-time funding for 911 Center scoping study	(150,000)	-
Proposed Operating		
Reduction of additional positions and related funding	(879,219)	(26.00)
Reduction based on projected staffing levels	(512,925)	-
Transfer ESLIP funding back to SPD	(67,423)	-
Update CSCC and SPD software for improved compatibility	-	-
Updates to CSCC's and SFD's computer-aided dispatch (CAD) systems	-	-
Council		
Add 2.0 FTE Emergency Communications Dispatcher II	193,423	2.00
Council Provisos		
Add \$717,000 GF (in 2024) to implement dual dispatch program and impose a proviso	-	-

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Total Incremental Changes	\$(1,638,545)	(24.00)
Total 2023 Adopted Budget	\$20,522,661	150.00

Description of Incremental Budget Changes

Baseline

Citywide Adjustments for Standard Cost Changes

Expenditures \$(470,339)

Citywide technical adjustments made in the baseline phase reflect changes to internal services costs, including rates from the Department of Finance & Administrative Services, Seattle Information Technology Department, Seattle Department of Human Resources, and for healthcare, retirement, and industrial insurance charges for the department. These adjustments reflect initial assumptions about these costs and inflators early in the budget process.

Appropriations for 2022 Annual Wage Increase (AWI)

Expenditures \$647,938

This centrally administered change adjusts appropriations to reflect an annual wage increase in 2022, as outlined in the agreements between certain City unions, for personnel costs included in this department. These agreements were not finalized until after the 2022 budget had been adopted. This change includes ongoing cost increases to salary, FICA, Medicare, retirement, overtime and temporary labor. There is no increase assumed from 2022 to 2023.

Reduce one-time funding for Low Acuity 911 response

Expenditures \$(400,000)

This item reduces one-time funding of \$400,000 related to Low Acuity 911 response. Low Acuity 911 response is a part of ongoing alternative safety conversation with the Mayor's Office and Council.

Reduce one-time funding for 911 Center scoping study

Expenditures \$(150,000)

This item removes one-time funding of \$150,000 provided in the 2022 budget process. This funding was one-time consultant dollars that were put on hold in 2022 due to GF budget constraints. These funds were to update the 2016 staffing study and this work now will be part of staffing added in 2022.

Proposed Operating

Reduction of additional positions and related funding

Expenditures \$(879,219)

Position Allocation (26.00)

This item reduces 26 additional call taker positions, dispatcher positions and the associated \$879,000 of funding added during the 2022 budget process, to align the budget with anticipated expenses and forecasted staffing plans. The department has been operating with 148 FTE, of which 127 FTE are designated call takers, dispatchers, and Supervisors. CSCC has been experiencing vacancies and attrition with the call taker positions but the staffing

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situation has been improving. Currently, CSCC call takers have a vacancy rate of 10% and are still in the process of hiring for current FTEs.

Reduction based on projected staffing levels

Expenditures \$(512,925)

This item reduces staffing by 2.6%, through an assumed vacancy rate (approximately 4.0 FTE positions), based on projected staffing levels in CSCC. This aligns the budget with current and forecasted staffing plans. The department has seen improvements in recruitment and retention over the last several months.

Transfer ESLIP funding back to SPD

Expenditures \$(67,423)

This item returns Emergency Sign Language Interpretation Program (ESLIP) from CSCC back to SPD. The funding for this contract was inadvertently transferred to CSCC from SPD during the transition. The ESLIP service is primarily utilized by SPD officers in the field and SPD is responsible for paying for this contract.

Update CSCC and SPD software for improved compatibility

Expenditures -

In 2024, \$153,539 of one-time funding is for CSCC's computer-aided dispatch (CAD) system to improve compatibility with SPD's record management system. This will help resolve duplicate-entry problem within the CAD and RMS system, improve CSCC/SPD data management, improve data access (e.g. for Public Disclosure Requests, legal data requests, etc.). Funding will be available in 2024 after the completion of CSCC's computer-aided dispatch overall system in 2023.

Updates to CSCC's and SFD's computer-aided dispatch (CAD) systems

Expenditures -

In 2024, \$94,929 of one-time funding is for CSCC's computer-aided dispatch (CAD) system to improve compatibility with SFD's computer-aided dispatch (CAD) system. This update will develop two-way data integration that will enable dispatchers in the CSCC's 911 Center and SFD's Fire Alarm Center to coordinate response based on shared data. Funding will be available in 2024 after the completion of CSCC's computer-aided dispatch overall system in 2023.

Council

Add 2.0 FTE Emergency Communications Dispatcher II

Expenditures \$193,423

Revenues \$193,423

Position Allocation 2.00

This Council Budget Action adds 2.0 FTE 911 Emergency Communications Dispatcher II in 2023 to CSCC to enhance call takers' ability to answer the City's 911 Emergency line and better enable the CSCC to meet call-answering standards. These positions will be funded from an escrow account maintained by King County for the receipt of 911excise tax revenues due to the CSCC Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP).

Council Provisos

Add \$717,000 GF (in 2024) to implement dual dispatch program and impose a proviso

Expenditures -

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This Council Budget Action adds \$717,000 GF (2024) to CSCC to support the implementation of dual dispatch of sworn officers and civilian staff to augment current response to calls with a mental/behavioral health nexus. This investment is in addition to \$1.9 million already reserved for the same purpose.

Expenditure Overview

Appropriations	2021 Actuals	2022 Adopted	2023 Adopted	2024 Endorsed
CS - BO-CS-10000 - Community Safety and Communications Center				
00100 - General Fund	11,351,511	22,161,206	20,522,661	21,682,645
Total for BSL: BO-CS-10000	11,351,511	22,161,206	20,522,661	21,682,645
Department Total	11,351,511	22,161,206	20,522,661	21,682,645
Department Full-Time Equivalents Total*	1.00	174.00	150.00	150.00

** FTE totals are provided for informational purposes only. Changes in FTEs resulting from City Council or Human Resources Director actions outside of the budget process may not be detailed here*

Budget Summary by Fund Community Safety and Communications Center

	2021 Actuals	2022 Adopted	2023 Adopted	2024 Endorsed
00100 - General Fund	11,351,511	22,161,206	20,522,661	21,682,645
Budget Totals for CS	11,351,511	22,161,206	20,522,661	21,682,645

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Appropriations by Budget Summary Level and Program

CS - BO-CS-10000 - Community Safety and Communications Center

The purpose of the Community Safety and Communications Center Budget Summary Level is to: receive requests for public safety services for Seattle; provide dispatch, notification, and communication services; facilitate reporting of minor incidents; and respond to community safety requests.

Program Expenditures	2021 Actuals	2022 Adopted	2023 Adopted	2024 Endorsed
Communications Center	11,351,511	21,761,207	20,522,662	21,682,645
Community Safety	-	400,000	-	-
Parking Enforcement	-	-	-	-
Total	11,351,511	22,161,206	20,522,661	21,682,645
Full-time Equivalents Total*	1.00	174.00	150.00	150.00

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The following information summarizes the programs in Community Safety and Communications Center Budget Summary Level:

Communications Center

Expenditures/FTE	2021 Actuals	2022 Adopted	2023 Adopted	2024 Endorsed
Communications Center	11,351,511	21,761,207	20,522,662	21,682,645
Full Time Equivalents Total	-	174.00	150.00	150.00

Community Safety

Expenditures/FTE	2021 Actuals	2022 Adopted	2023 Adopted	2024 Endorsed
Community Safety	-	400,000	-	-
Full Time Equivalents Total	1.00	-	-	-