



Criminal Division Quarter III, 2024 Report

SEATTLE CITY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
ANN DAVISON



Report Compiled by Per-Olaf Swanson. Please address inquiries to:

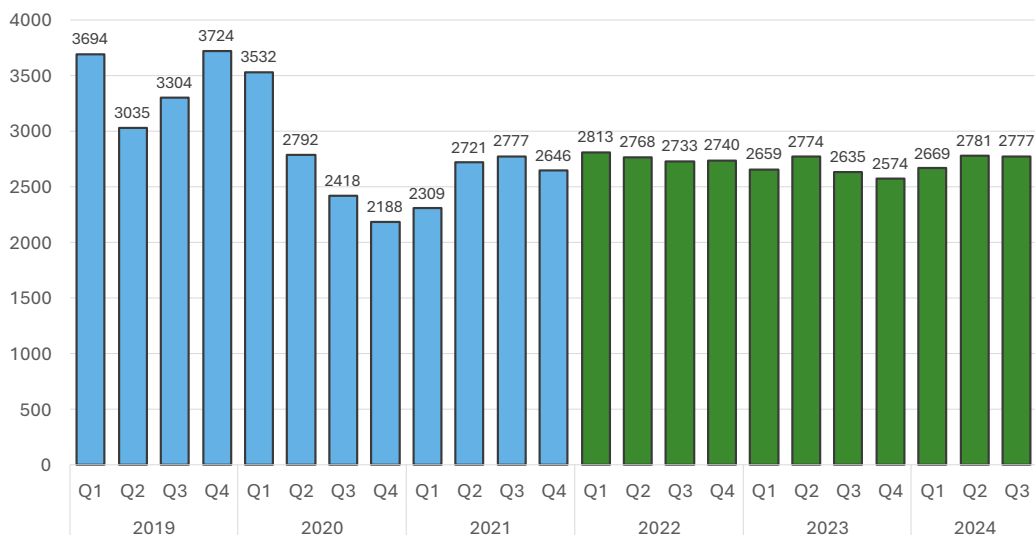
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Police Referrals

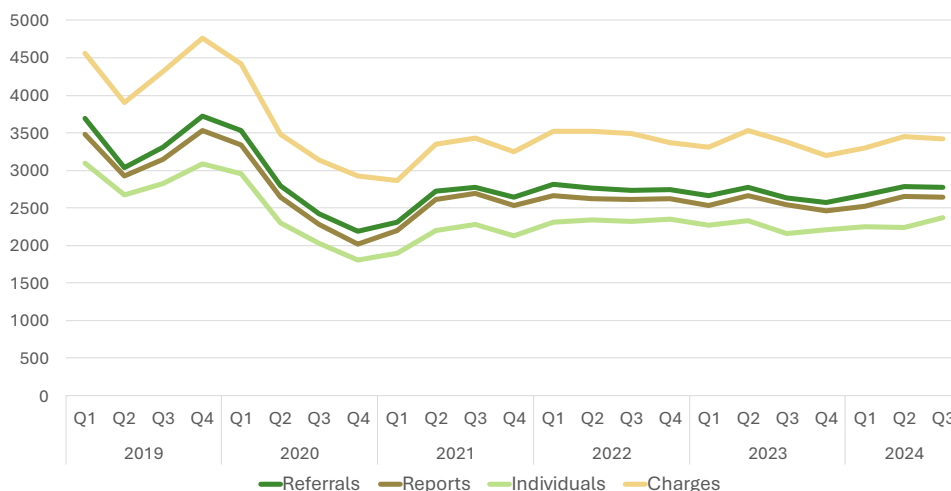
Misdemeanor Referrals



In the first quarter of 2024, the City Attorney’s Office received 2,777 referrals from the Seattle Police Department. This represents a marginal decrease from Q2 of 2024 and a 5% increase from Q3 of 2023. The number of current referrals is below pre-COVID levels and lower than before the loss of a significant number of SPD officers.

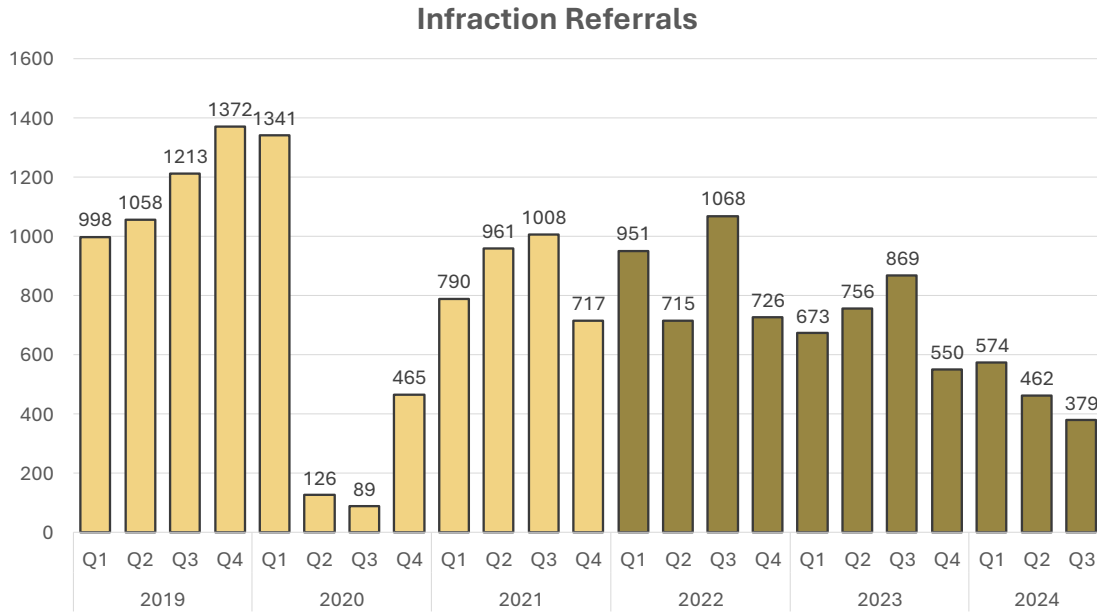
- **Referral:** represents a unique person from an SPD report; a single report with two suspects would be two referrals. This reflects the best measure of law department workload and is used in this analysis.
- **Report:** a single document sent from the Seattle Police Department.
- **Individual:** one, unique person referred to CAO; most individuals will only have a single referral, but some can have dozens like the criteria for the High Utilizer Initiative.
- **Charges:** are the actual criminal offenses. Each report and each individual can have many.

Referrals vs Reports vs Individuals vs Charges



Infractions

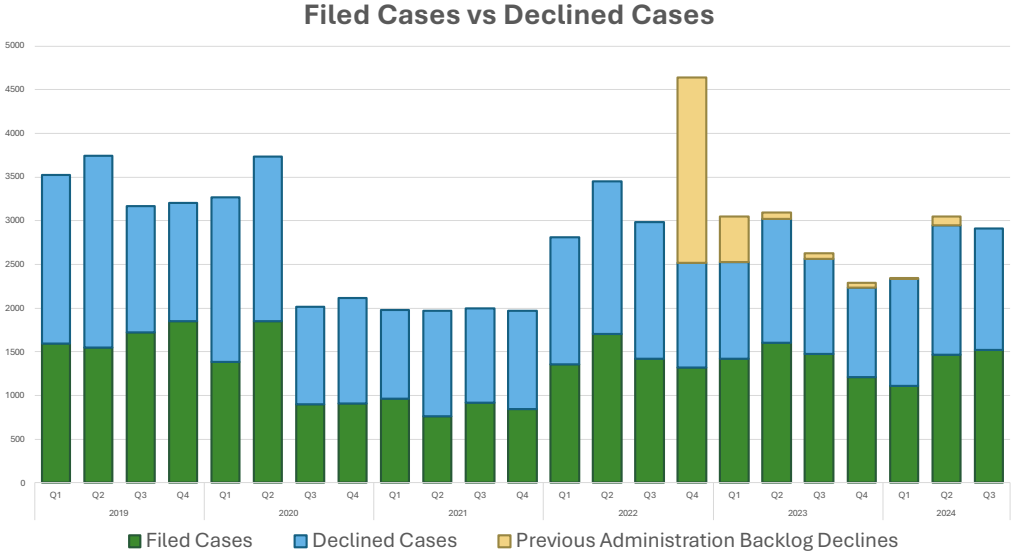
When an individual receives a citation for an infraction, it does not go to the City Attorney’s Office. If the citation is challenged, also called “contested,” then it is referred to the City Attorney’s Office by the court. Contested citations are almost always filed the same day they are received at the CAO. Contested citations are not part of the misdemeanor system and therefore are measured separately in the graph below.



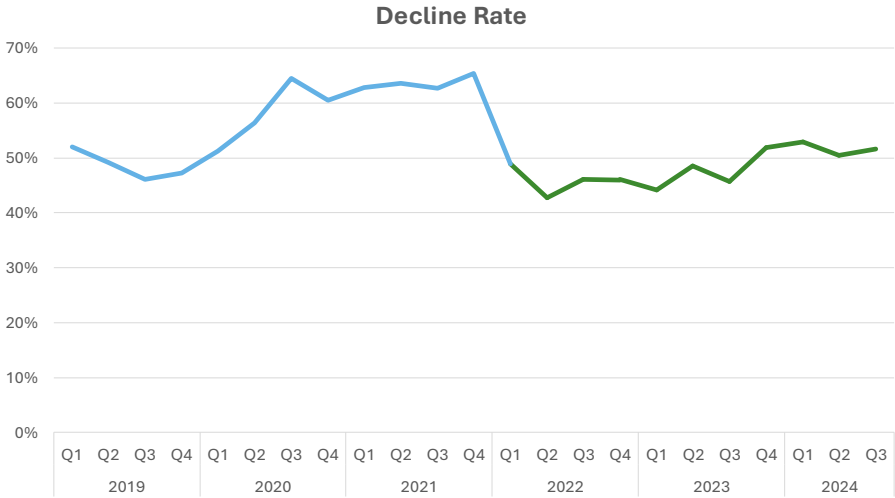
In Q3 of 2024, the City Attorney’s Office received 379 infractions that were sent from the Seattle Municipal Court. This represents a 18% decrease from Q2 of 2024 and a 56% decrease from Q3 of 2023.

Case Filing

Referrals can either be filed cases with the Seattle Municipal Court or declined. Diverted referrals turn into declines after successful completion of requirements.



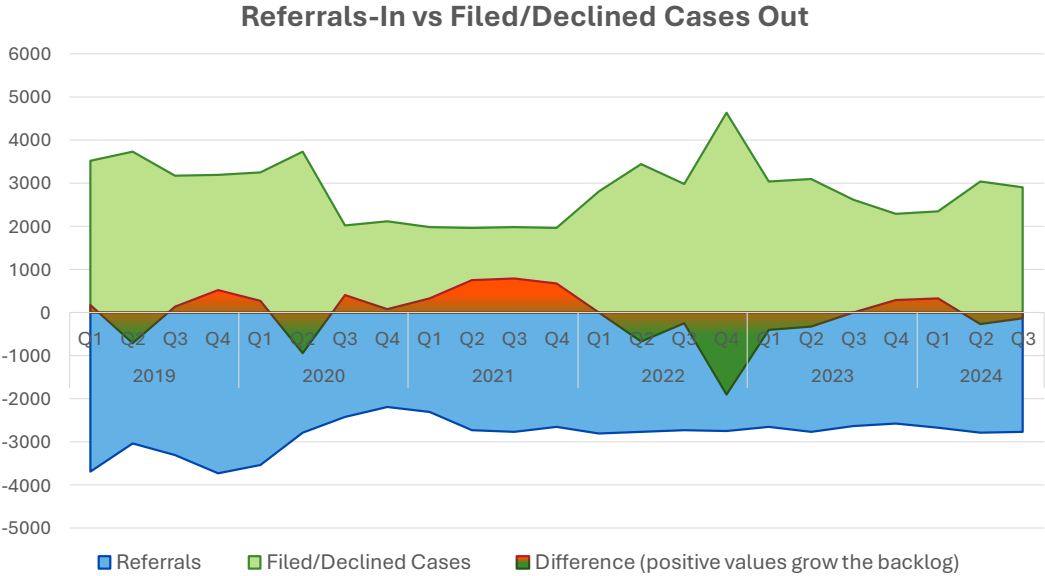
This chart shows the output of filing decisions from the City Attorney’s Office. In Q1 of 2024, the City Attorney’s Office filed 1,520 cases (an increase of 4% from Q2 2024 and 3% more than Q3, 2023) and declined a total of 1,396 (down 12% from Q2 2024 and up 22% from Q3 2023). The tan elements represent declined cases from the previous administration’s backlog.



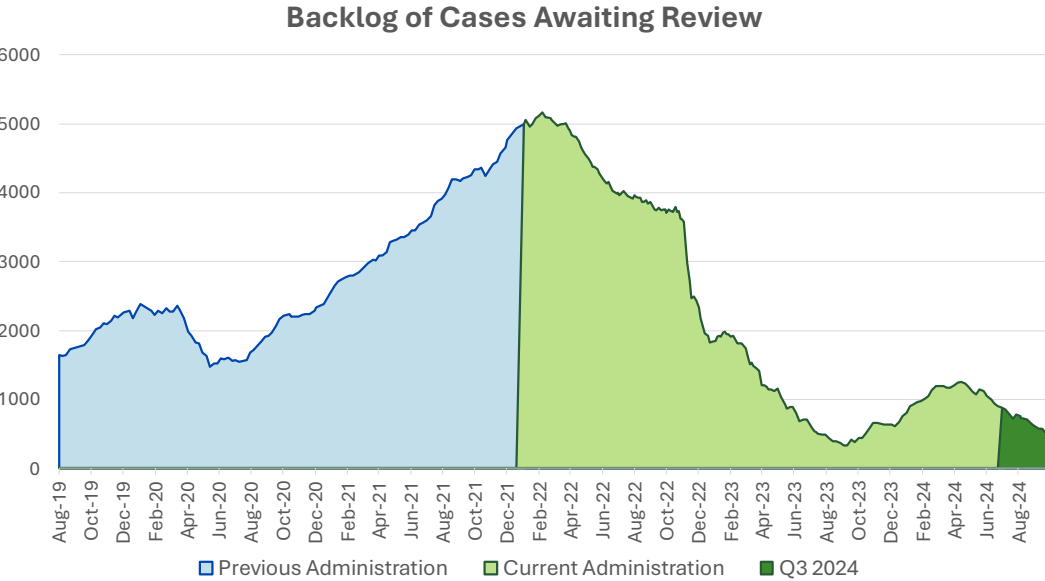
Decline rates as measured by $\frac{\text{declines}}{\text{files} + \text{declines}}$ remained the same in the first quarter of 2024. The decline rate for filing decisions on referrals during Q1 2024 was 52%, down from 53% in Q2 2024 and up from Q3 2023’s 46%. These rates do not include drug use and possession charges which do not follow the typical review process and are explained on pages 17 and 18.

Backlog

Referrals awaiting a response are considered part of the backlog.



Responses to incoming referrals lagged for years and resulted in a substantial backlog within the Criminal Division. Areas in orange represent times when the backlog grew and areas in green represent times when it was addressed and reduced. The backlog was at 4990 referrals at the start of 2022.

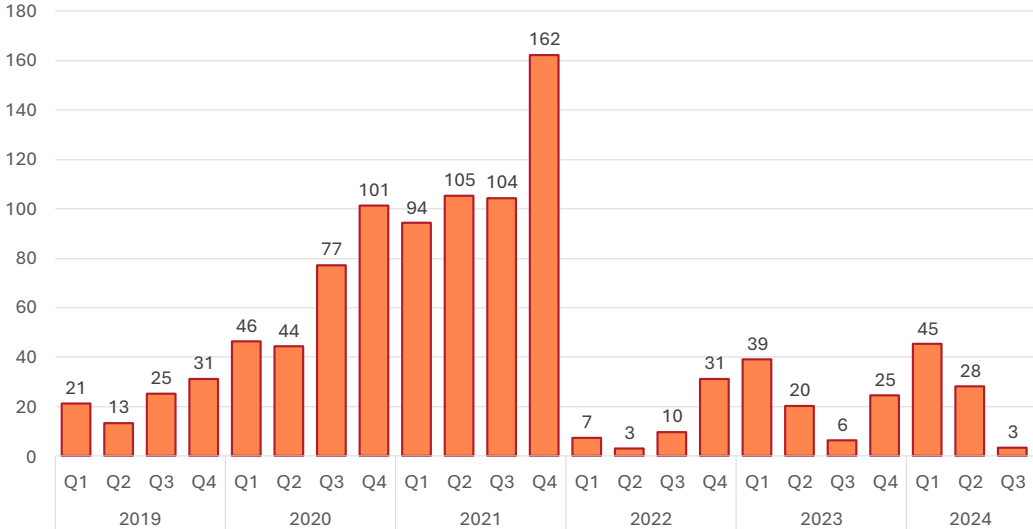


Changes in staffing in Q3 2023 resulted in a temporary increase which has since been mostly sorted through.

Close-in-Time Filing

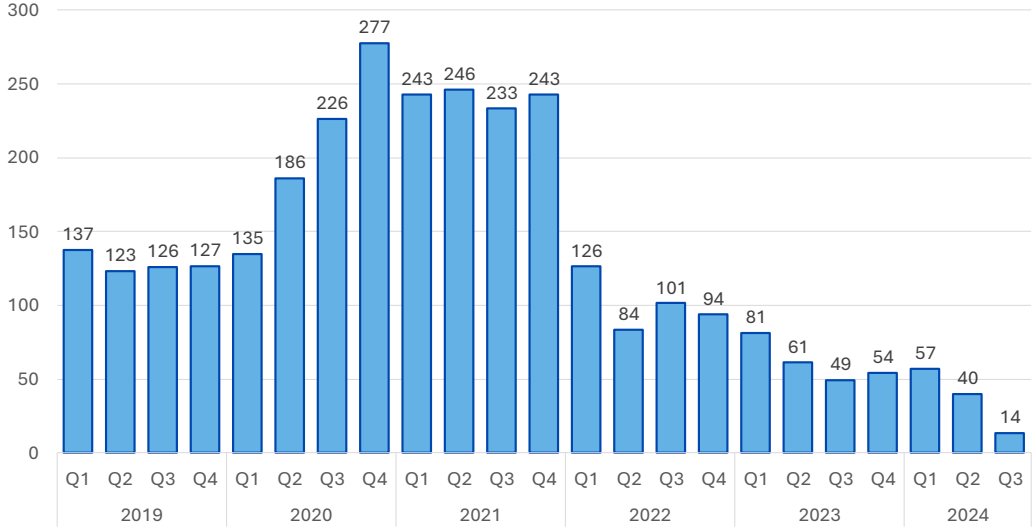
The Close-in-Time filing policy set by City Attorney Davison created the goal of making a filing decision within five business days (seven calendar days). Domestic violence referrals are afforded an additional week to engage in a trauma informed approach, which considers input from the victim on their safety concerns. Referrals involving LEAD clients get 30 days for clients to engage in services.

Median Time to Make a Filing Decision



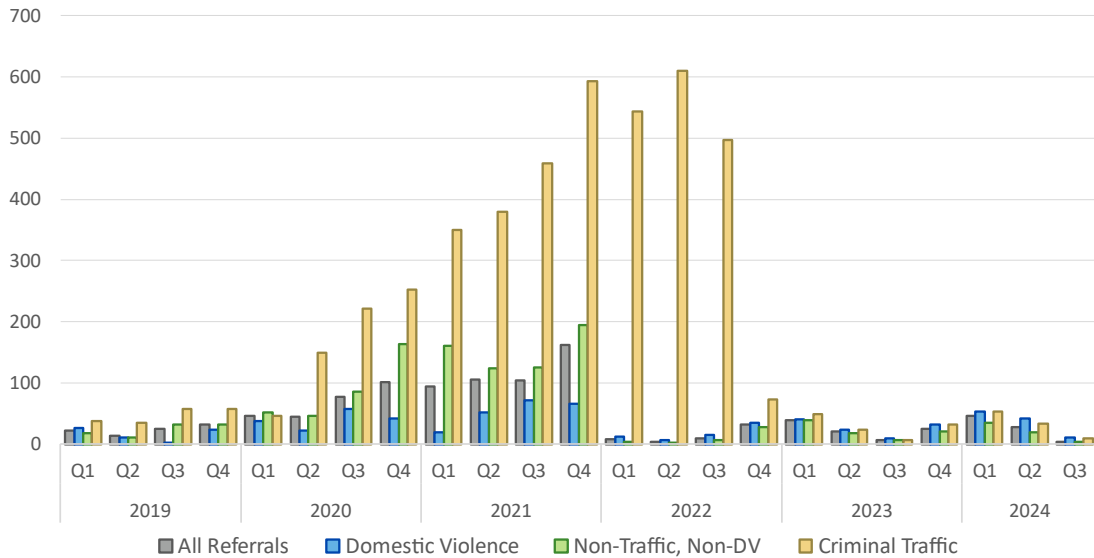
Staffing issues have complicated the close-in-time goals as has the major backlog in the state toxicology laboratory for DUIs. As DUIs make up about 11% of referrals, the backlog has a major affect on mean times but a minor one on median times.

Mean Time to Make a Filing Decision



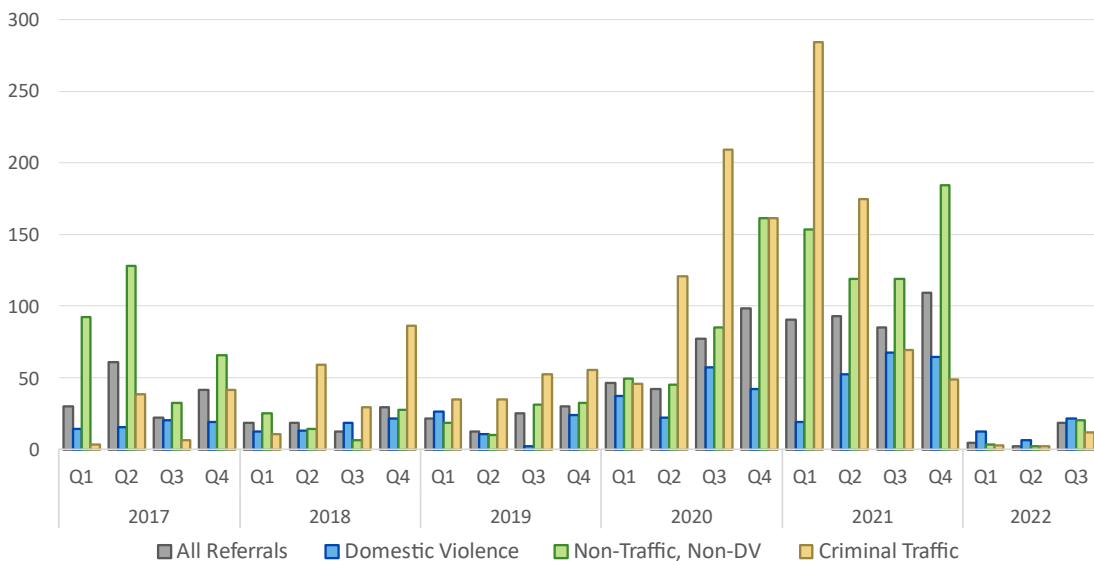
Median filing time is a more accurate description of the data due to its skewed nature.

Median Time to Make a Filing Decision by Type



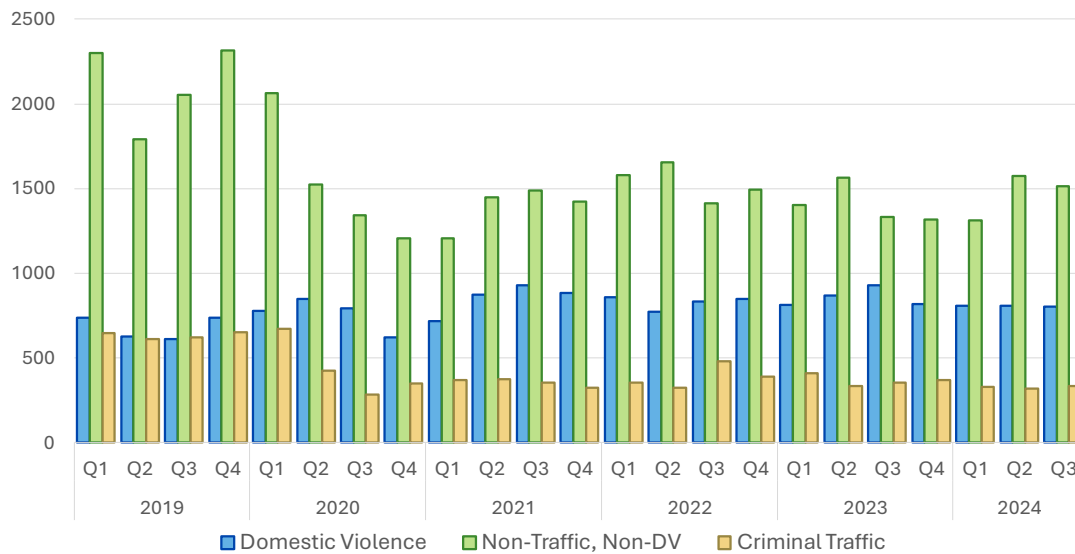
Median time to make a filing decision came back down to within a week for most crime types. What should stand out is the very long time within criminal traffic. This is due to the lengthy backlog in receiving toxicology results from the state toxicology laboratory, primarily in DUIs. Because this data is based on when we receive the report, it hasn't had time for all of the backlogged DUIs to catch up. Looking at this same chart from Q3 2022, there is the start of the same trend from older referrals, but none of the very long times for the DUIs as they didn't come in until more recently.

Median Time to Make a Filing Decision by Type

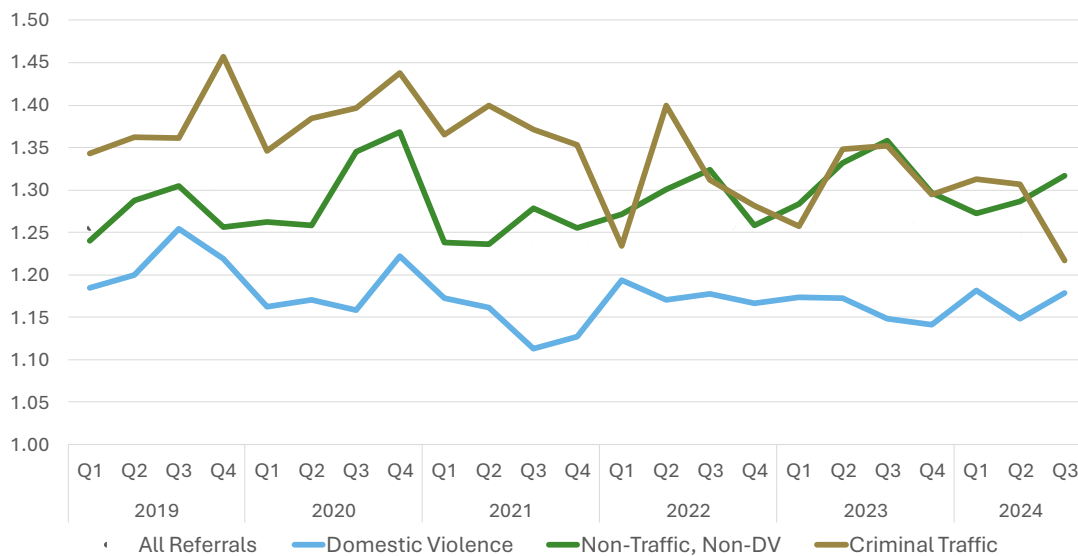


Case Type Specifics

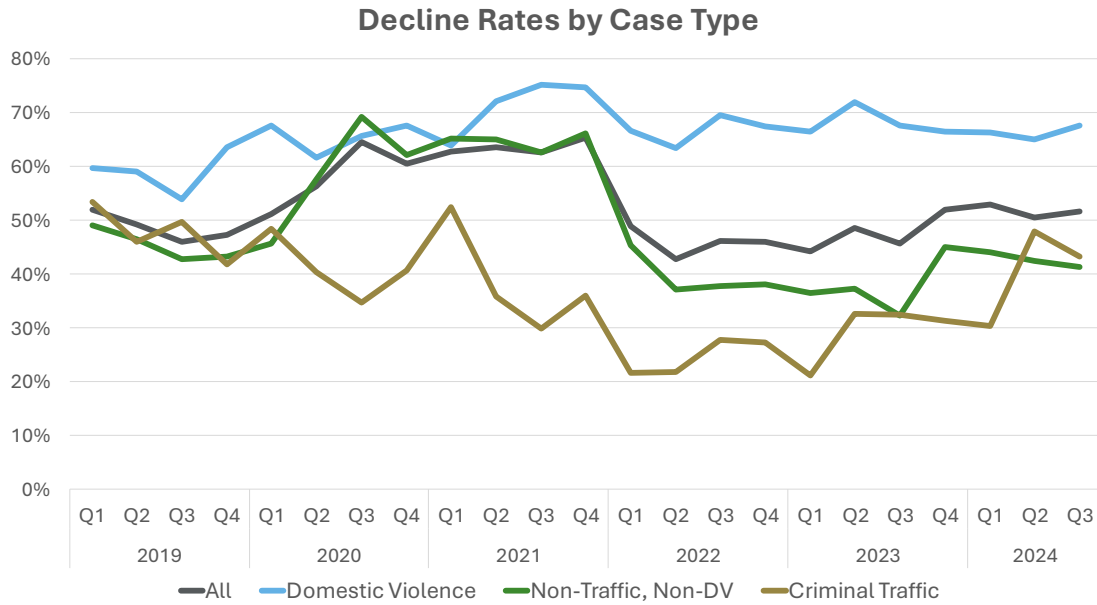
Referrals by Case Type



Charges per Referral by Case Type

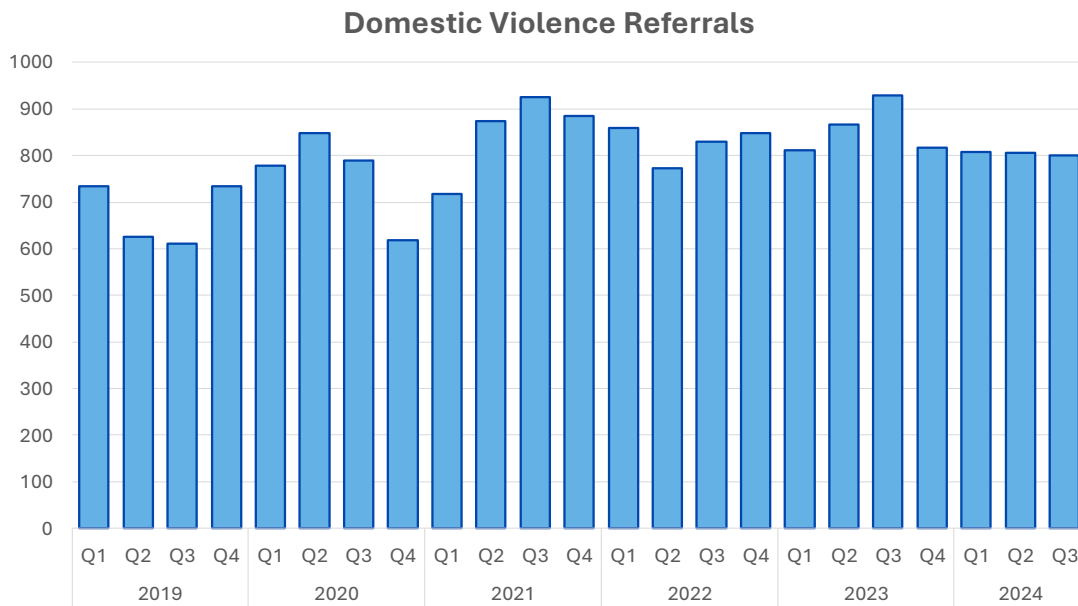


The number of charges on each police referral averages about 5 charges for every 4 referrals (1.25) and does not vary much between quarters. The decrease for Criminal Traffic is likely due to far fewer referrals including driving with a suspended license.

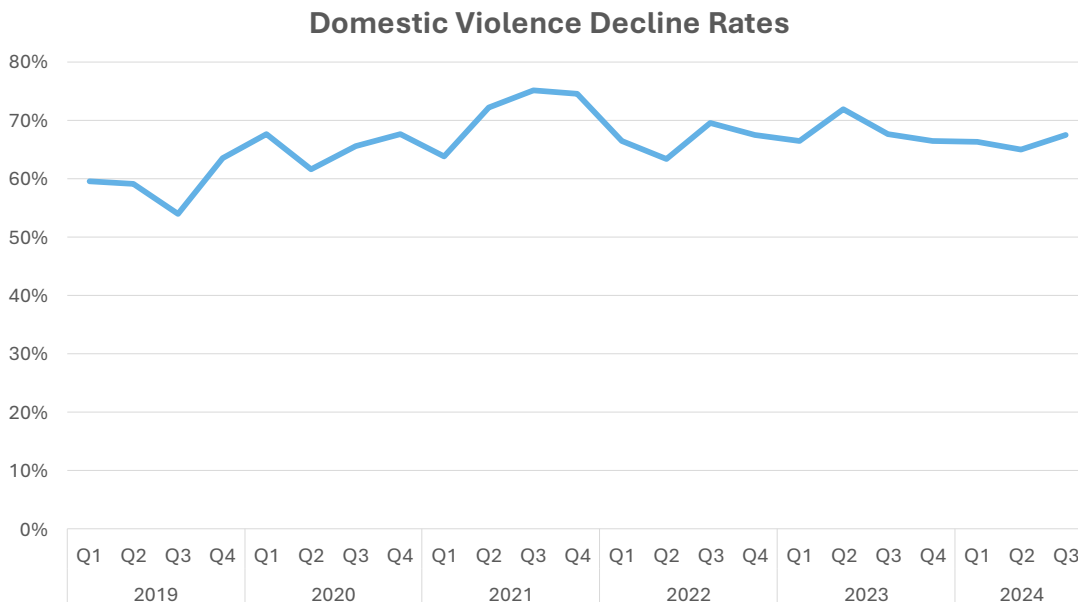


Domestic violence referrals historically have higher decline rates for a variety of reasons. Prosecutors carefully weigh the impact to the victim, the victim's desired outcome, lethality factors, and the nature of past referrals in addition to the evidence. Some referrals are declined as part of a consolidation of cases between other jurisdictions. The reduction in the decline rate for criminal traffic referrals is because a higher percentage of them now include DUIs.

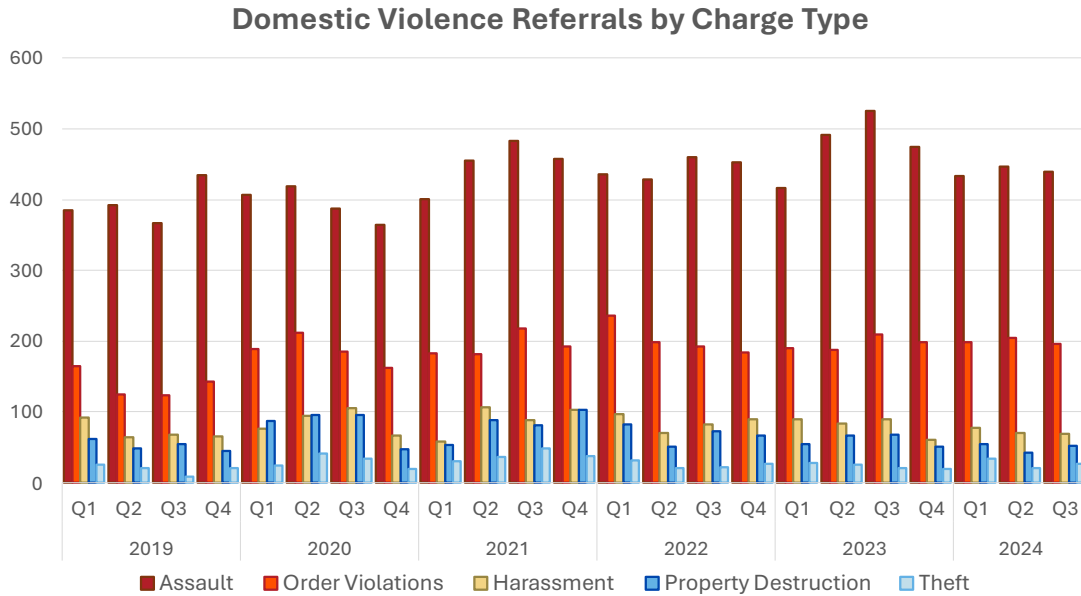
Domestic Violence



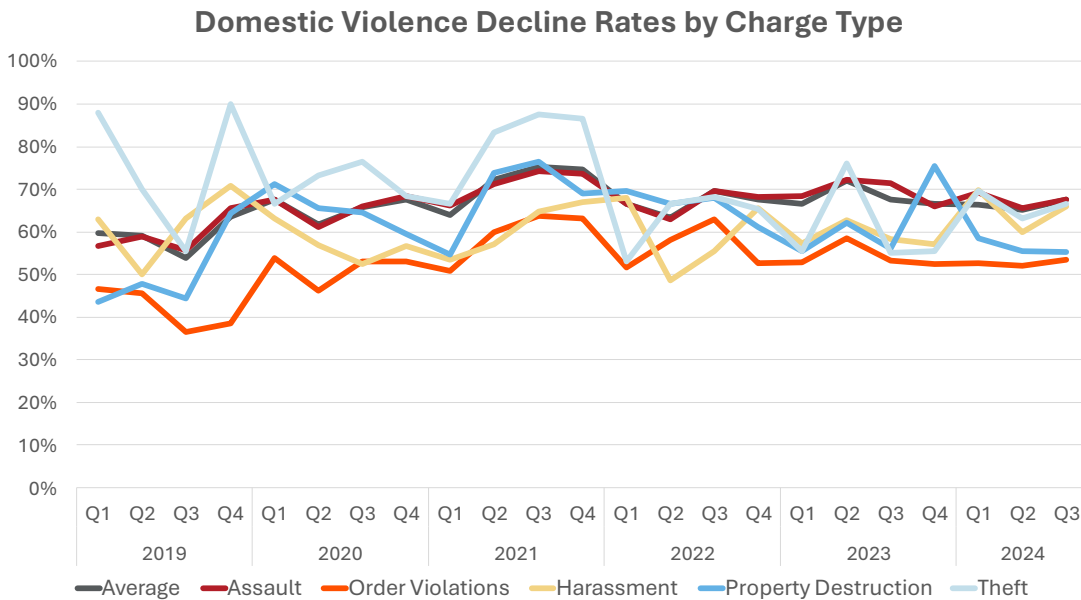
Domestic violence referrals did not see a sharp decrease during the pandemic, unlike other referrals. If Seattle followed the national trend of increased incidents of domestic violence during the pandemic, then these numbers could be under-reported due to SPD under-staffing. Incoming domestic violence referrals have been remarkably similar for the last four quarters.



Domestic violence referrals differ because of the impact charges may have on a survivor of intimate partner or family violence. Their ability to assist prosecution varies based on many factors, leading to a higher decline rate. These rates do not reflect backlog filing and the Q3 2024 rate was 68%.

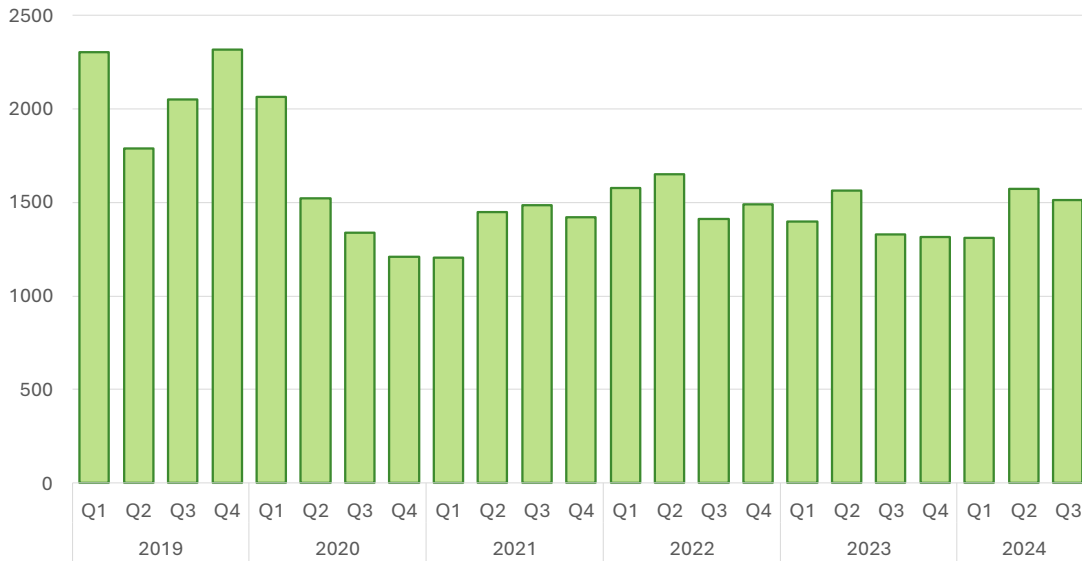


Assaults and protection/no contact order violations are the most common types of domestic violence charges. This is not an exhaustive list of domestic violence charges but represents the most common types.



Criminal Non-Traffic, Non-Domestic Violence

Non-Traffic, Non-Domestic Violence Referrals



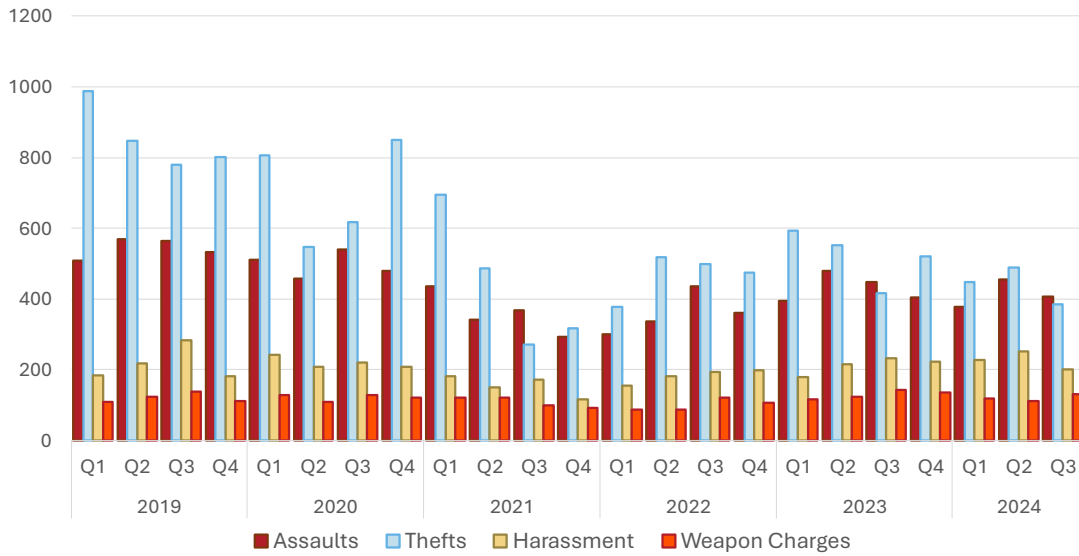
Criminal non-traffic, non-domestic violence referrals include many dozens of offenses and have a large proportion of thefts, trespasses, harassment, and assaults. They also include weapons charges and a myriad of less common offenses like reckless burning or false reporting.

Non-Traffic, Non-Domestic Violence Decline Rate



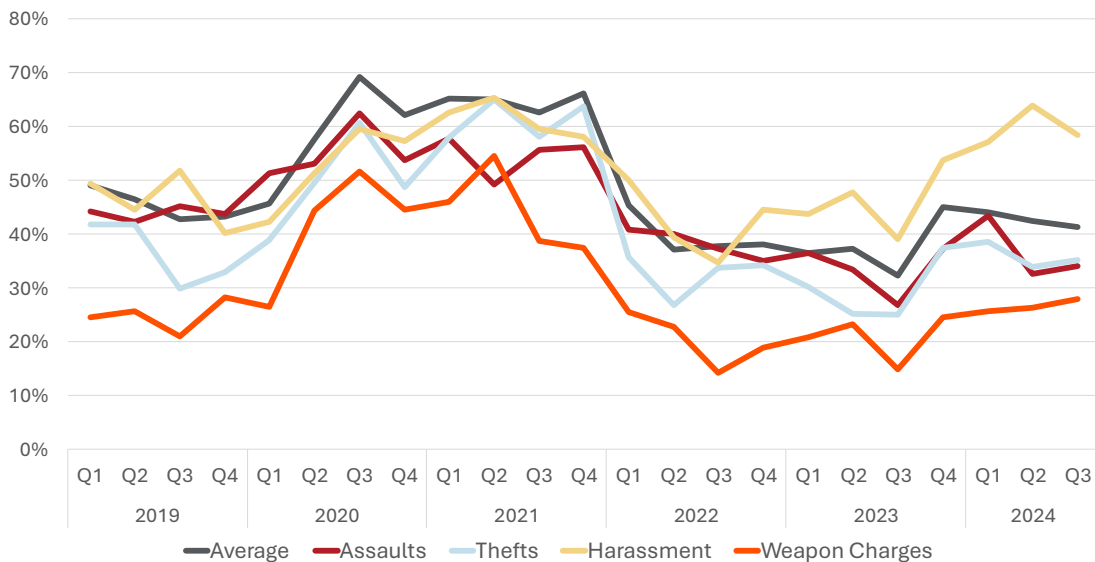
Decline rates for these misdemeanors had been rising more than any other category through 2021. Part of this can be explained by the backlog in referrals that was increasing until early 2022. The decline rate for these crimes was 41% in Q3 2024.

Non-Traffic, Non-DV Referrals by Charge Type



Assault and Theft are the most common non-traffic, non-domestic violence charges. Thefts are likely heavily under reported compared to assaults given the staffing challenges at SPD.

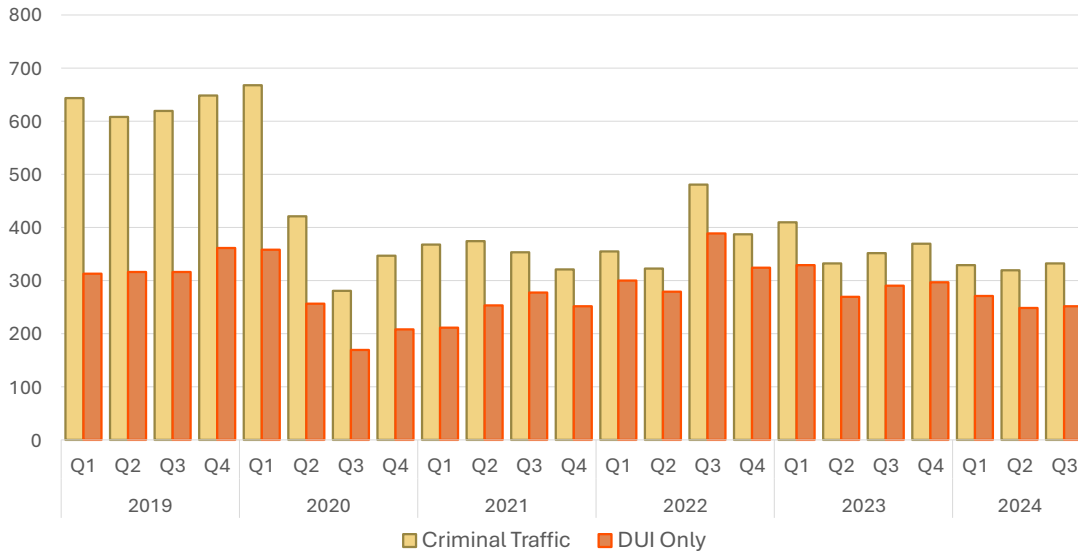
Non-Traffic, Non-DV Decline Rates by Case Type



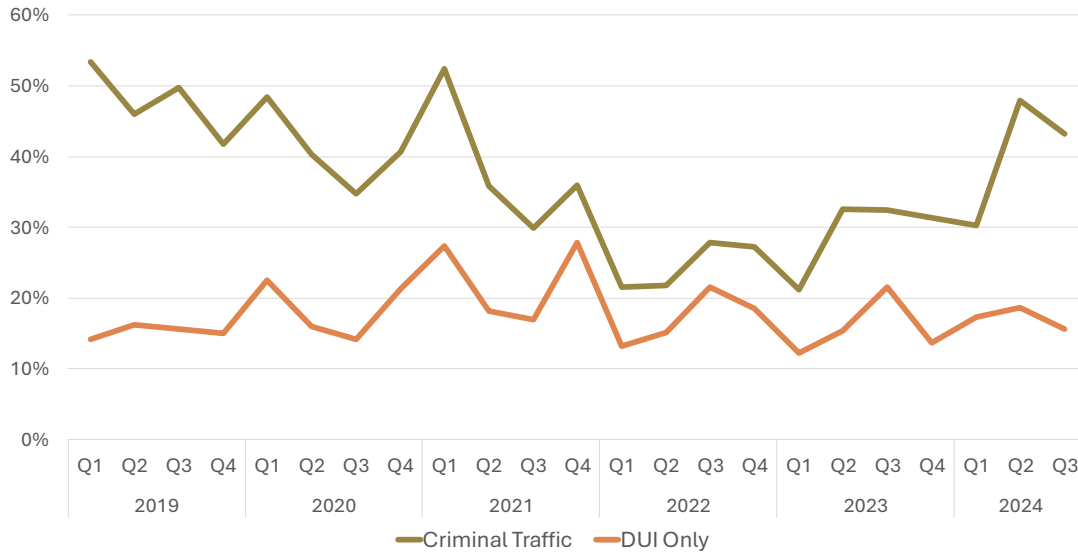
Weapons charges have the lowest decline rates, though their relatively smaller sample sizes lead to more variation.

Criminal Traffic

Criminal Traffic Referrals



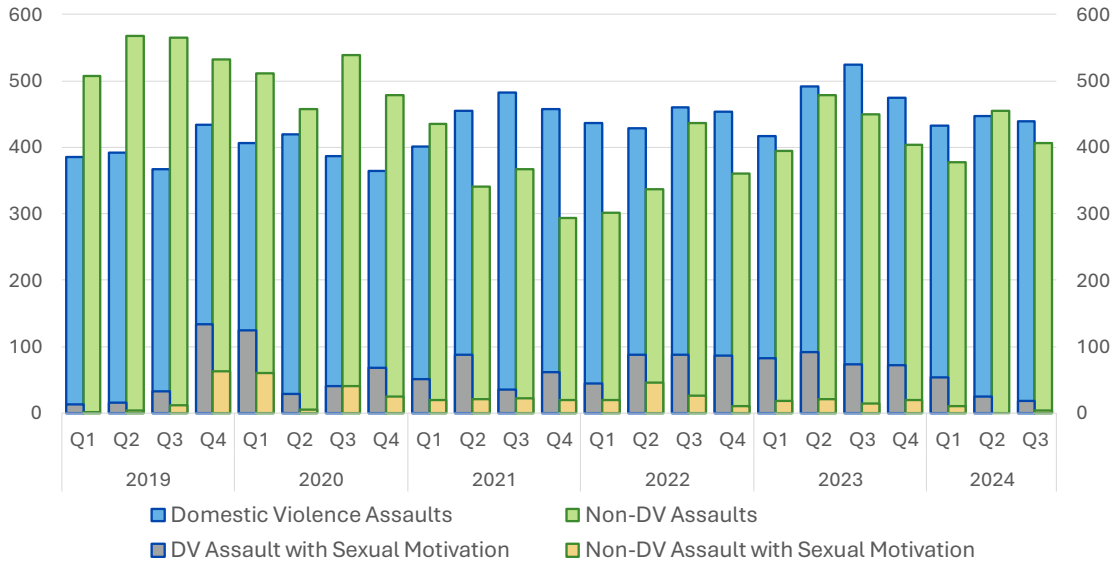
Criminal Traffic Decline Rates



Historically DUIs have had very low decline rates but have been rising lately. This is potentially because of large delays at the state toxicology laboratory that has forced some declines. The overall traffic decline rate has dropped as DUIs have become an increasingly more dominant proportion of all traffic misdemeanors. Criminal traffic filing saw a decline rate of 43% in Q3 2024.

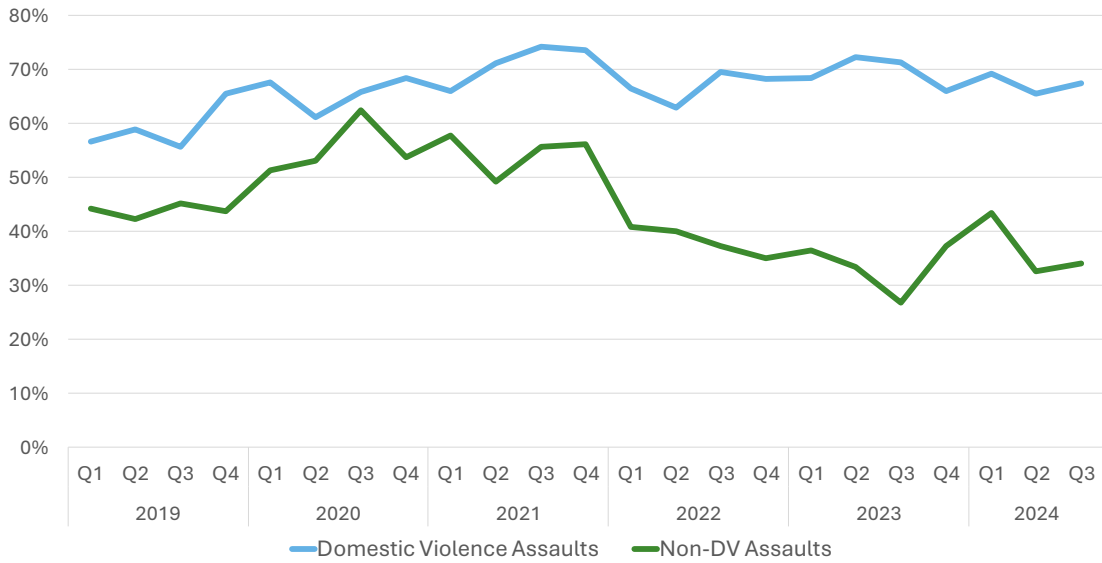
Assault

Referrals that Included at least One Assault Charge



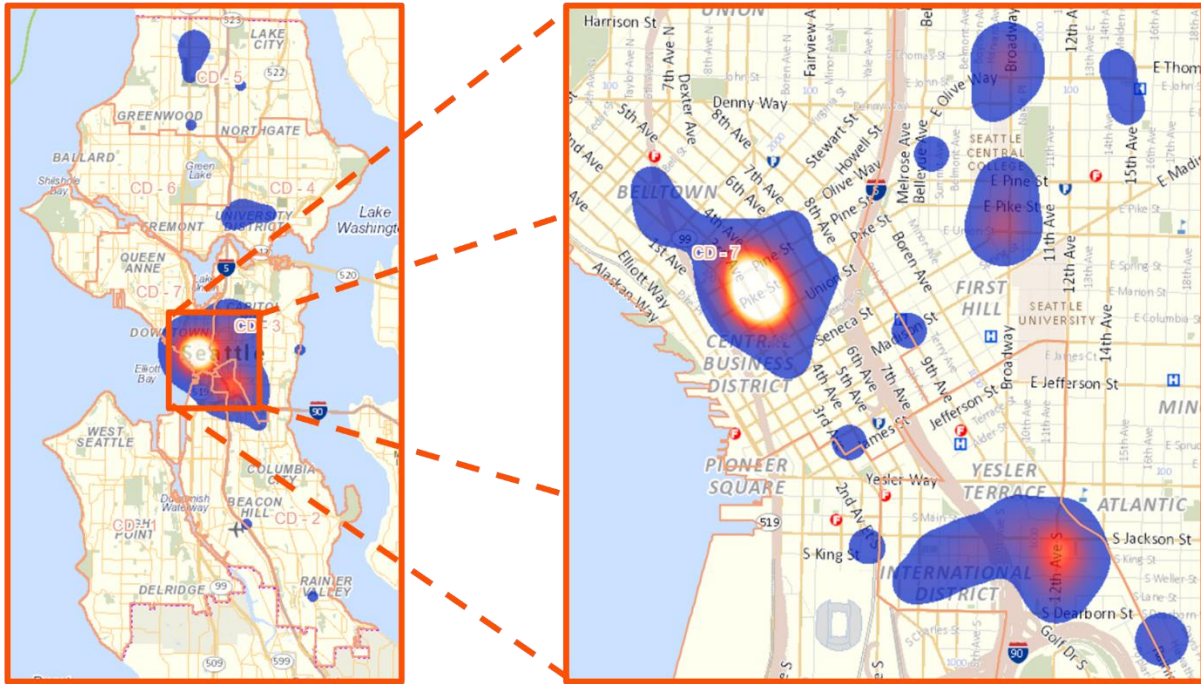
Referred Assaults were lower in the summer months of 2024 than in 2023 but similar to 2022.

Decline Rates for Referrals Containing Assault Charges

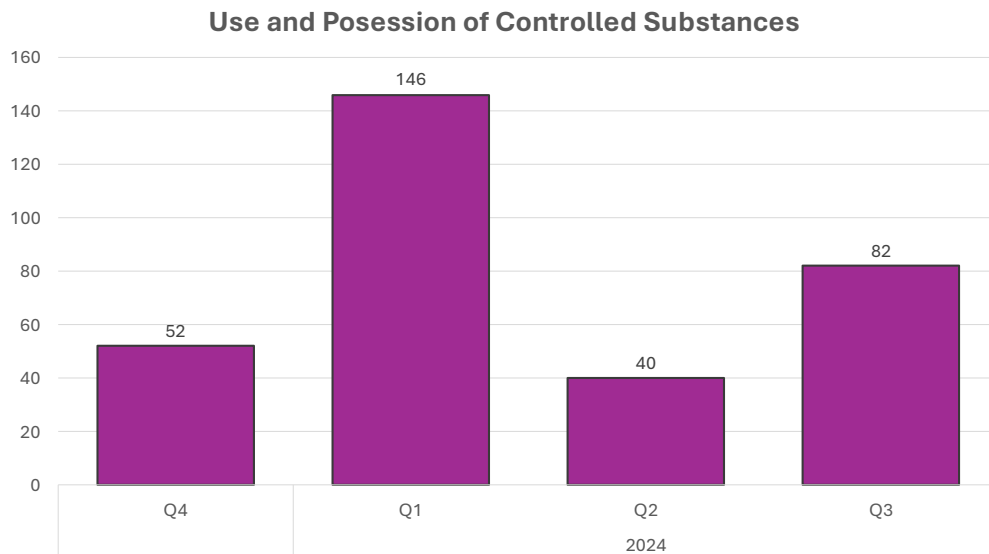


Possession and Use of Controlled Substances

In 2023, Washington State passed a law making it illegal to consume or possess controlled substances like narcotics in public spaces. Later that year the City of Seattle passed its own ordinance on controlled substances. Below is a map of the referrals into the City Attorney’s Office involving possession or use of controlled substances in Q3 of 2024:

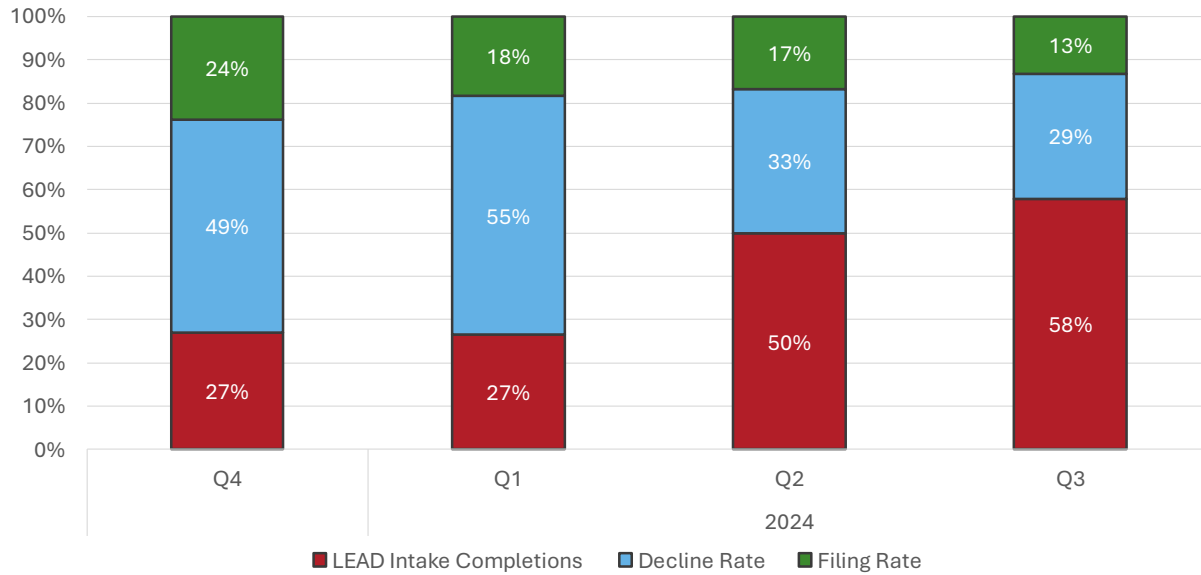


This chart shows the incoming referrals for those crimes:



The Seattle Police Department began enforcing the City’s ordinance in October of 2023 so Q4 of that year has partial data.

Use and Possession of Controlled Substances Decline Rate



Use and Possession referrals differ from most in that they have much more involvement with the LEAD program. Individuals have their referrals automatically declined if they have either completed their LEAD intake or updated their individualized service plan within 30 days of the incident per LEAD protocols.

Alternatives to Traditional Prosecution

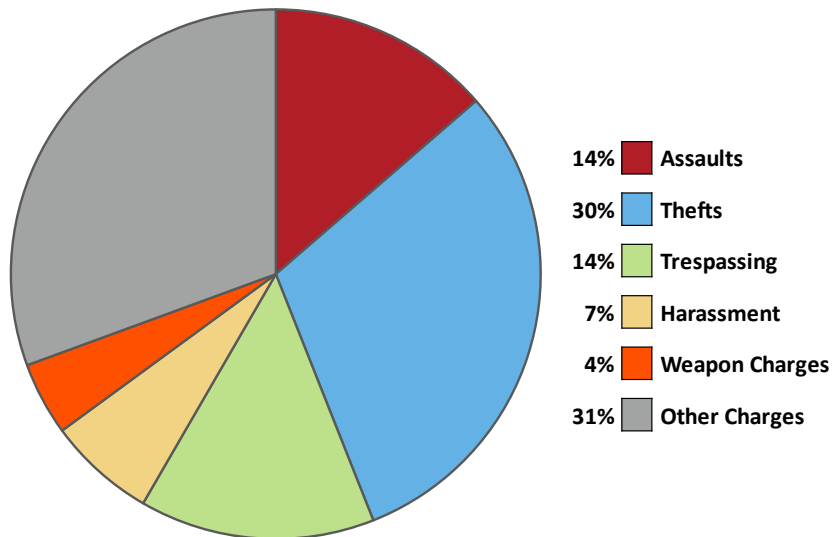
LEAD, CoLEAD, and Vital Clients

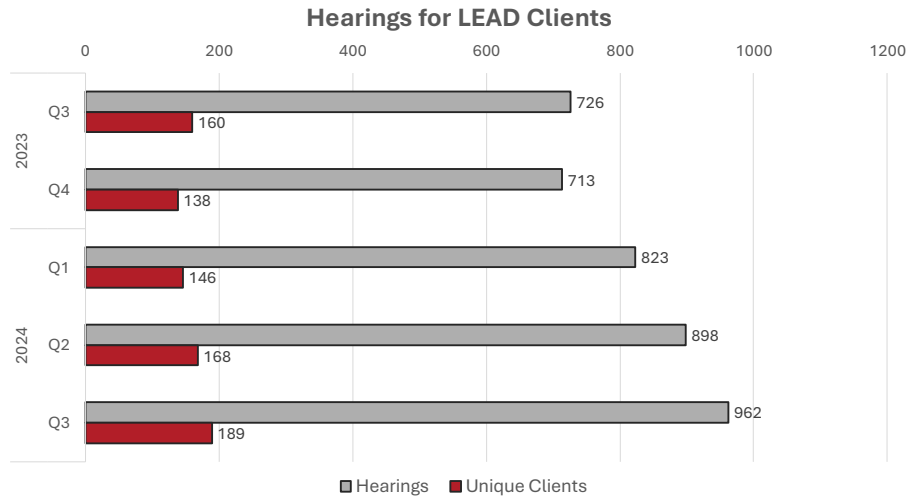
The Seattle City Attorney’s Office LEAD prosecutors work with LEAD’s almost 900 enrolled clients as well as 150 clients in CoLEAD and 60 in Vital.



The City Attorney’s Office has started to track these clients with much greater detail. The department has integrated better client tracking as to overcome shortcomings in the current criminal case management system (DAMION). We are working on putting in past clients, but currently only have clients from 2022 onward.

Breakdown of Charges on Referrals Involving LEAD

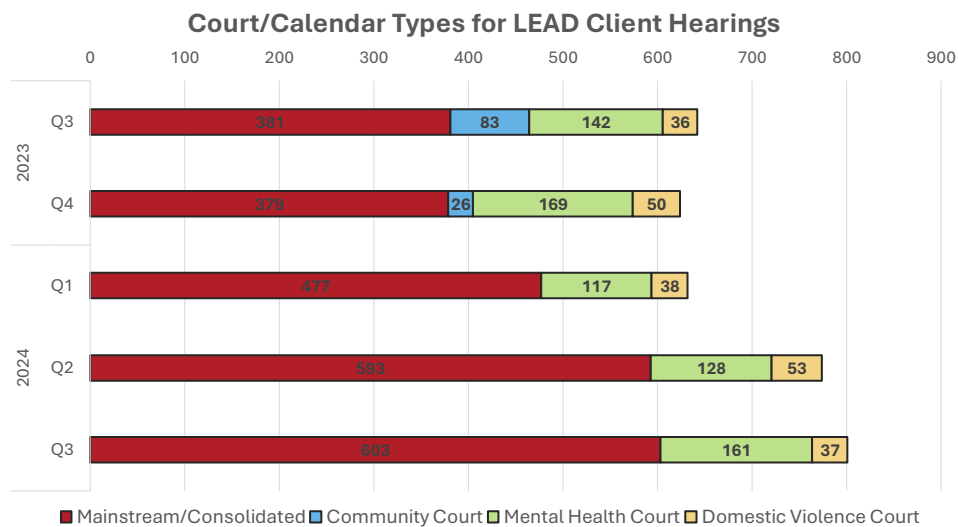




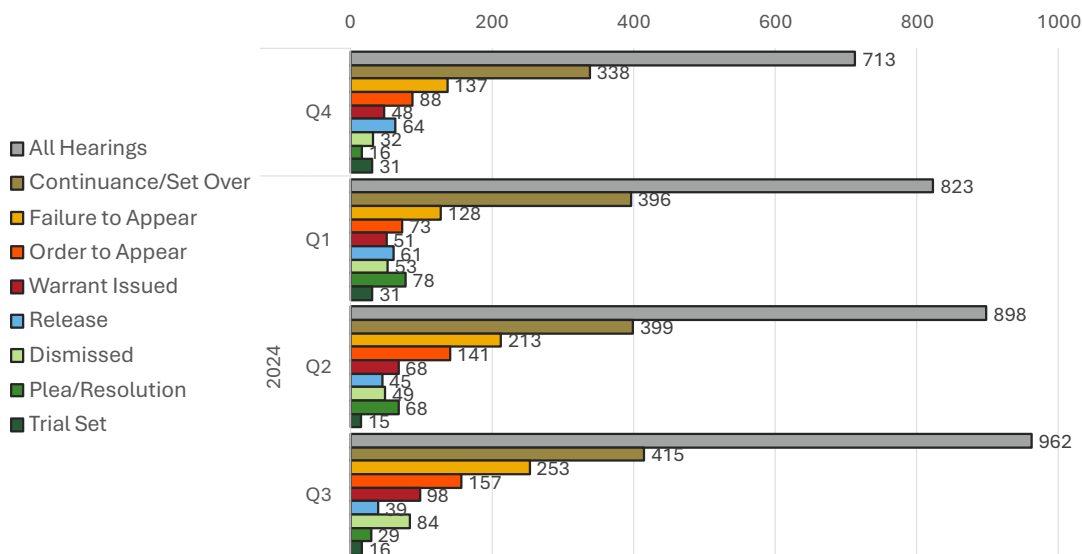
The Seattle City Attorney’s Office has a specialized team to work with program clients. A new data tracking system was put in place starting in Q4 2022. In Q1 2024 the team was part of 823 hearings covering 146 clients. One person can have multiple hearings on the same day if they have multiple active cases. Clients with multiple hearings require more work and coordination from the City Attorney’s Office. The average number of hearings per client as approximately five.

There are 4 main hearing types:

- **Mainstream/Consolidated:** This category covers cases that are not part of the below categories
- **Community Court:** An ineffective court that has been disbanded in favor of pre-file diversion
- **Mental Health Court:** This references the court described on page 23
- **Domestic Violence Court:** For clients suspected of committing domestic violence

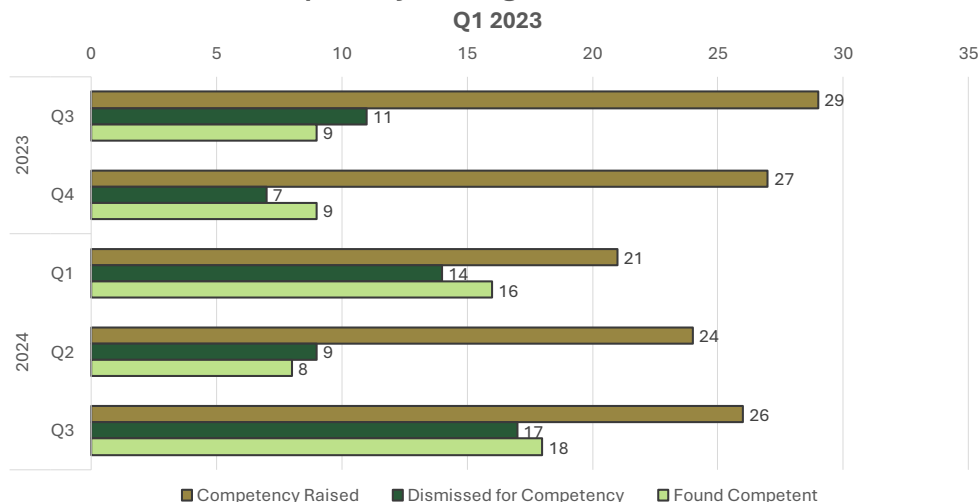


Common Hearing Outcomes for LEAD Clients



The above are common hearing outcomes for program clients. Each hearing can have multiple outcomes. A continuance or set-over is when a hearing is delayed and set for a later date. A failure to appear often results in either an order to appear the next time or a warrant to do so. A Release refers to being released from custody either on their own recognizance, released with an electronic monitoring device, or a temporary release for something like treatment. Hearings can also have an outcome like a dismissal, plea or the setting of a trial date.

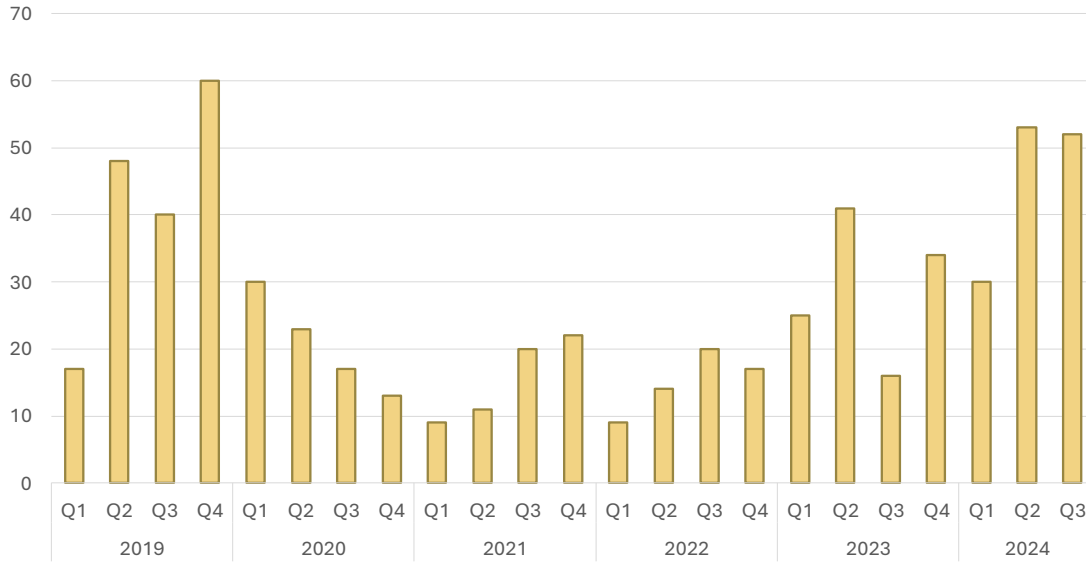
Competency Hearings for LEAD Clients



Hearings can also have an outcome of asking whether a defendant is mentally competent to stand trial as well as a dismissal because they are not found competent or they can be found competent. A competency finding does not always occur in the same quarter that it was raised.

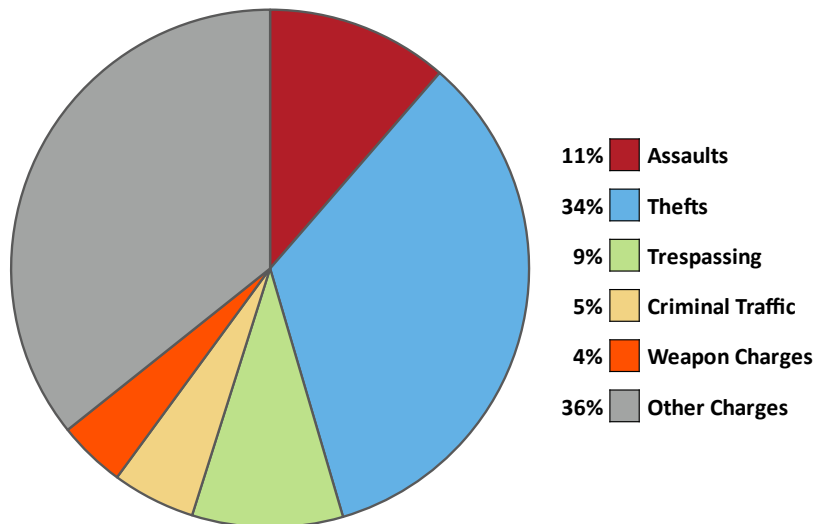
Pre-File Diversion

Referrals Declined After Successful Pre-File Diversion

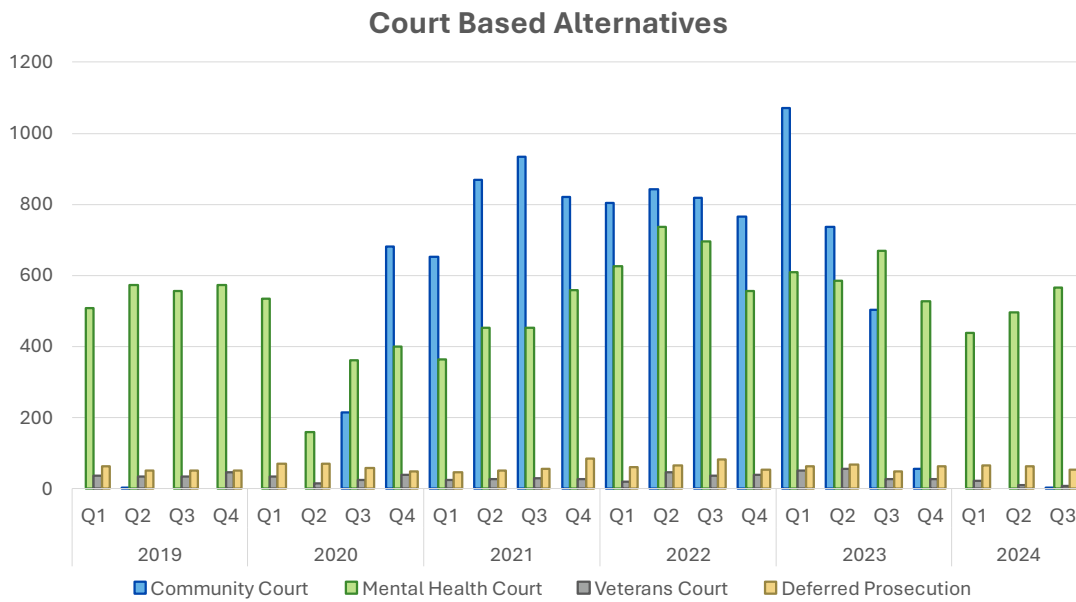


This data does not include diversions done by the team after a case has been filed.

Breakdown of Charges in Pre-File Diversion Declines



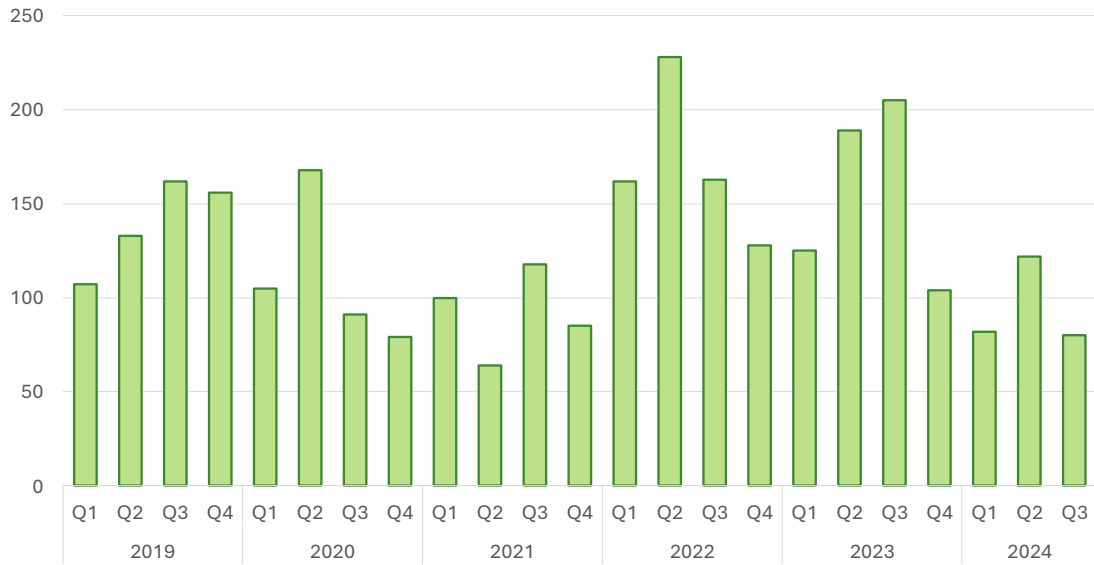
Court Based Alternatives



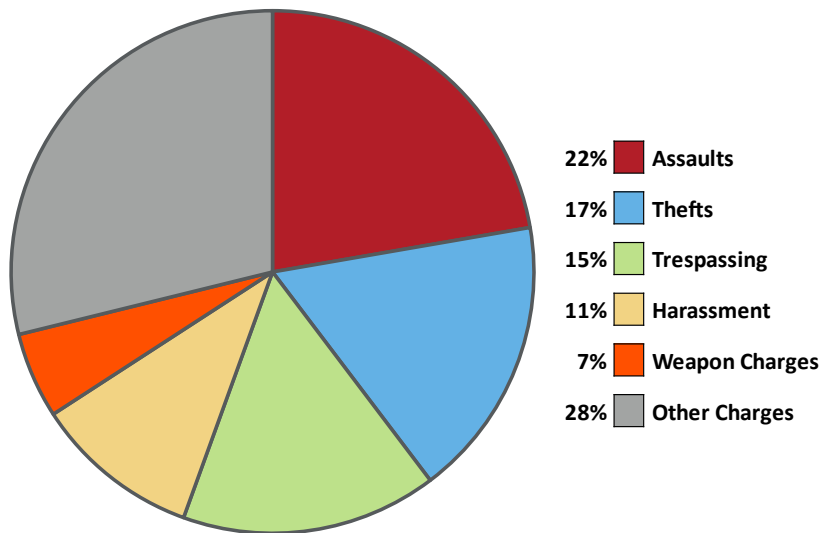
To compare between alternatives, the rest of the charts use the disposition date, but this one uses the date of court hearings.

Mental Health Court

Referrals Involving Mental Health Court

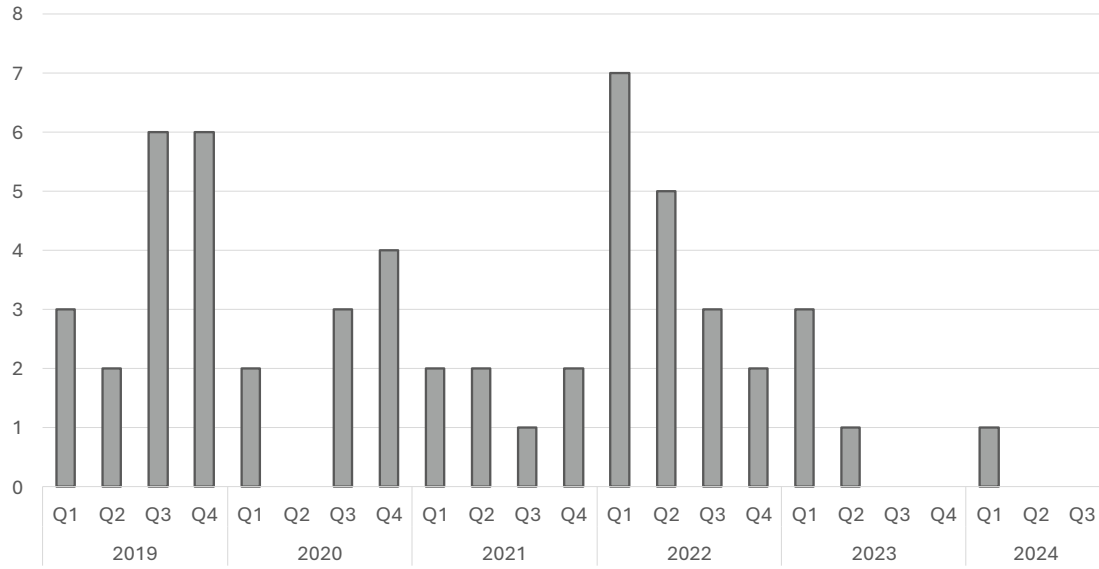


Breakdown of Charges in Mental Health Court



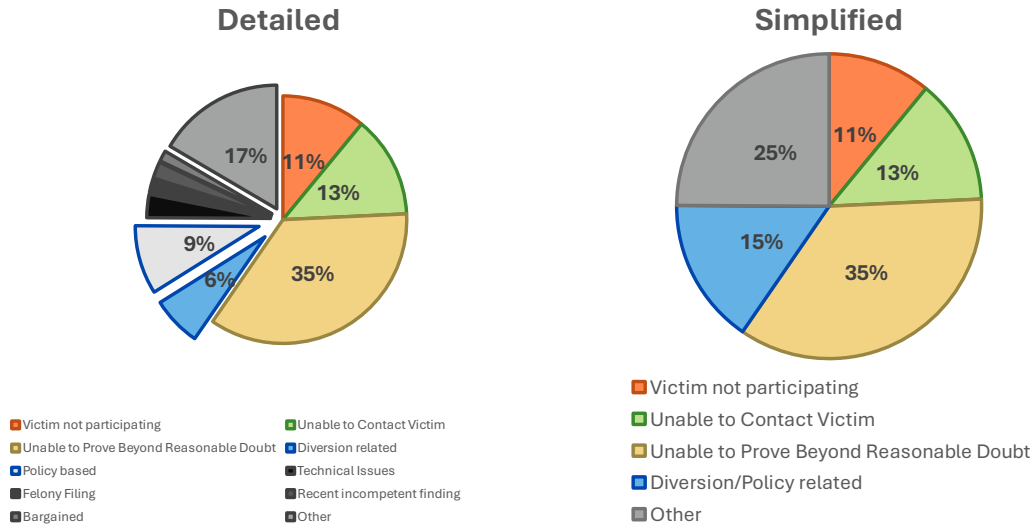
Veterans Treatment Court

Referrals Involving Veterans Treatment Court



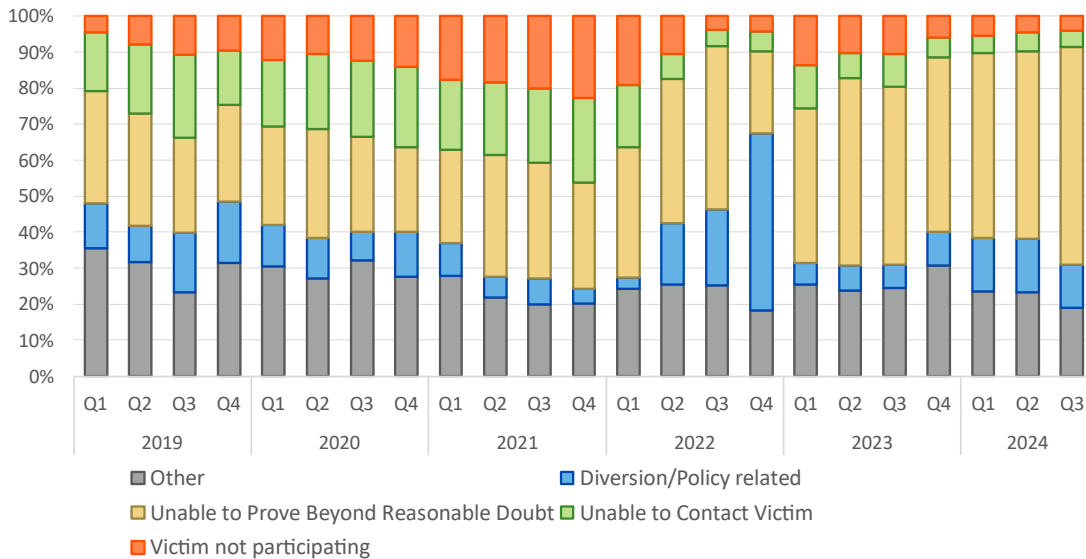
Decline Reasons

Breakdown of Decline Reasons
(2-year averages)



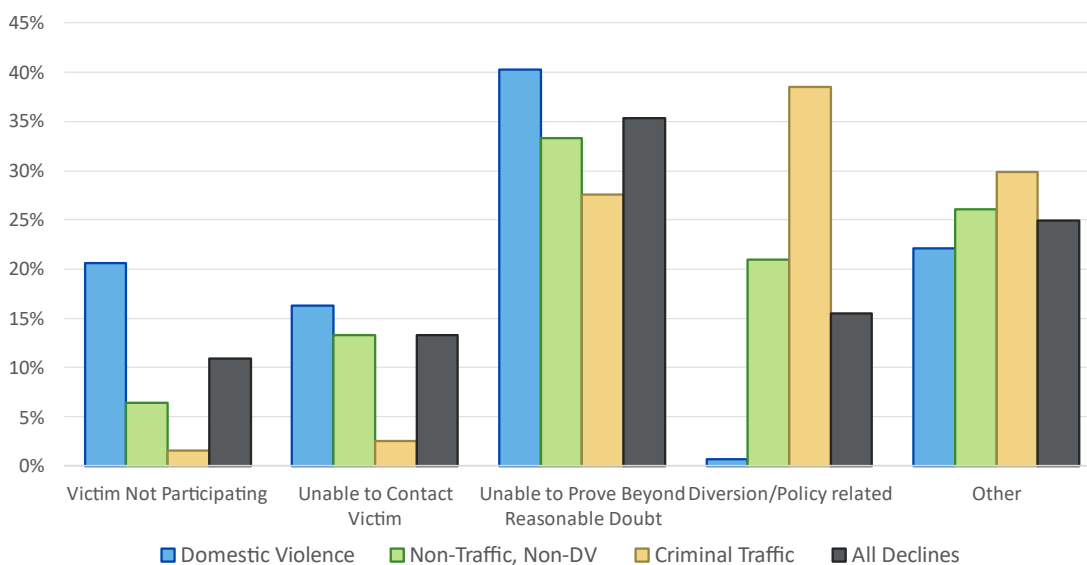
There are many reasons that the City Attorney’s office may decline to file a case. The major ones are listed above. The simplified one is used for reporting ease. These are based on 5-year averages.

Timeline of Declines by Reason Category



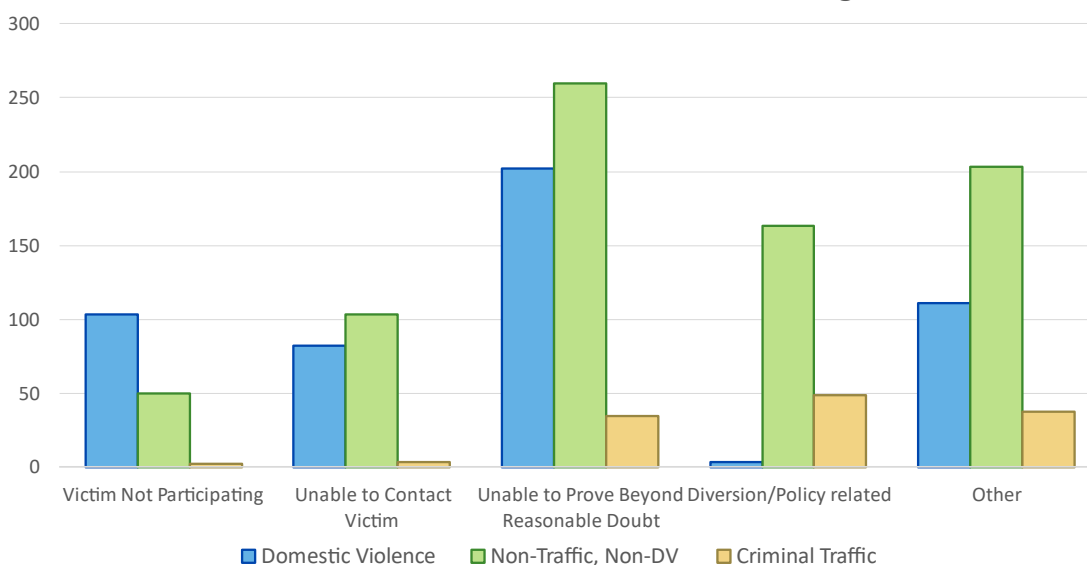
Victim related issues have continued to decline and have become a very small barrier to filing. This is partly due to better contact outcomes from the Close-In-Time policy as well as a concerted effort to look at the merits of cases beyond relying only on victim participation. Policy based declines in Q4 2022 are primarily due to the backlog filing project and skew the other proportions in that quarter.

Breakdown of Historical Decline Reason Proportions

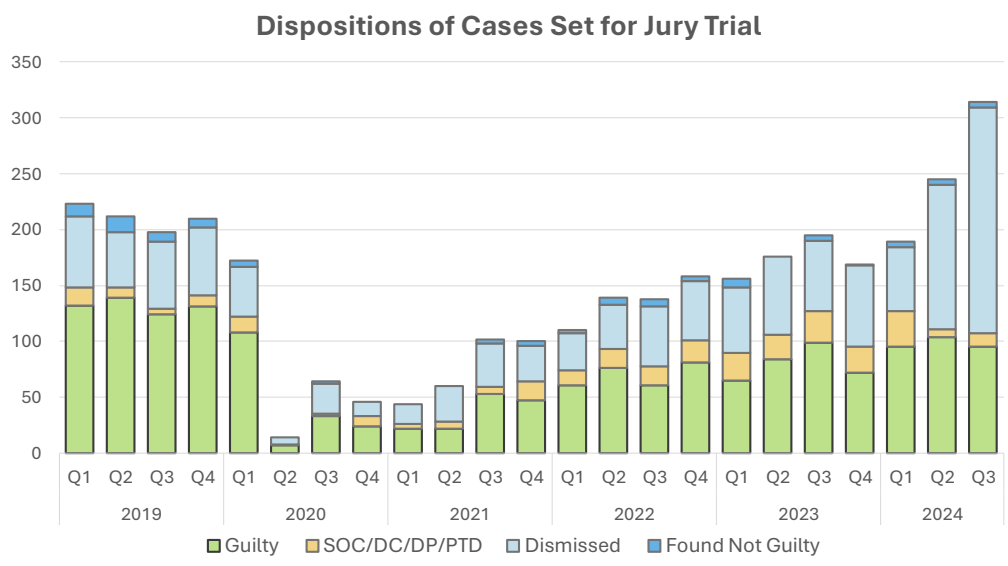


Over the past five years, a large proportion of domestic violence declines are related to the victim not wanting or being able to assist the prosecution. This is the primary reason that domestic violence decline rates are higher than for other crime types. The large percent of declines in criminal traffic referrals come from the policy of not pursuing charges on driving while license suspended charges. As these referrals are currently rare, this does not reflect the current state in 2024. The chart above shows the relative proportions of each type of decline for each crime type. The chart below shows the five-year average number of quarterly declines.

Breakdown of Historical Decline Reason Averages



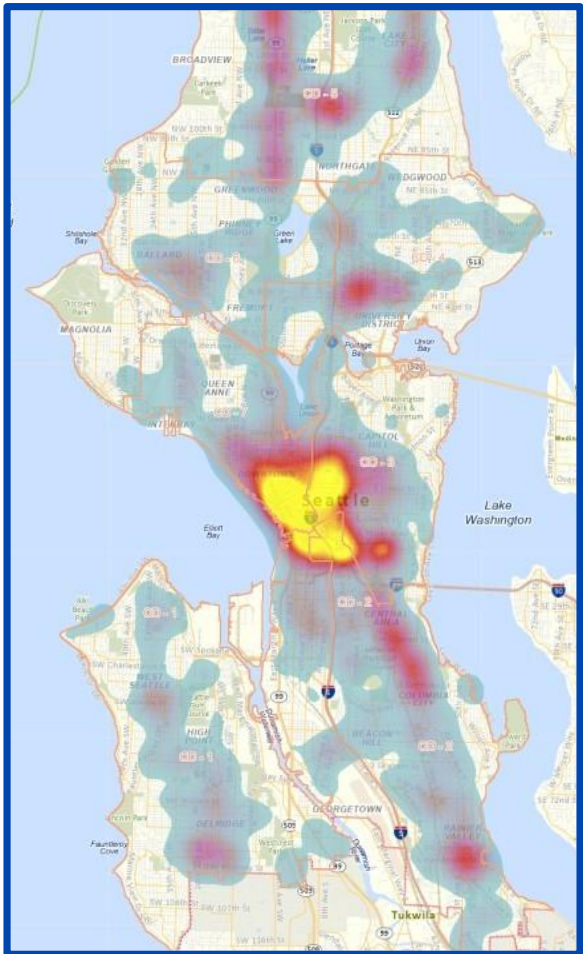
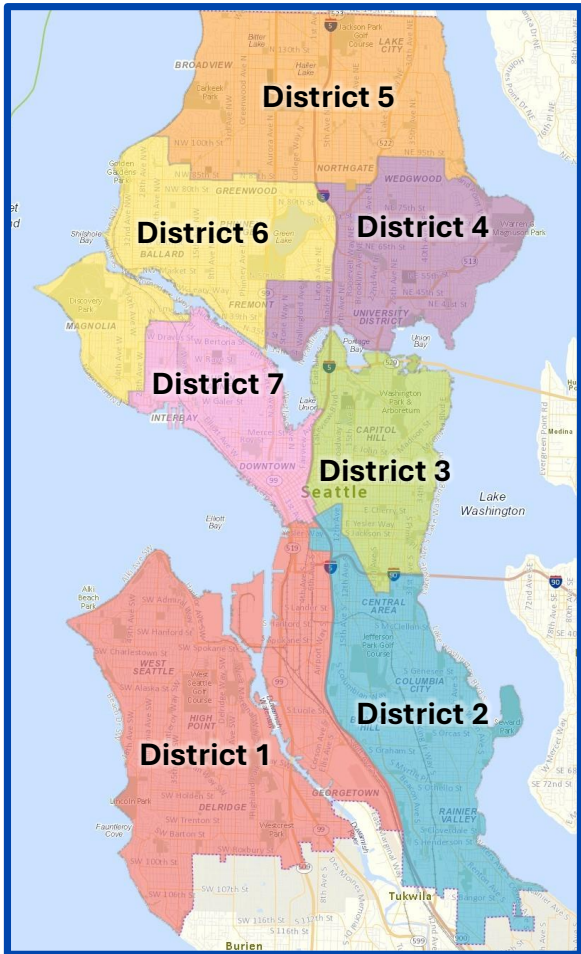
Final Dispositions



The most common final dispositions are guilty pleas, typically as part of a negotiated plea deal. Dismissals related to successful completion of alternatives to traditional prosecution, proof issues, and victim or witness related dismissals are also common. Guilty and not guilty findings via jury verdict are rare due to the decreased number of jury trials. The category “SOC/DC/DP/PTD” includes stipulated orders of continuances, dispositional continuances, deferred prosecution, and pre-trial diversion. All of those involve a situation where a defendant agrees to meet a set of requirements for a period of time and if successful, their case is dismissed.

Due to the breakdown in the electronic communication between the court’s new case management system and ours, a manual workaround had to be made to incorporate court data into our system for the final dispositions. The data did not differentiate between guilty pleas and guilty findings so the two were combined. The increased dismissals shown in Q2 and Q3 could be related to incongruent data from the communications breakdown.

District Specifics



Council Districts were redrawn effective Q1 2023. The largest changes were District 1 absorbing the land between the Duwamish and I-5 and District 6 absorbing Magnolia.

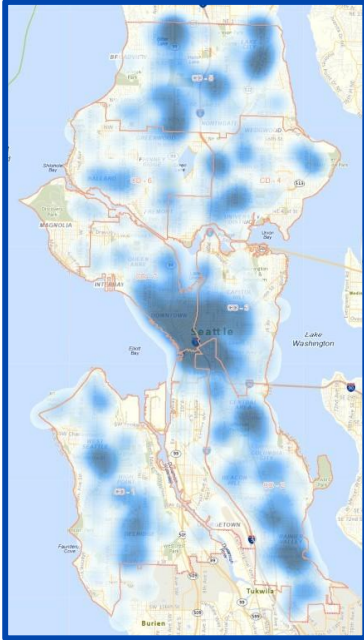
Mapping Accuracy

Mapping a police referral relies on the accuracy of the information on a report. Even after manually correcting addresses, some either do not have enough information or are not tied to a physical address in the city’s GIS database. The most common of these are DUIs that occur on grade-separated roads.

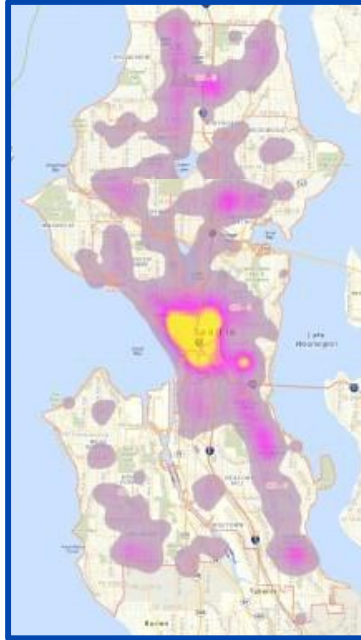
	Domestic Court Order		Weapons				Total	
	Violence	Violations	Assault	Charges	Harassment	Theft	DUI	Referrals
Mapped	772	239	841	147	288	431	246	2695
UnMapped	28	5	25	4	8	6	5	82
Mapped %	97%	98%	97%	97%	97%	99%	98%	97%

Maps

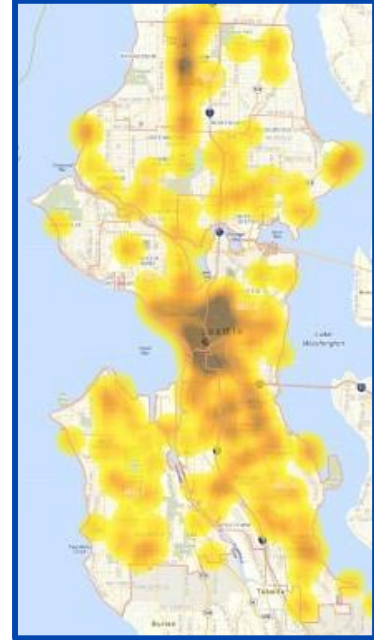
Domestic Violence



Non-Traffic, Non-DV



Criminal Traffic



Domestic Violence

Domestic Violence Referrals concentrate in any part of the city that has a higher density of housing. In addition to the city's core, higher rates of domestic violence follow the light rail down the rainier valley and the denser portions of the Lake City Way and Aurora corridors. It can also be found in higher levels in West Seattle and Wallingford.

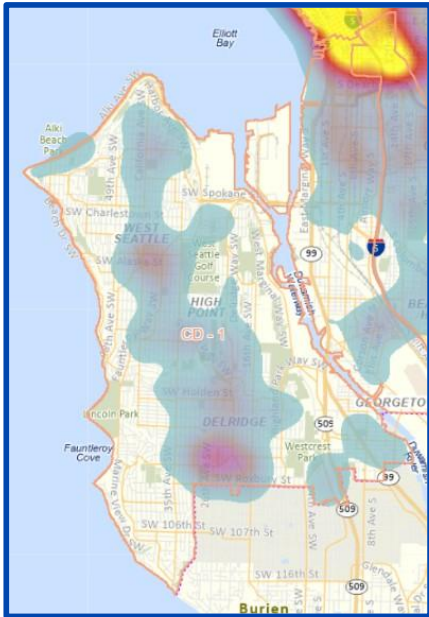
Criminal Non-Traffic, Non-Domestic Violence

Misdemeanors that are neither traffic nor domestic violence related concentrate around commercial areas like Downtown, Capitol Hill, Northgate, The U District, Mount Baker, North Aurora, and Ballard.

Criminal Traffic

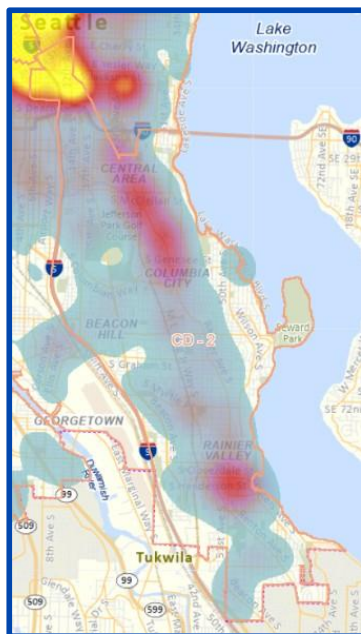
Unlike the other categories, criminal traffic misdemeanors do not have the highest concentration downtown. Rather they have the highest concentration in Capitol Hill. The downtown areas with the most are Pioneer Square and Belltown and are likely related to bar activity. North Aurora, Fremont, Ballard, Georgetown, and South Park also have higher incidents of criminal traffic referrals. While traditionally they were tied to nightlife and drinking, the modern DUIs tend to involve drug use and can happen throughout the day.

District 1



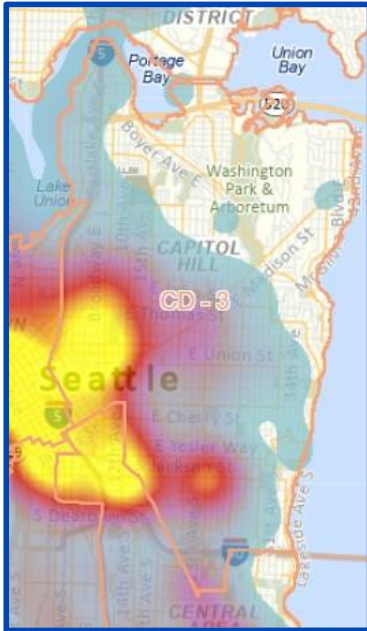
District 1, Q3-2024		
	Count	% of Seattle
Domestic Violence	120	16%
Court Order Violations	44	18%
Assault	135	16%
Weapons Charges	14	10%
Harassment	39	14%
Theft	44	10%
DUI	54	22%
Total Referrals	400	15%

District 2



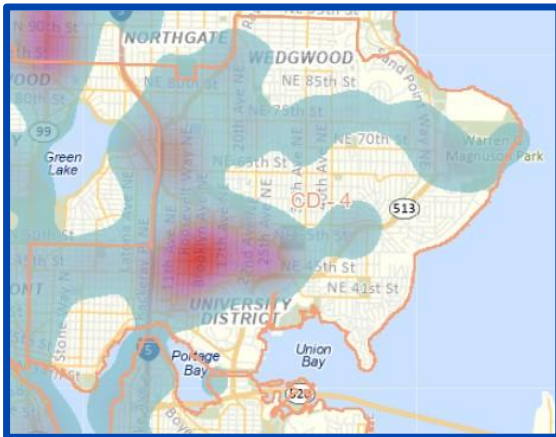
District 2, Q3-2024		
	Count	% of Seattle
Domestic Violence	176	23%
Court Order Violations	46	19%
Assault	156	19%
Weapons Charges	28	19%
Harassment	59	20%
Theft	95	22%
DUI	60	24%
Total Referrals	555	21%

District 3



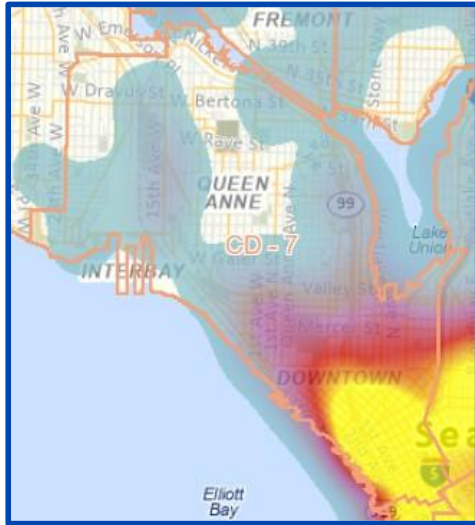
District 3, Q3-2024		
	Count	% of Seattle
Domestic Violence	109	14%
Court Order Violations	23	10%
Assault	140	17%
Weapons Charges	21	14%
Harassment	59	20%
Theft	92	21%
DUI	53	22%
Total Referrals	461	17%

District 4



District 4, Q3-2024		
	Count	% of Seattle
Domestic Violence	60	8%
Court Order Violations	22	9%
Assault	56	7%
Weapons Charges	12	8%
Harassment	27	9%
Theft	30	7%
DUI	18	7%
Total Referrals	188	7%

District 7

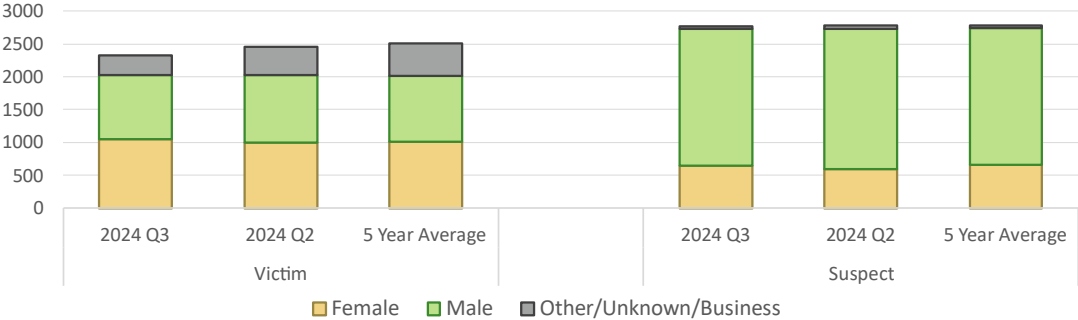


District 7, Q3-2024		
	Count	% of Seattle
Domestic Violence	119	15%
Court Order Violations	30	13%
Assault	183	22%
Weapons Charges	43	29%
Harassment	39	14%
Theft	105	24%
DUI	33	13%
Total Referrals	593	22%

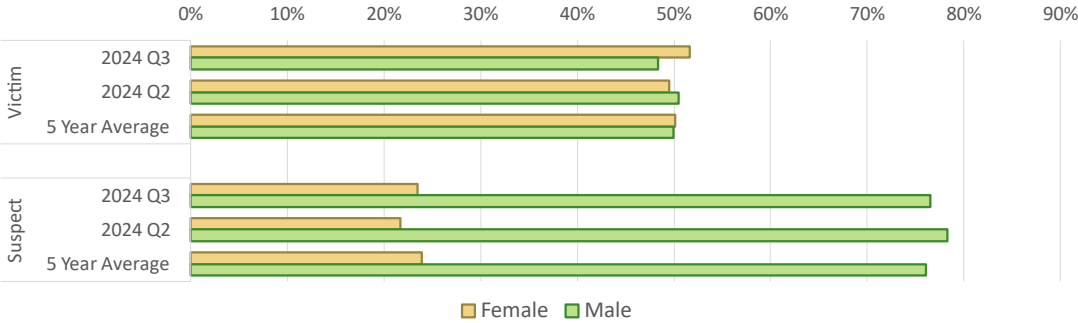
Gender Specifics

Demographic information originates with police reports and are on occasion updated by SCAO staff.

Incoming Referrals by Gender for Victims and Suspects

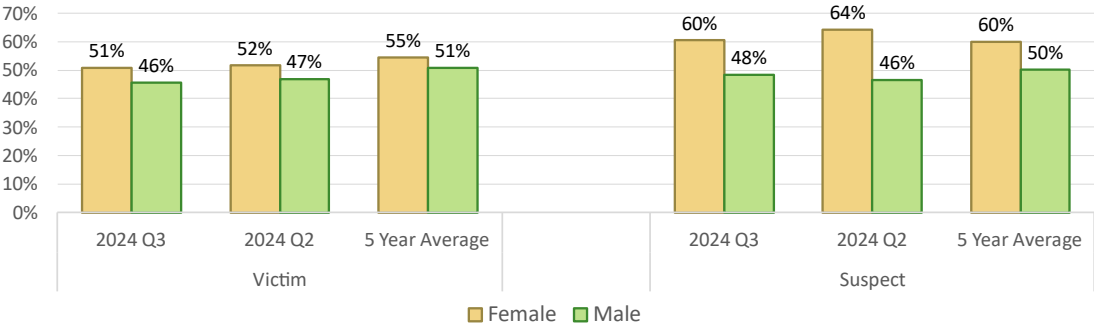


Proportion of Incoming Referrals by Gender for Victims/Suspects



While males make up about three quarters of police referrals, crime victims are more proportional to the population with businesses making up a large proportion of the “other/unknown/business” category. Gender diverse individuals are less than one percent of victims and of suspects.

Decline Rates by Gender for Victims and Suspects



Tables

These tables provide the information on the next several pages in a condensed form. Blank sections refer to data that has too small of a sample size to be relevant.

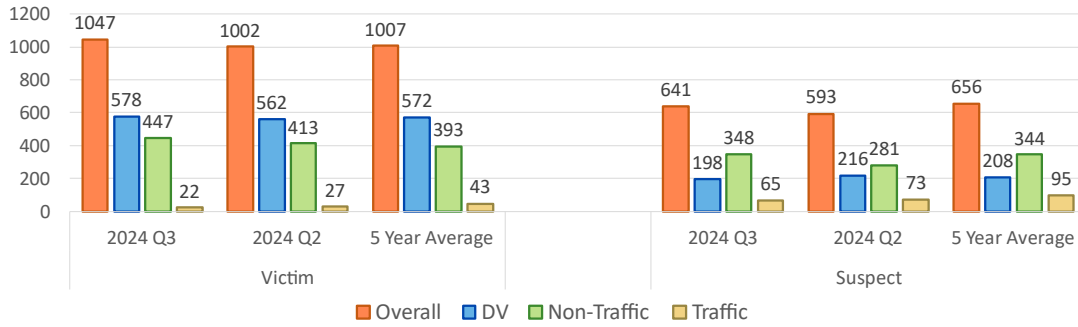
Referrals by Gender													
		Q3 2024				5-year Average				Change			
		Overall	DV	Non-Traffic	Traffic	Overall	DV	Non-Traffic	Traffic	Overall	DV	Non-Traffic	Traffic
Female	Victims	1047	578	447	22	1007	572	393	43	4%	1%	14%	-
	Suspects	641	198	348	65	656	208	344	95	-2%	-5%	1%	-32%
Male	Victims	980	271	666	42	1004	270	667	67	-2%	0%	0%	-38%
	Suspects	2087	593	1136	264	2084	588	1174	303	0%	1%	-3%	-13%

Decline Rates by Gender													
		Q3 2024				5-year Average				Change			
		Overall	DV	Non-Traffic	Traffic	Overall	DV	Non-Traffic	Traffic	Overall	DV	Non-Traffic	Traffic
Female	Victims	51%	60%	40%	-	55%	62%	48%	16%	-4%	-2%	-8%	-
	Suspects	60%	80%	48%	-	60%	80%	55%	35%	0%	-1%	-7%	-
Male	Victims	46%	76%	34%	-	51%	73%	45%	19%	-5%	3%	-11%	-
	Suspects	48%	63%	39%	42%	50%	62%	47%	36%	-2%	0%	-8%	6%

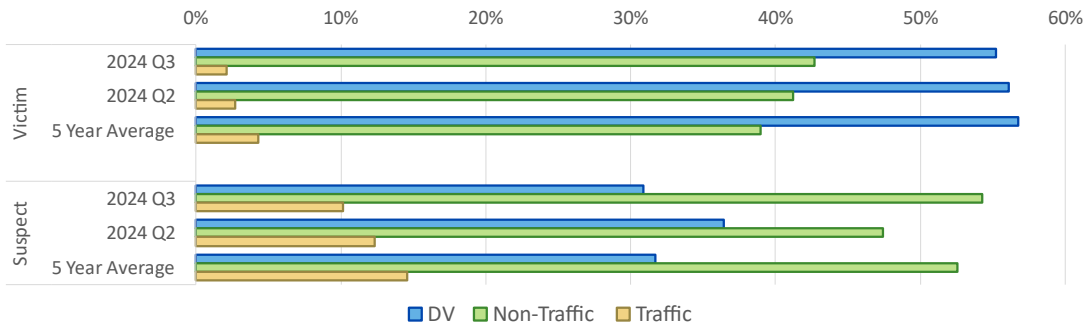
Final Dispositions by Gender										
		Q3 2024			5 Year Average			Change		
		% Guilty Pleas	% Jury Trials w/ Findings	% Found Guilty	% Guilty Pleas	% Jury Trials w/ Findings	% Found Guilty	% Guilty Pleas	% Jury Trials w/ Findings	% Found Guilty
Female	Victims	-	0%	-	45%	2%	70%	-	-2%	-
	Suspects	-	50%	-	51%	5%	75%	-	45%	-
Male	Victims	-	0%	-	52%	2%	60%	-	-2%	-
	Suspects	-	470%	100%	55%	5%	66%	-	465%	34%

Female

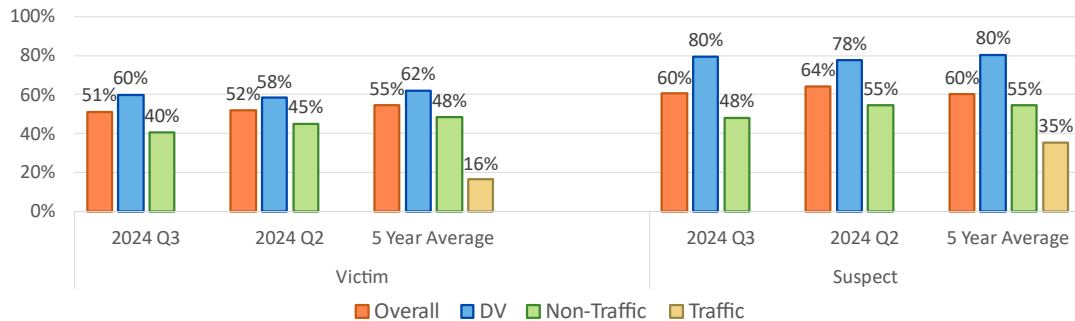
Referrals by Category Involving Female Victims and Suspects



Crime Type Proportions for Female Victims and Suspects

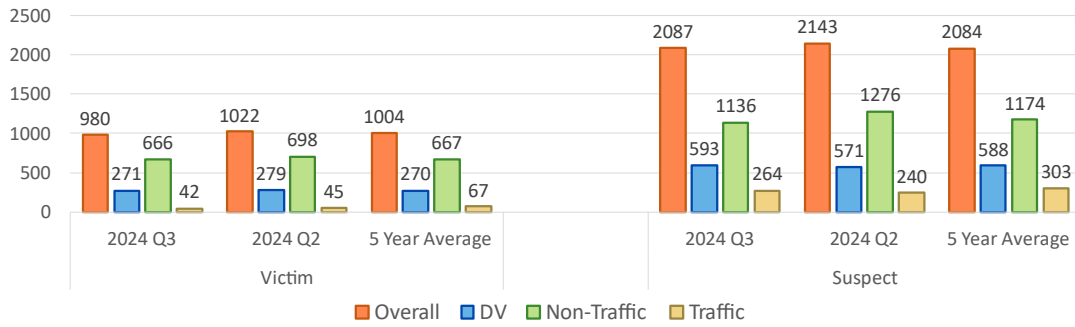


Decline Rates for Referrals Involving Female Victims and Suspects

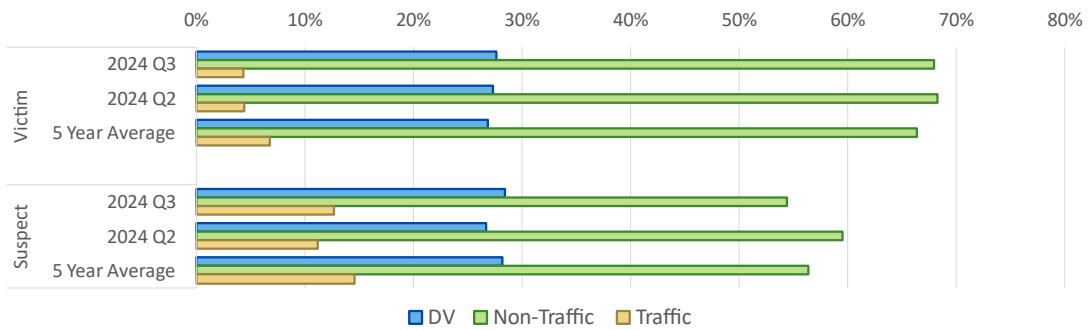


Male

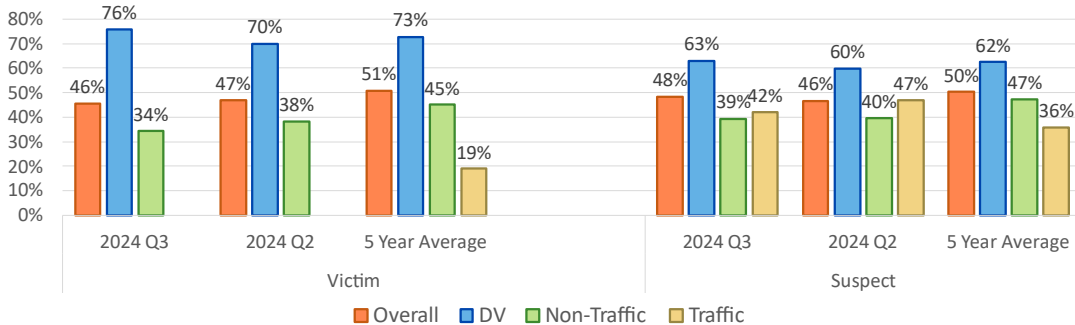
Referrals by Category Involving Male Victims and Suspects



Crime Type Proportions for Male Victims and Suspects



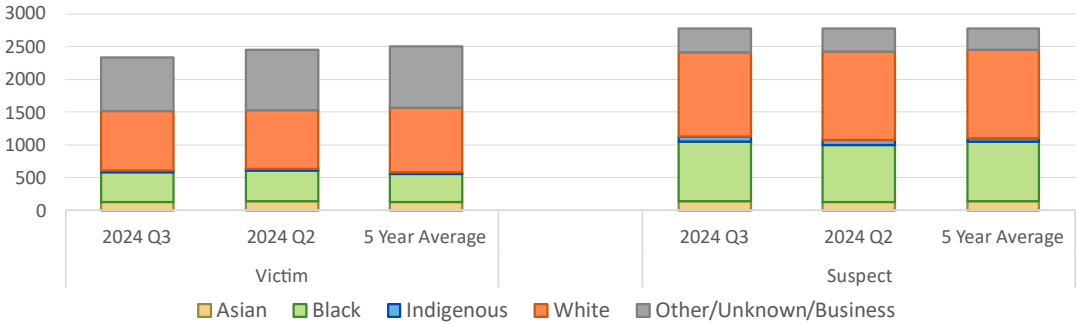
Decline Rates for Referrals Involving Male Victims and Suspects



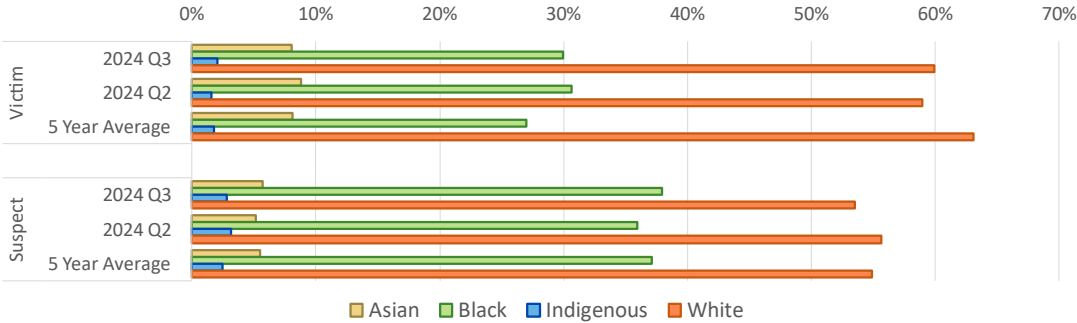
Race Specifics

Demographic information originates with police reports and are updated by SCAO staff. **Small sample sizes for Asian and Indigenous peoples may reduce statistical relevance.**

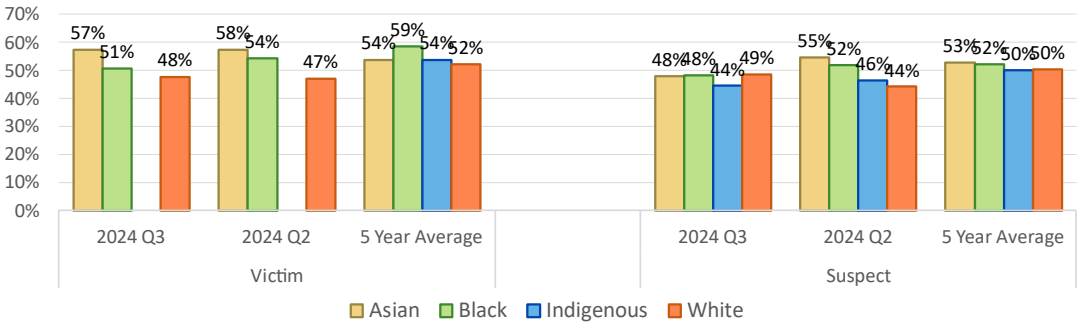
Incoming Referrals by Race for Victims and Suspects



Proportion of Incoming Referrals by Race for Victims/Suspects



Decline Rates by Race for Victims and Suspects



Tables

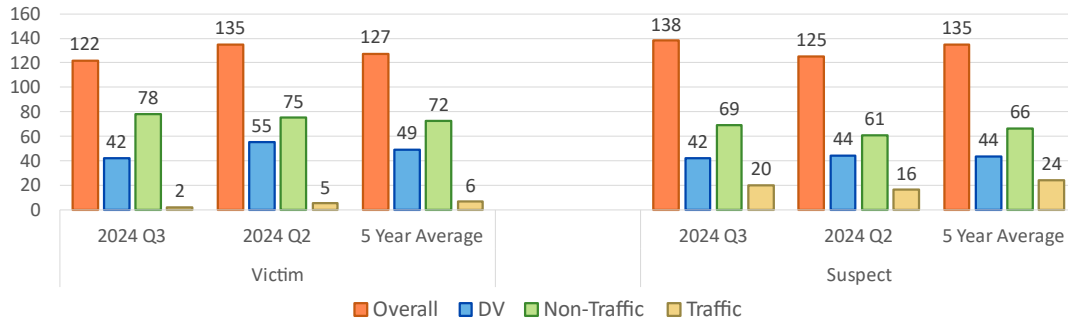
These tables provide the information on the next several pages in a condensed form. Blank sections refer to data that has too small of a sample size to be relevant.

Referrals by Race													
		Q3 2024				5-year Average				Change			
		Overall	DV	Non-Traffic	Traffic	Overall	DV	Non-Traffic	Traffic	Overall	DV	Non-Traffic	Traffic
Asian	Victims	122	42	78	2	127	49	72	6	-4%	-14%	8%	-
	Suspects	138	42	69	20	135	44	66	24	2%	-4%	4%	-
Black	Victims	456	241	203	12	422	228	182	12	8%	6%	11%	-
	Suspects	914	278	523	84	909	271	517	115	1%	2%	1%	-27%
Indigenous	Victims	31	23	8	0	28	18	9	0	-	-	-	-
	Suspects	67	17	44	1	60	16	39	4	12%	-	13%	-
White	Victims	912	369	516	26	987	408	544	35	-8%	-10%	-5%	-
	Suspects	1290	330	718	167	1344	351	773	205	-4%	-6%	-7%	-19%

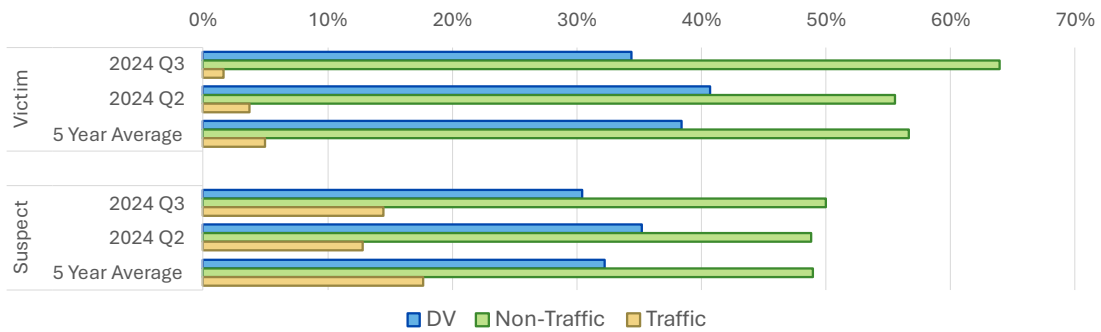
Decline Rates by Race													
		Q3 2024				5-year Average				Change			
		Overall	DV	Non-Traffic	Traffic	Overall	DV	Non-Traffic	Traffic	Overall	DV	Non-Traffic	Traffic
Asian	Victims	57%	73%	49%	-	54%	67%	48%	20%	4%	6%	1%	-
	Suspects	48%	62%	37%	-	53%	67%	49%	38%	-5%	-6%	-12%	-
Black	Victims	51%	65%	35%	-	59%	68%	50%	19%	-8%	-2%	-16%	-
	Suspects	48%	62%	38%	58%	52%	65%	48%	41%	-4%	-3%	-9%	17%
Indigenous	Victims	-	-	-	-	54%	59%	45%	-	-	-	-	-
	Suspects	44%	-	-	-	50%	70%	44%	-	-6%	-	-	-
White	Victims	48%	67%	36%	-	52%	64%	45%	22%	-5%	3%	-10%	-
	Suspects	49%	65%	39%	33%	50%	66%	48%	32%	-2%	-1%	-9%	2%

Final Dispositions by Race											
		Q3 2024			5 Year Average			Change			
		% Guilty Pleas	% Jury Trials w/ Findings	% Found Guilty	% Guilty Pleas	% Jury Trials w/ Findings	% Found Guilty	% Guilty Pleas	% Jury Trials w/ Findings	% Found Guilty	
Asian	Victims	-	0%	-	-	1%	-	-	-1%	-	
	Suspects	-	-	-	50%	5%	-	-	-	-	
Black	Victims	-	0%	-	33%	2%	60%	-	-2%	-	
	Suspects	-	44%	-	53%	5%	56%	-	40%	-	
Indigenous	Victims	-	-	-	-	3%	-	-	-	-	
	Suspects	-	-	-	-	6%	-	-	-	-	
White	Victims	-	0%	-	40%	2%	67%	-	-2%	-	
	Suspects	-	900%	100%	56%	5%	74%	-	895%	26%	

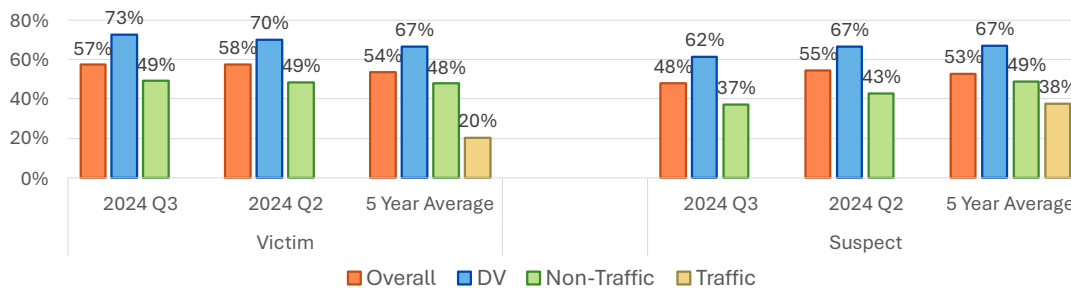
Referrals by Category Involving Asian Victims and Suspects



Crime Type Proportions for Asian Victims and Suspects

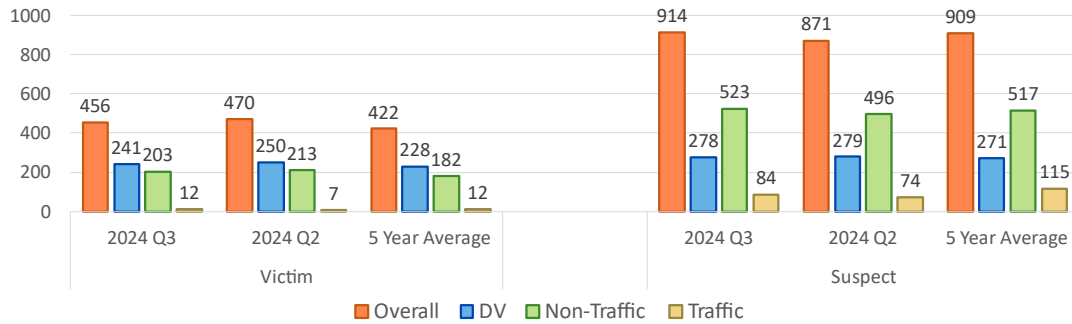


Decline Rates for Referrals Involving Asian Victims and Suspects

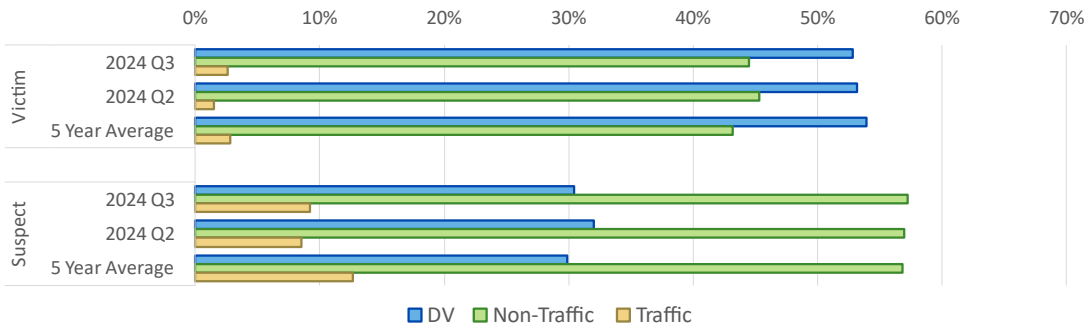


Black

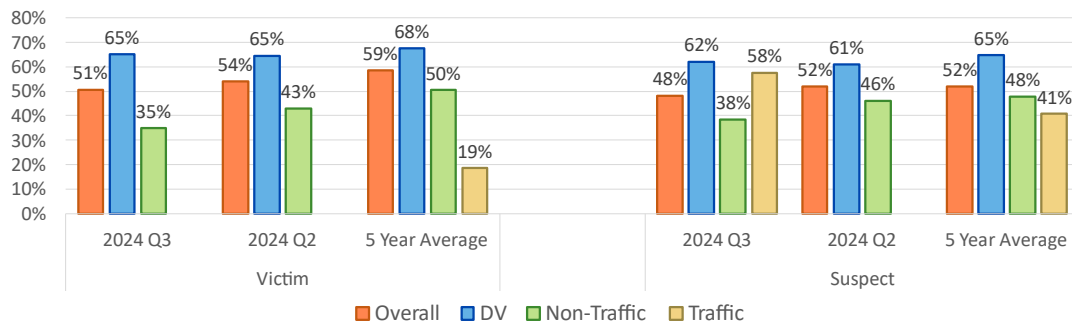
Referrals by Category Involving Black Victims and Suspects



Crime Type Proportions for Black Victims and Suspects

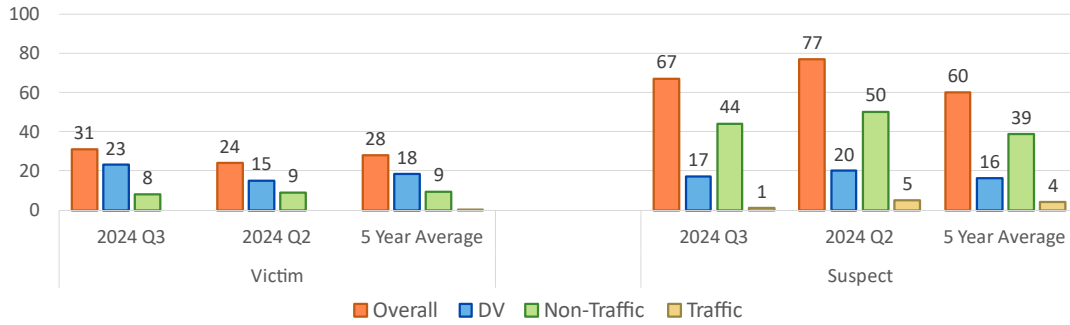


Decline Rates for Referrals Involving Black Victims and Suspects

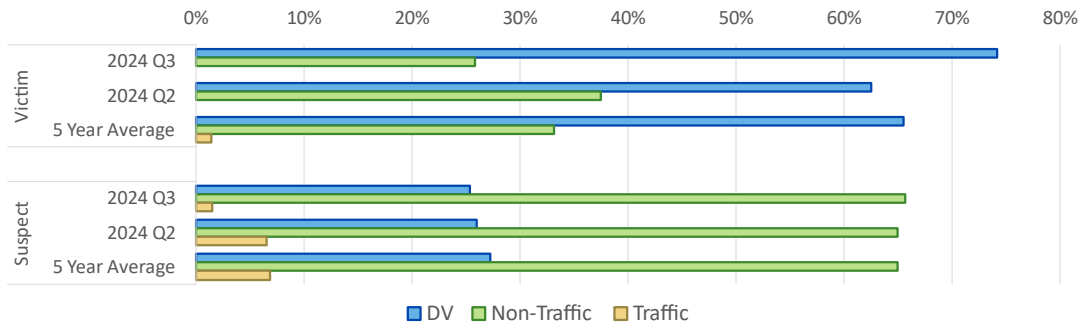


Indigenous

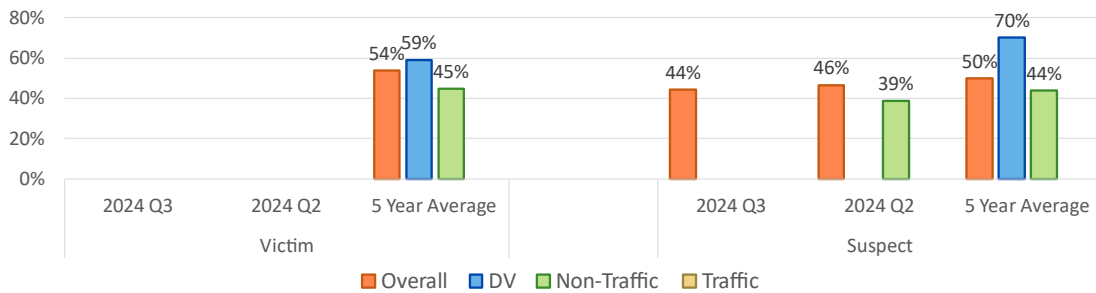
Referrals by Category Involving Indigenous Victims and Suspects



Crime Type Proportions for Indigenous Victims and Suspects



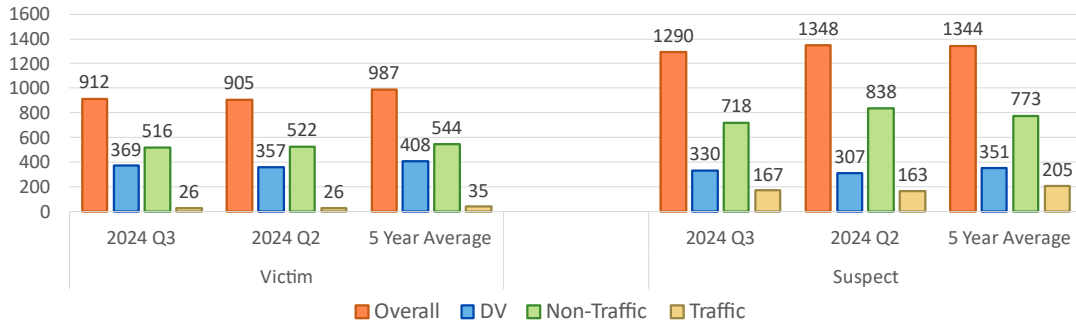
Decline Rates for Referrals Involving Indigenous Victims and Suspects



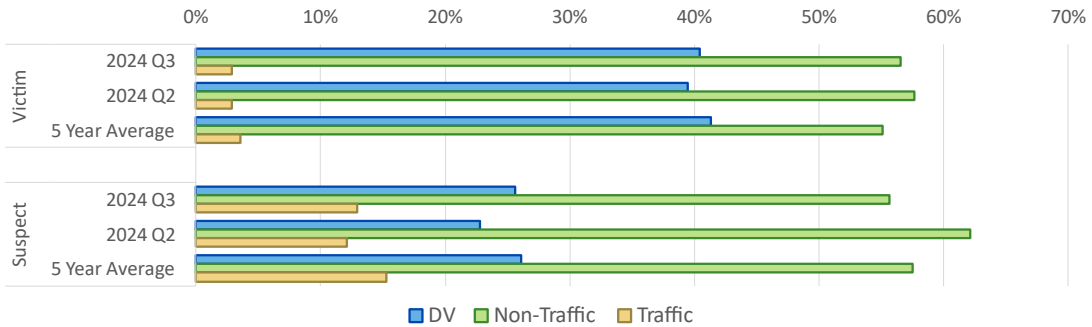
Other than overall rates, there were too few Indigenous victims and suspects that had filed or declined referrals for any meaningful decline rates in Q1 2024 or Q4 2023.

White

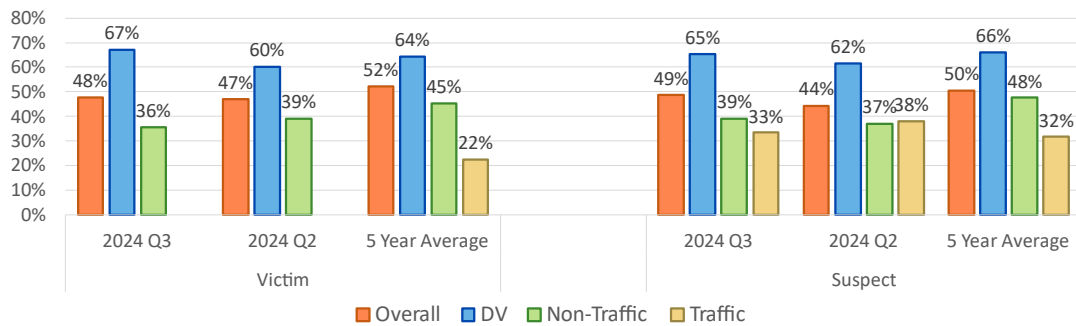
Referrals by Category Involving White Victims and Suspects



Crime Type Proportions for White Victims and Suspects



Decline Rates for Referrals Involving White Victims and Suspects



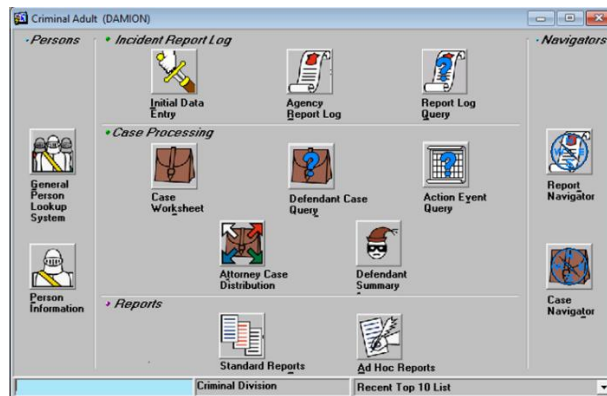
Policy Changes

There were no significant policy changes in Q3 2024.

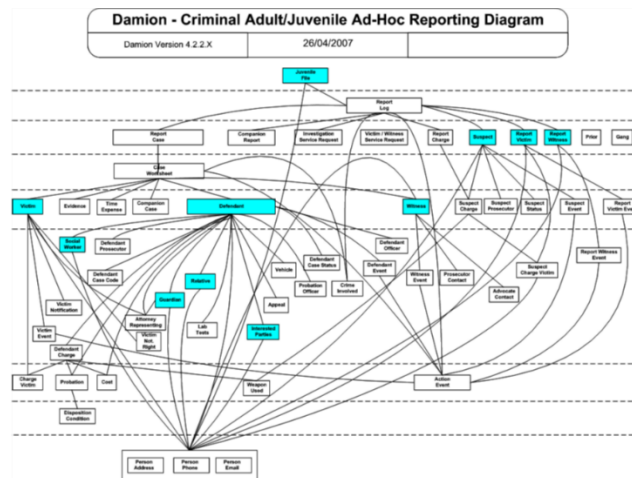
Reporting Challenges

DAMION

The criminal case management system currently used by the City Attorney’s Office is the District Attorney Management Information Office Network (DAMION.) It is very complex and archaic. It was introduced at a similar time to the idea of Windows, and it still reflects its time origination by using icons from contemporary video games. Below is what the program looks like.



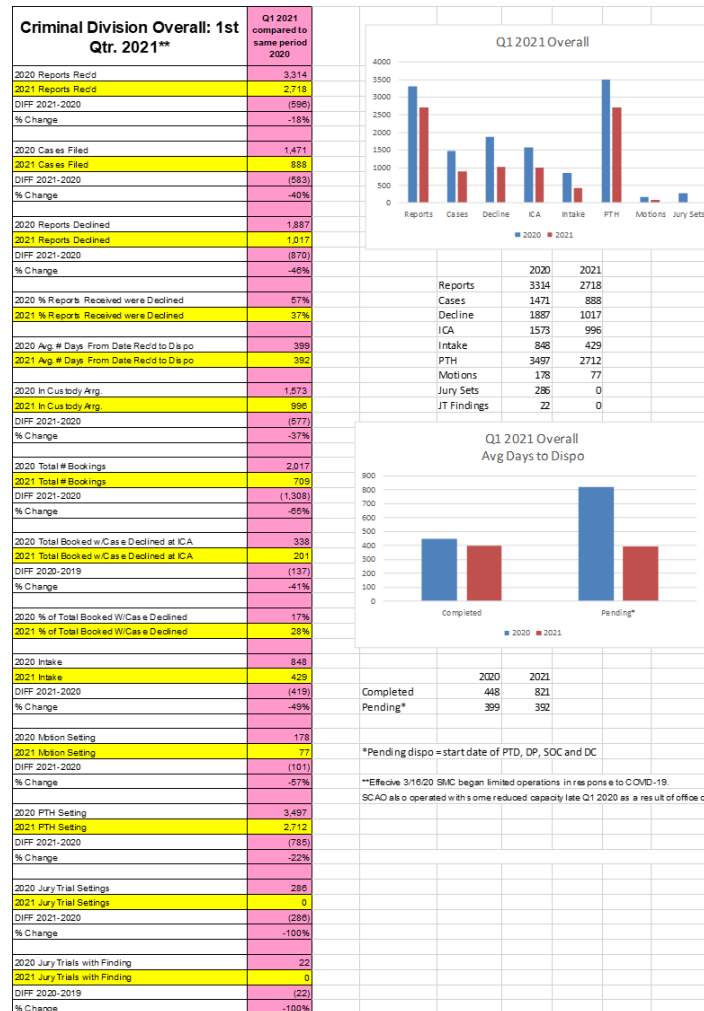
The database that is housed within DAMION uses a hierarchical relationship model which means that data from different sections can only be viewed together if they have a direct link and are not on the same level. For instance, it is not possible to view information from the Victim and Suspect sections at the same time. Extracting any sort of aggregate data from the database requires writing a custom “Ad Hoc Report.” Below is a visual map of the data within the DAMION database.



The City Attorney’s Office has been aware of data issues with DAMION and has been trying to replace it for 5 years. After a lengthy RFP process, the city settled on Justice Nexus and has spent millions of dollars over the past three years working on a new system. That process is still ongoing.

Prior Versions of the SPAR

The Statistics of Prosecution & Analysis Report (SPAR) was coded decades ago to query the DAMION database and return a digital “ticker tape” of values. It was not created to handle any form of demographics that are now required by council ordinance, nor does it look at historical context. Prior reports relied on copying this information into an excel sheet to display that period’s data alongside the previous period’s data. Below is an example of this report as it was delivered in years past.



Because the data in the department contains relatively high variability between quarters, a comparison to just one other period does not provide contextually accurate information to policy makers. It also lacked analysis to describe potential causes for high variance from previous periods in most instances or descriptions that would benefit readers from the general public.

The reports also contained information on outcomes provided by a companion query program. This was also copied into a spreadsheet most quarters and it showed counts of 20 “favorable” outcomes, 7 “unfavorable” and 2 others. An example is shown at the start of the following page.

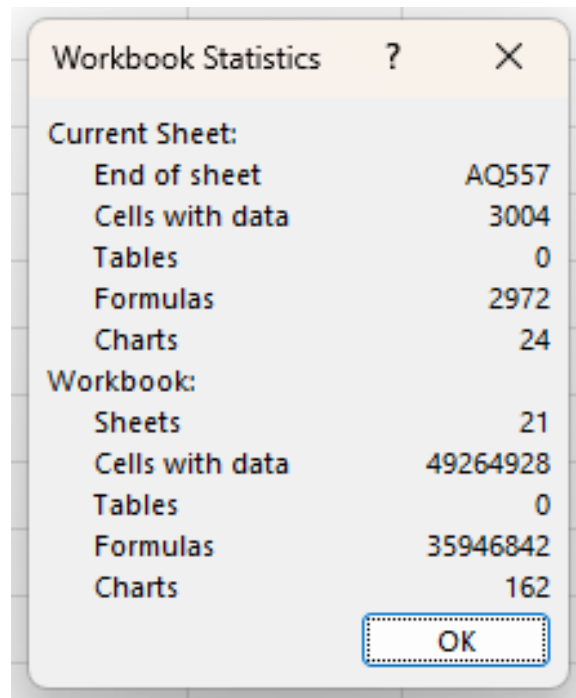
OUTCOME MEASURES SUMMARY REPORT					
2019		2019		2018	
JANUARY - SEPT (FAVORABLE)		JANUARY - SEPT (FAVORABLE)		JANUARY - DECEMBER (FAVORABLE)	
Count	Description	Count	Description	Count	Description
122	Deferred Prosecution	116	Deferred Prosecution	158	Deferred Prosecution
10	Dismiss - Prison	21	Dismiss - Prison	25	Dismiss - Prison
126	Dismiss DP - Successful	136	Dismiss DP - Successful	176	Dismiss DP - Successful
46	Dismiss Pre-Trial Diversion	40	Dismiss Pre-Trial Diversion	75	Dismiss Pre-Trial Diversion
481	Dismiss- Dispo. Cont. Successful	437	Dismiss- Dispo. Cont. Successful	583	Dismiss- Dispo. Cont. Successful
171	Dismiss-SOC successful	151	Dismiss-SOC successful	193	Dismiss-SOC successful
1,596	Dismissed - Negotiated Plea	1,680	Dismissed - Negotiated Plea	2,146	Dismissed - Negotiated Plea
40	First Time Offender DWLS*	1	First Time Offender DWLS*	2	First Time Offender DWLS*
56	Dispositional Continuance - Red.	67	Dispositional Continuance - Red.	94	Dispositional Continuance - Red.
415	Dispositional Continuance	478	Dispositional Continuance	547	Dispositional Continuance
28	FG - Unsuccessful DP	16	FG - Unsuccessful DP	28	FG - Unsuccessful DP
2	FG - Unsuccessful DC	6	FG - Unsuccessful DC	8	FG - Unsuccessful DC
6	FG - Unsuccessful PTD	9	FG - Unsuccessful PTD	12	FG - Unsuccessful PTD
171	FG - Unsuccessful SOC	24	FG - Unsuccessful SOC	26	FG - Unsuccessful SOC
120	Found Guilty	89	Found Guilty	107	Found Guilty
2,262	Plead Guilty	2,579	Plead Guilty	3,173	Plead Guilty
437	Plead Guilty Reduced	312	Plead Guilty Reduced	388	Plead Guilty Reduced
21	Pre-Trial Diversion	38	Pre-Trial Diversion	31	Pre-Trial Diversion
181	Stipulated Order of Cont.	169	Stipulated Order of Cont.	258	Stipulated Order of Cont.
41	Dismissed - Felony Filing	47	Dismissed - Felony Filing	66	Dismissed - Felony Filing
6,325	Total Favorable	6,456	Total Favorable	8,091	Total Favorable
JANUARY - SEPT 2019 Unfavorable		JANUARY - SEPT 2018 Unfavorable		JANUARY - DECEMBER 2018 Unfavorable	
58	Dismissed Proof Problem	63	Dismissed Proof Problem	771	Dismissed Proof Problem
888	Dismissed - No Civilian Witness	731	Dismissed - No Civilian Witness	866	Dismissed - No Civilian Witness
6	Dismissed - No Non-Civilian	2	Dismissed - No Non-Civilian	2	Dismissed - No Non-Civilian
0	Hung Jury	0	Hung Jury	0	Hung Jury
136	Not Guilty	95	Not Guilty	68	Not Guilty
0	Stricken	0	Stricken	0	Stricken
0	Reduced Charge - No Officer	0	Reduced Charge - No Officer	0	Reduced Charge - No Officer
1,604	Total Unfavorable	1,427	Total Unfavorable	1,807	Total Unfavorable
3	Dismissed - Court Error	3	Dismissed - Court Error	3	Dismissed - Court Error
420	Dismissed - Age	11	Dismissed - Age	11	Dismissed - Age
Summary		Summary		Summary	
JANUARY - SEPT 2019		JANUARY - SEPT 2018		JANUARY - DECEMBER 2018	
7,929	Total Dispositions	7,885	Total Dispositions	9,898	Total Dispositions
80%	Favorable Dispositions	82%	Favorable Dispositions	82%	Favorable Dispositions
20%	Unfavorable Dispositions	18%	Unfavorable Dispositions	18%	Unfavorable Dispositions

While this example provides context of the entire previous year, it is for a different timeframe, so it is difficult to use the data for comparison. The graphic below also points out that sometimes the data can vary wildly from report to report. The two examples side by side are from Q2 and Q3 of 2021. One states that 2020 had zero cases dismissed due to no civilian witness and the other has over 1000 listed.

2021 Q2 Report		2021 Q3 Report	
2020		2020	
JANUARY - DECEMBER (FAVORABLE)		JANUARY - DECEMBER (FAVORABLE)	
Count	Description	Count	Description
73	Deferred Prosecution	137	Deferred Prosecution
12	Dismiss - Prison	13	Dismiss - Prison
101	Dismiss DP - Successful	144	Dismiss DP - Successful
5	Dismiss Pre-Trial Diversion	53	Dismiss Pre-Trial Diversion
204	Dismiss- Dispo. Cont. Successful	576	Dismiss- Dispo. Cont. Successful
127	Dismiss-SOC successful	199	Dismiss-SOC successful
786	Dismissed - Negotiated Plea	1,970	Dismissed - Negotiated Plea
81	First Time Offender DWLS	53	First Time Offender DWLS
22	Dispositional Continuance - Red.	69	Dispositional Continuance - Red.
169	Dispositional Continuance	449	Dispositional Continuance
8	FG - Unsuccessful DP	32	FG - Unsuccessful DP
4	FG - Unsuccessful DC	2	FG - Unsuccessful DC
1	FG - Unsuccessful PTD	6	FG - Unsuccessful PTD
15	FG - Unsuccessful SOC	42	FG - Unsuccessful SOC
48	Found Guilty	140	Found Guilty
1016	Plead Guilty	2,753	Plead Guilty
171	Plead Guilty Reduced	622	Plead Guilty Reduced
5	Pre-Trial Diversion	25	Pre-Trial Diversion
132	Stipulated Order of Cont.	216	Stipulated Order of Cont.
57	Dismissed - Felony Filing	47	Dismissed - Felony Filing
3,037	Total Favorable	7,548	Total Favorable
JANUARY - DECEMBER 2020 Unfavorable		JANUARY - DECEMBER 2020 Unfavorable	
518	Dismissed Proof Problem	690	Dismissed Proof Problem
0	Dismissed - No Civilian Witness	1022	Dismissed - No Civilian Witness
0	Dismissed - No Non-Civilian	10	Dismissed - No Non-Civilian
0	Hung Jury	0	Hung Jury
14	Not Guilty	138	Not Guilty
0	Stricken	0	Stricken
0	Reduced Charge - No Officer	0	Reduced Charge - No Officer
532	Total Unfavorable	1,860	Total Unfavorable
0	Dismissed - Court Error	3	Dismissed - Court Error
40	Dismissed - Age	432	Dismissed - Age
Summary		Summary	
JANUARY - DECEMBER 2020		JANUARY - DECEMBER 2020	
3,569	Total Dispositions	9,408	Total Dispositions
85%	Favorable Dispositions	80%	Favorable Dispositions
15%	Unfavorable Dispositions	20%	Unfavorable Dispositions

Case Management System Limitations

To overcome the limitations of the DAMION criminal case management system, the City Attorney's Office's Data and Transparency Team built a program that recreates the relevant sections of the DAMION database then runs analysis on that data. This should expedite the release of future reports while DAMION is still in use. This program continues to evolve to include additional functionality and now has nearly 36 million formulas spread across 21 sheets. Below is a screenshot of the number of calculations it requires to stitch the disparate sections of the DAMION database together and pull-out useful information:



Data Caveats

DAMION

Running the same report on different days can yield slightly different results as an automatic process can update a field. While specific values might change on the margins, overall data is consistent with itself and none of the marginal changes are enough to influence important trends or statistics.

Decline Rates

Decline Rates in this report are generally based on the quarter in which the referral was received.

Small Sample Sizes

Many categories, especially within demographic breakdowns represent very small quantities of data and are not useful for comparison or statistical analysis. For example, if there is one person that fits a set of criteria, then a decline rate can only be 0% or 100%. Similarly, a single event can have an unusably strong effect on the data. Even a sample of 20 that adds another data point will sway the aggregate by nearly 5%. Often, areas of data with too low of a sample size are not included.

Alternatives to Traditional Prosecution

The nature of alternatives is that they are very individualized and come in many forms. For this reason, it is difficult to compare one to the other and one person can be involved in many or none. In general, the information in this report refers to individuals who have successfully completed alternatives and not people who have not been successful.

Final Dispositions

Final Dispositions were changed to reflect cases instead of charges in Q3 2023.

Communication with the Seattle Municipal Court

The new court case management system that went online in March of 2024 broke many of the automated data communications and has caused a lot of manual work. This may lead to errors and has made the determination of final dispositions much more complicated.