

King County, Washington

THE COST

of Gun Violence

THE DIRECT COST TO TAXPAYERS

King County, Washington, includes 39 cities, towns, and unincorporated areas. Within King County, 90% of county firearm incidents occur in Auburn, Des Moines, Federal Way, Kent, Renton, Seattle, and Tukwila.¹ Seattle experiences the largest proportion of gun violence, with 49% of county incidents occurring in the city last year.

King County is home to 2.27 million residents, 755,078 of whom live in Seattle.² The county population is 62.7% White, 22.2% Asian, 11.1% Latino, and 7.4% Black—a similar demographic makeup to the City of Seattle. Des Moines, Federal Way, Kent, Renton, and Tukwila all have larger Black populations (8.4%–17.4%). These five cities and Auburn also have larger Latino populations (14.8%–22.2%). Renton and Tukwila also have larger Asian populations than the county as a whole (26.2% and 24.4%, respectively).

Seattle had the ninth highest cost of living in the US in 2023.³ Wages are also fairly high in the city and county, with the most recent median household income for both at over \$116,000 annually. Median household income in the other cities experiencing elevated rates of gun violence ranged from \$76,331 (Tukwila) to \$92,292 (Renton). Notably, Tukwila also has the largest proportion of residents living in poverty (13.3%), and each of the largest cities, excluding Auburn and

Renton, have a higher proportion of individuals living in poverty (10.5–13.3%) than the county as a whole (8.5%).

Prior to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, fatal shootings in King County were decreasing, with 57 victims in 2017 and 49 in 2019. However, firearm homicides increased 81% from 2019 to 2020, from 49 to 69 homicide victims, followed by an additional 28% increase to 88 victims in 2021. Nonfatal firearm injuries steadily increased during that same period, going from 183 in 2017 to 372 in 2021, for an increase of 103%. In 2022, the county saw a slight dip in the number of firearm homicide victims (6%) and nonfatal shooting victims (4%) relative to 2021, but 2023 saw a 29% increase in firearm homicides and 6% increase in nonfatal shootings.⁴

When someone is shot in King County, there is an immediate, multifaceted, and very expensive response from an array of government agencies. The Fire Department dispatches Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs); government-contracted ambulances respond; and, depending on the city or area of the shooting, one or more of several local law enforcement agencies' units descend on the scene.⁵ Investigators from the King County Prosecuting Attorney's Office (PAO) also often arrive, and if the victim is declared dead on the scene, the Coroner

is called. All of this is only for the shooting scene itself. For a surviving victim, there is also typically a hospitalization, which is frequently paid for by tax dollars. Rehabilitation follows in the case of serious injury, and victim compensation is generally provided. There is also often a lengthy investigation by a local law enforcement agency, such as Seattle Police Department (SPD), the King County Sheriff's Office, or one of the many other city-specific law enforcement agencies in King County, along with the PAO, who is sometimes joined by the US Attorney. A trial and a long incarceration period frequently follow. When there are multiple victims and/or suspects, these efforts and costs multiply for a single shooting incident. These are just some of the costs of each shooting in King County.

The National Institute for Criminal Justice Reform (NICJR) was commissioned by the King County Regional Office of Gun Violence Prevention (ROGVP), with private philanthropic contributions in coordination with the Center for Children & Youth Justice, to conduct this detailed analysis that documents the government expenses accompanying every fatal or nonfatal shooting in King County. In tracking the direct and indirect costs per shooting incident, NICJR has used averaged or weighted figures for each expense and aired on the side of utilizing more conservative estimates. This means that the calculated cost of **\$1,927,422** for a fatal shooting in King County is a conservative estimate; the real cost is likely even higher.

1. [King County gun violence data \(2017-2023\)](#)

2. [US Census Bureau Quick Facts: King County, Washington](#)

3. [The 15 US cities with the highest cost of living—San Francisco isn't No. 1](#)

4. [King County gun violence data: 2017-2023 Q4 reports](#)

5. The Seattle Police Department and the King County Sheriff's Office (which provides local law enforcement services for a number of cities and for unincorporated areas) are the two largest law enforcement agencies in the county, together accounting for the majority of shooting responses and investigations. For this reason, this analysis only includes crime scene response and investigation data from these two agencies and extrapolates their costs to the full county.



When a shooting suspect is a juvenile, costs associated with a shooting incident may differ. Youth who are arrested are detained in different facilities, cases process through the delinquency system faster than they would the criminal justice system, corrections sanctions are often shorter, and programming during and after incarceration is more common. Additionally, the financial impact that could result in increased eligibility for social service programs for their families is lower since youth are not the main financial contributors for their families. With these differences, the cost of a fatal shooting incident involving a juvenile suspect is **\$789,684**. However, according to Seattle Police Department offense data, only 6% of known fatal shooting suspects and 2% of known nonfatal shooting suspects were under 18 years old in 2022 and 2023. Suspects in both fatal and nonfatal shootings were most often 18–34 years old, with the average age of known suspects being 34 for fatal shootings and 31 for nonfatal shootings.

In the past three years, King County has averaged approximately **93 fatal shootings** and **366 nonfatal shootings** annually. At this rate, each year of shootings will ultimately **cost taxpayers more than \$353 million**, with both immediate costs such as crime scene response and longer-term costs such as lost tax revenue and long-term incarceration. If King County could reduce its gun violence rate by just 20%, that could result in government **savings of more than \$70 million** for every year of shootings.

There are also additional costs that are not reflected in this report but represent significant expenses for the City of Seattle and King County. In 2021, Harborview Hospital launched their Hospital-Based and Community-Linked Violence Intervention program, to provide direct support for and interventions with individuals with gunshot injuries and their families. This program, which is co-funded by Public Health – Seattle & King County, The City of Seattle, and the State of Washington, uses an evidence-informed model

to reduce retaliatory violence, while providing people with a range of supportive services while they heal.⁶

King County residents also have access to the Harborview Abuse and Trauma Center (HATC), which includes a dedicated trauma therapist who works with individuals impacted by gun violence, including family and community members. In 2023, the Center served 146 King County residents through this program and provided 1,540.5 hours of assessment, advocacy, and therapy services.⁷ With city and county grants and counseling services revenue totalling \$2.2 million for the Center, and 26% of center clients being impacted by gun violence, more than \$550,000 went toward these services.⁸ In 2024, the Seattle City Council approved \$1.8 million to install more closed-circuit television (CCTV) and real-time crime center (RTCC) technologies in the city.⁹ These investments in expensive technologies and community mental healthcare to react to gun violence is in addition to the calculated cost of gun violence presented in this report.

King County has recently taken important steps toward increased safety and well-being for all residents. In 2023, the County established the Regional Office of Gun Violence Prevention (ROGVP), which aims to take a public health approach to gun violence and implement a gun violence reduction strategy with the support of community-based organizations across the region.¹⁰ Focusing on violence intervention, violence prevention, and community transformation, the ROGVP's proactive approach stands to have a major impact on gun violence countywide.

6. [King County Hospital-based and Community-Linked Intervention](#)

7. Harborview Medical Center Interview

8. [Harborview Abuse and Trauma Center \(HATC\) 2023 Annual Report](#)

9. [Mayor Harrel Announces Crime Prevention Technology Pilot Next Steps Following Public Input](#)

10. [King County launches office dedicated to preventing gun violence](#)

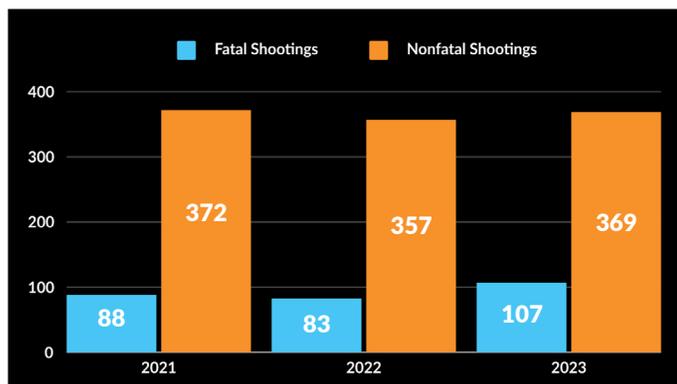
Population:

2,271,380



Police Force: 1,395¹¹

Fatal and Nonfatal Shootings from 2021-2023



Homicide Clearance Rates^{12,13}

2023	26%
2022	41%
2021	32%

11. [Seattle Police Department: Department Fact Sheet, Law Enforcement Crime Data Explorer: 2023](#); as noted previously, this analysis only includes data from SPD and KCSO, which are the largest law enforcement agencies in the county and respond to the majority of shootings.

12. Throughout the report, "fatal shootings" and "homicides" are not used synonymously. "Fatal shootings" refers to shooting incidents resulting in the death of the victim; "homicides" refers to all homicides in general.

13. [Crime in Washington Archive Folder: 2021 and 2022 Annual Reports; Crime in Washington 2023 Annual Report](#)



The Greater **COMMUNITY COST** of Gun Violence

There are significant community costs of gun violence beyond the costs included in NICJR's calculations. In addition to the direct financial burden borne by taxpayers, areas with high rates of gun violence experience the loss of community resources and decreases in property values. Businesses, community events, and other vital resources often flee from violent neighborhoods. Further, a study by the Controller for the City of Philadelphia examining the economic impact of gun violence on property values found that "a single homicide lowers sale prices by 2.3 percent in the immediate neighborhood (within 0.75 miles of the homicide)."¹⁴

An increase in shootings, especially in a concentrated geographic area and timeframe, means greater trauma and more strained resources, which in turn makes each process that touches gun violence more expensive. Healthcare and other direct service workers in the field are subject to vicarious trauma in seeing and treating the aftermath of gun violence. These professionals experience physical and mental health impacts that result in additional healthcare costs and loss of productivity. Similarly, the stress and emotional toll of the work leads to high rates of turnover among criminal justice agencies such as prosecuting and public defense offices. Each time an attorney position turns over, all of the assigned cases must be reassigned, resulting in longer case times and more costs per case.

"The public health approach to violence shows that, like disease, violence is a contagion that can breed in areas of social dysfunction."

Community members in neighborhoods where rates of violence are highest also bear the burden of community tension and trauma. The normalization, or even expectation of violence can lead to high rates of gun possession and the resolving of minor disputes with gun violence. The public health approach to violence shows that, like disease, violence is a contagion that can breed in areas of social dysfunction. In "The Contagious Spread of Violence Among US Adolescents Through Social Networks," the National Institutes of Health found that "Contagious diseases and violence tend to cluster in similar ways... There are geographic 'hot spots' for contagious diseases, such as the 2015 measles outbreak linked to Disneyland in California involving clusters of unvaccinated children. Likewise, there are geographic hot spots for violent crime on specific streets and in specific neighborhoods."¹⁵

Finally, children are especially impacted by violence around them. Experiencing violence, witnessing violence, and having close friends or family members victimized by violence produces trauma and vicarious trauma. In the 1990s, the groundbreaking

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) study by the Centers for Disease Control and Kaiser Permanente revealed that children who have traumatic experiences when they are young have significantly higher rates of poor health outcomes as they age.^{16,17} Additional studies have proven that the experience of trauma negatively impacts the brain function of young people and can cause depression, behavioral challenges, academic disruption, and delinquency.



"Trauma negatively impacts the brain function of young people and can cause depression, behavioral challenges, academic disruption, and delinquency."

14. [Report on the Economic Impact of Homicides](#)

15. [The Contagious Spread of Violence Among US Adolescents Through Social Networks](#)

16. [Relationship of Childhood Abuse and Household Dysfunction to Many of the Leading Causes of Death in Adults](#)

17. While the CDC-Kaiser ACEs study is not available to the public, information about the study may be found [here](#).

COST BREAKDOWN

King County Washington



CRIME SCENE RESPONSE

The crime scene response to a fatal shooting or severe nonfatal shooting typically includes a heavy police presence, EMT staff, and medical transport staff. The Seattle Police Department, which responds to many of the shootings in King County, deploys 12 officers, including patrol, homicide unit personnel, and other supervisory-level officers, to respond to a typical fatal shooting.



MEDICAL

Once a victim has been transported to the hospital, the costs of treatment in an emergency department trauma unit, surgery, inpatient stay, and rehabilitation are exorbitant. With a little more than 40% of gunshot victims either uninsured or on Medicaid, these costs represent a tremendous strain on King County's hospital network. Harborview Medical Center is the only Level 1 trauma center servicing Washington, Alaska, Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming, meaning this strain on resources impacts individuals far beyond King County.



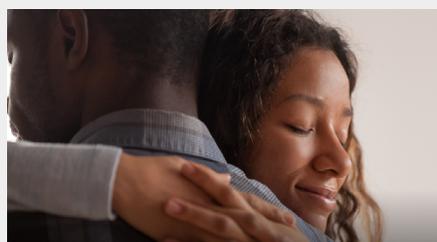
CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Justice system costs include police investigation, prosecution and defense attorneys, forensic analysis, court personnel and judges, and the use of court facilities. Due to the consequences of a homicide conviction, these cases go to trial more often than other types of cases. Sometimes these cases involve multiple suspects with multiple court dates and separate trials. From the time of arrest, court proceedings in fatal or nonfatal shooting cases average about two years.



CORRECTIONS

Incarceration accounts for a large portion of the costs once a suspect is arrested. A stay in the King County jail system costs an average of \$32,036 for the pretrial incarceration period for a fatal shooting. Some suspects are released from the local jail and supervised through pretrial release, at a cost of \$89 for nonfatal shootings. Following a trial, an inmate is incarcerated within the Washington State prison system at an average cost of \$31,016 for those convicted of attempted murder or aggravated assault and \$483,671 for those convicted of homicide. A prison sentence may be followed by a period of parole, which may last for the rest of the individual's life following a fatal shooting, at a cost of \$98,935.



VICTIM SUPPORT & SOCIAL SERVICES

Many victim support costs are covered by the Washington State Crime Victim Compensation Program. On average, families of homicide victims and surviving victims of nonfatal shootings receive \$7,154 and \$246 (respectively) in compensation to cover costs such as burial expenses, medical expenses, and counseling. Since the victim and suspect may be major financial contributors to their households, many families may need to apply for social services support after their family member is incarcerated, injured, or deceased. Including costs such as Social Security benefits and social services for the families of each victim and arrested suspect increases the total cost for victim support and social services to \$503,596 for a fatal shooting.



LOST TAX REVENUE

King County and Seattle have a combined sales and use tax of 10.53%. Federal taxes use a marginal tax rate up to 12% for median income families and FICA and Social Security taxes use a flat combined rate of 15.3%. When a fatal or nonfatal shooting occurs, both income and sales tax cannot be collected from the incarcerated individual(s) or fatal shooting victim(s), and taxes collected from nonfatal shooting victims may be reduced or stopped for a time. Each incident can often represent lost tax revenue from a minimum of two individuals for more than 30 years.

THE COST PER SHOOTING

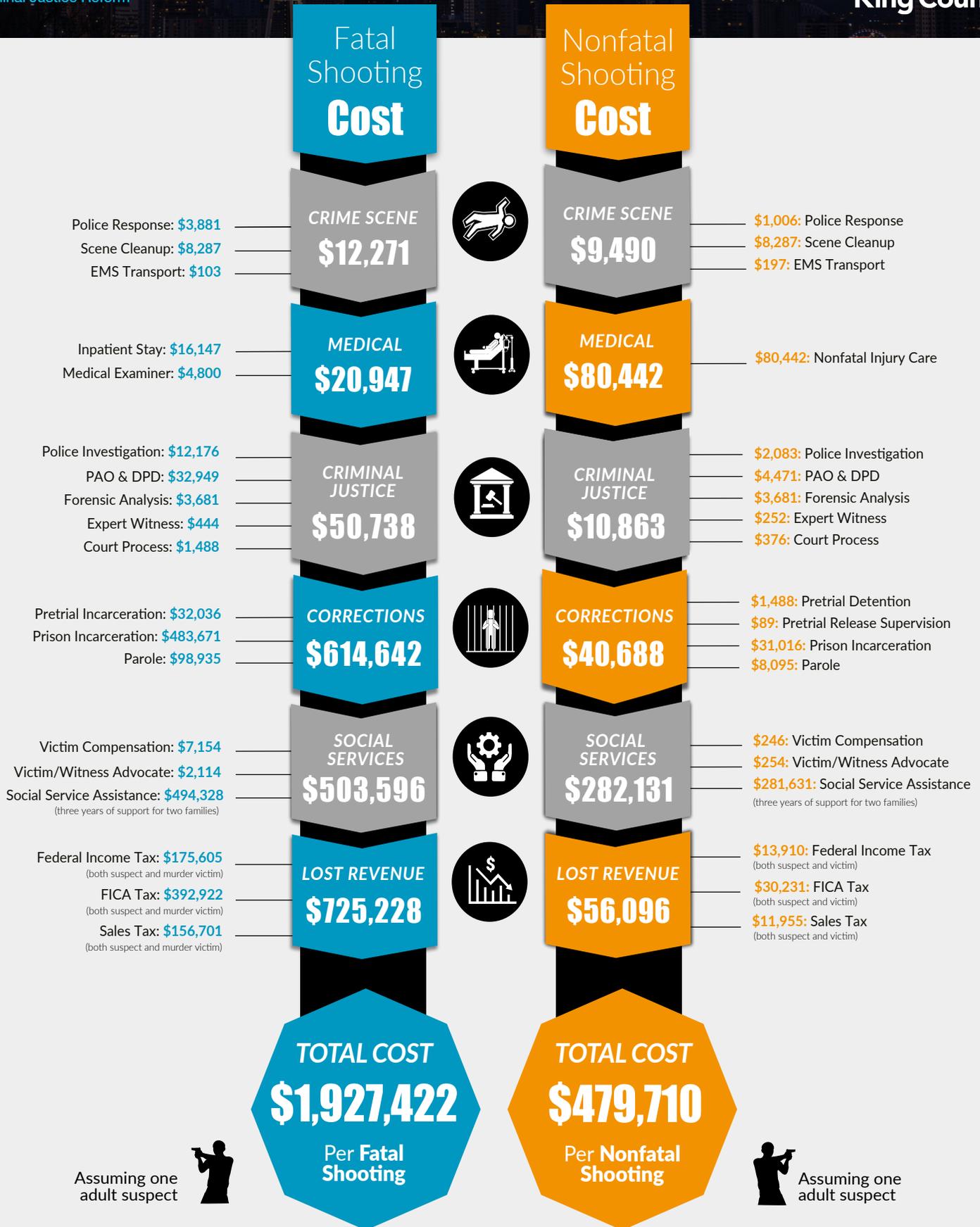
The governmental cost of gun violence to the City, County, and State



ADULT SUSPECT



King County



Assuming one adult suspect



Assuming one adult suspect

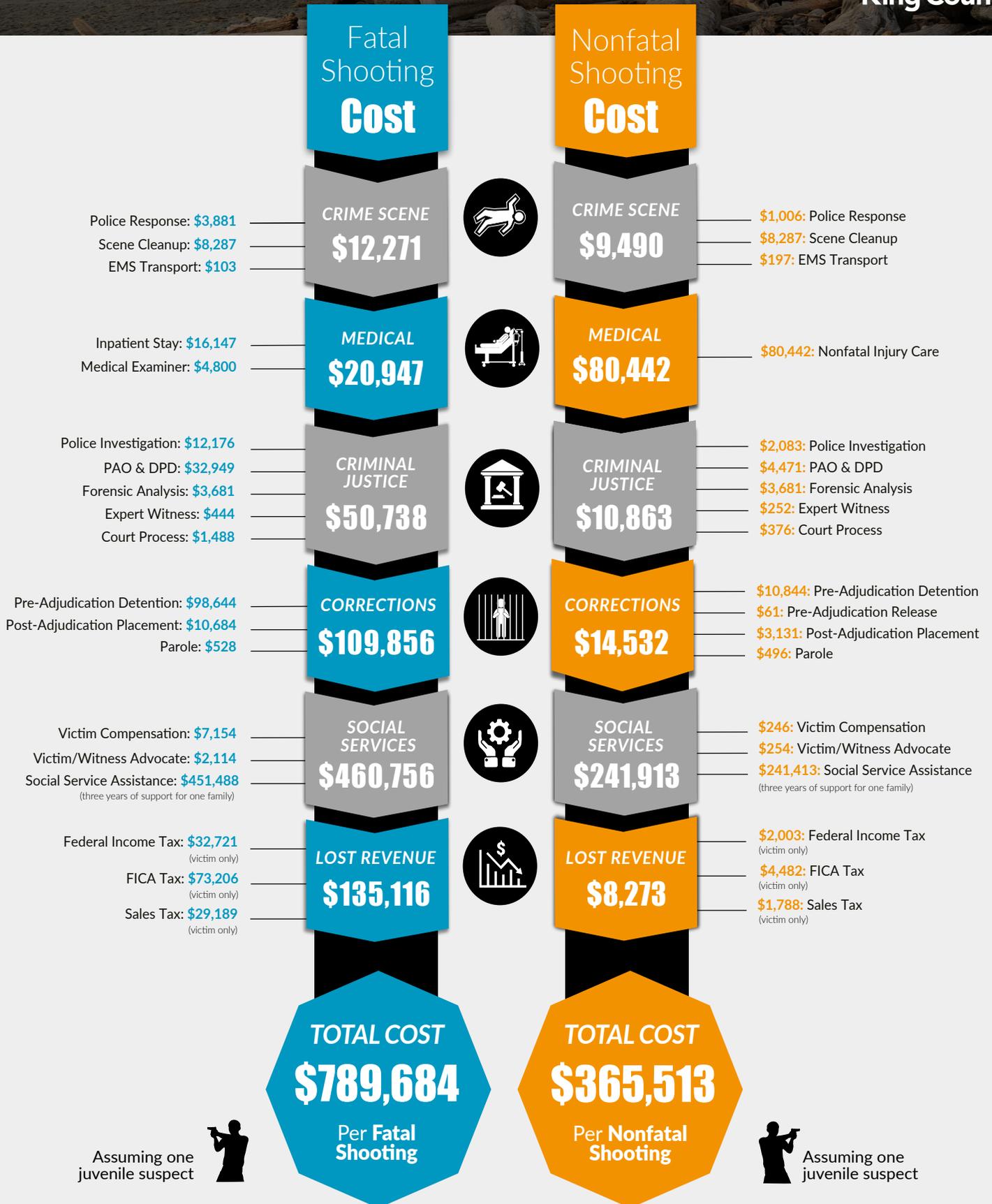
THE COST PER SHOOTING

The governmental cost of gun violence to the City, County, and State



King County

JUVENILE SUSPECT



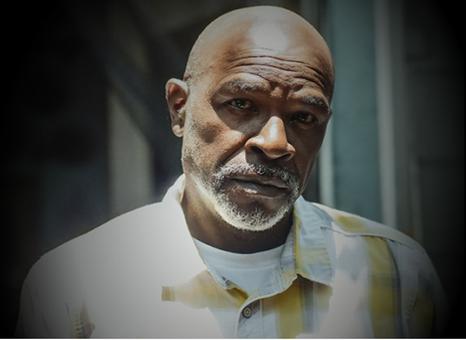
Assuming one juvenile suspect



Assuming one juvenile suspect

CLOSE UP

Following the Trajectory of One Shooting in King County¹⁸



In 2019, a 29-year-old man was shot multiple times on his way to a soccer game. The victim was mistakenly targeted in an attempt to gain revenge for a shooting a year prior that he had not been involved in. The victim died on the scene. Following the shooting, at least 21 officers, deputies, detectives, and sergeants responded to the scene and pursued an investigation. During this time, police received physical evidence including shell casings, canvassed for security cameras, and reviewed footage. Detectives spent the next three days surveilling, speaking with witnesses, and ultimately arresting the suspect and his girlfriend; however, charges against the girlfriend were dropped. A cost of \$19,570 for crime scene response and investigation.¹⁹

After the arrest, the suspect spent 1,276 days in a King County jail. Because it costs King County's adult jails \$120 per day to house an individual, this amounts to a total cost of \$153,120. The investigation continued during this time. This included an autopsy, at a cost of \$4,800; forensic analysis, at a cost of \$3,681; and PAO and Department of Public Defense (DPD) investigation, for a combined estimated cost of \$11,490. Mitigation specialists in the DPD likely worked with the defendant to help him receive a just sentence, and victim/witness advocates worked to help the victim's family understand the system and advocate for their wishes, at a cost of \$16,329.

While the suspect was incarcerated in a county jail, the case moved through the criminal justice system. The case involved 20 orders for continuance, each requiring the presence of a judge, bailiff, clerk, prosecutor, and defense attorney for hearings that lasted fewer than 10 minutes, according to minutes documents. Additionally, the case required five motion hearings, each lasting less than one hour but requiring the presence of a judge,

bailiff, clerk, one or two prosecutors, one or two defense attorneys, and sometimes one or two additional attorneys representing witnesses in the case. The estimated total cost in courtroom time was \$1,876. This does not include hours spent by attorneys and administrative staff outside of the courtroom; each hour of work by attorneys is an additional combined \$157, and each hour of administrative work is an additional \$176.

After almost three years, the case went to trial. In fact, it went to trial twice, with the first resulting in a mistrial. The first trial took 25 days, including eight days for jury selection and another eight for deliberation. The trial required the presence of a judge, bailiff, court clerk, court interpreter, prosecuting and defense attorneys, a jury, and witnesses, including police and a medical examiner. The first trial cost \$74,745 just in courtroom time. The trial also included expert testimony, resulting in a total cost of at least \$1,750 in addition to payment of witness expenses at \$1,028 and jury daily pay totaling \$3,750.²⁰ With similar expenses, the second trial cost an additional \$64,575. Both trials combined cost \$145,848. Five years later, the case is now in the appeals process.

At the end of the second trial, in a 70-minute sentencing hearing costing \$571, the suspect was sentenced to 480 months of incarceration and 36 months of parole. It costs the State of Washington \$69,260 per year to house an individual in the Washington State Penitentiary.²¹ This means that over the next 40 years, it will cost the State more than \$2,770,400 to incarcerate the suspect in this case.²² At \$50 per day, the 36 months of parole following incarceration represent an additional \$54,000 spent to supervise the suspect in the community. These dollars have been earmarked for this purpose 40 years in advance.

In addition to these costs, there are losses of tax revenue and increased spending for social services resulting from this case. The victim was reported to be working more than full-time hours as a gas station clerk. Ziprecruiter estimates an income of \$19 per hour for this role.²³ At 60 hours per week, this amounts to an estimated annual income of \$59,280. The victim would have paid approximately \$3,378 in federal income taxes in 2024.^{24,25} Given the victim's age in 2019 (29) and the federal retirement age of 67, more than \$128,348 in federal tax revenue will be lost as a result of this death—without accounting for inflation, salary increase, or tax rate increase. The victim would have also paid \$4,535 in FICA taxes in 2023, representing further tax revenue loss of approximately \$172,330 over 38 years. It is unknown what income the suspect may have had and what he would have paid in federal income or FICA taxes. It is also unknown exactly how much victim compensation was provided to the victim's family; however, on average, families receive \$7,154 in victim compensation in Washington State following a homicide.

This firearm homicide case, which involved a mistaken identity and was sparked by revenge for a noninjury shooting a year prior, resulted in the loss of a community member, a 40-year prison sentence, and an economic impact of \$3,492,895 (a conservative estimate) for crime scene response, investigation, victim services, two trials, and corrections costs, with additional costs continuing to accrue even five years later. Had the suspect in this case received violence interruption services after his own shooting victimization in 2018, more than 3.5 million taxpayer dollars could have been used to reinvest in the community, and two men may have been alive and free today.

18. All case study information is sourced from publicly available court records unless otherwise noted.

19. This cost is calculated using King County Sheriff's Office salaries, average time officers of various rank spend responding to and investigating a fatal shooting, and the number of officers involved in the case based upon court records.

20. Expert witness court documents are sealed by law and not publicly available; there are likely additional expert witness costs.

21. [FY2022 Cost per incarcerated individual per day – all institution costs](#)

22. Incarceration and supervision calculations do not account for inflation or for variance costs in Department of Corrections operations over 40 years.

23. [Gas Station Clerk Salary](#)

24. [Federal income tax rates and brackets](#)

25. [IRS provides tax inflation adjustments for tax year 2024](#)

Arrest, Charge, and Conviction Rates

Sources: [Data Dashboard - Prosecuting Attorney's Office](#), [Fewer than 1% of federal criminal defendants were acquitted in 2022](#), [Crime in Washington 2021 Annual Report](#), [Crime in Washington 2022 Annual Report](#), [Crime in Washington 2023 Annual Report](#), [Statistical Report on Juvenile Offenses](#)

Notes: Arrest, charge, and conviction rates are used to determine the approximate likelihood of various costs occurring related to an incident, to approximate an "average" or weighted cost per expense (including incidents for which some costs are \$0). For example, while all shootings are assumed to involve an initial police response and investigation, only incidents in which a suspect is arrested and charged require prosecution, defense, and court costs.

Arrest rates are calculated using data published in the annual state crime report for the last three years. Charging rates and disposition rates are sourced from the Prosecuting Attorney's Office data dashboard. Juvenile charge and adjudication rates are not available by charge type, but do reflect only crimes against persons or involving a weapon. Exact conviction data are not available, but plea and trial frequencies are. The majority of cases ended in a plea, and national trial conviction data are used to estimate the number of trials that ended in a conviction.

Police Response

Sources: [King County 2023–2024 Biennial Budget](#), Seattle Police Department internal data, [King County Current Pay Rates Report](#) (obtained March 2024)

Notes: The Seattle Police Department provided computer-assisted dispatch (CAD) data, which are used to calculate the number of personnel by rank who typically respond to a shooting crime scene and the average number of hours each individual spends on scene. Pay rates, including benefits, for the Seattle Police Department and King County Sheriff's Office are averaged together since either department may respond to a shooting incident in the county. To determine total cost, these averaged pay rates are multiplied by the average number of hours on scene. This results in a cost of **\$3,881** for fatal shootings and **\$1,006** for nonfatal shootings.

EMS Transport

Sources: [Data dashboard: The impact of firearms in King County](#), [Ambulance Transportation Billing Guide](#) (see 2023 Fee Schedules), King County Public Health Department internal data, [Patterns in Location of Death From Firearm Injury in the US](#)

Notes: Washington State Medicaid reimbursement rates are used to estimate the cost for medical transport following a shooting incident. Using a 2023 peer-reviewed study, the proportion of individuals not classified as deceased at the scene is used to weigh the cost of Advanced Life Support (ALS) ambulance rides for fatal shootings. The Public Health Firearm Dashboard reports frequency of ambulance transport by severity. For nonfatal shootings, these frequencies are used to weigh the cost of ALS, Basic Life Support Services (BLS), and EMS response with no transportation because the victim did not accept or require transport. Mileage costs are calculated using an average distance between 2023 shooting incident locations and Harborview Medical Center, as provided by the Public Health Department, and added to the base ambulance cost. For fatal shootings this was **\$103**; for nonfatal shootings this was **\$197**. The average cost is higher for nonfatal shootings because victims in nonfatal shootings are more likely to need ambulance services.

Scene Cleanup

Sources: Public Records Request: All 2023 payments made to Pacific Northwest Bio Washington LLC

Notes: A public data request for all payments made to Pacific Northwest Bio Washington LLC, which is contracted by King County to provide biohazard cleanup services for crime scenes, showed the average payment made in 2023 was **\$8,287**.

Hospital Care

Sources: [2023 Hospital Census and Charges](#), [CHARS Public File 2023](#), [Harborview Medical Center Charge Estimator](#), [Hospital Uncompensated Care and Medicaid Shortfall Following Affordable Care Act](#), [Data dashboard: The impact of firearms in King County](#)

Notes: The cost for medical care following a shooting is calculated primarily using data from the Washington Comprehensive Hospital Abstract Report System (CHARS) 2023 publicly available dataset. Only data for patients with a firearm-related external cause of injury (ecode) are used. This dataset only includes inpatient stay information; emergency department and observation stays are not included. To convert hospital charges (the amount billed to a patient or insurance) to hospital costs (the amount spent by the hospital to render care), charges are multiplied by a ten-year average hospital cost-to-charge ratio for Washington State.

For fatal shootings, the average charge to patients with a discharge status indicating a fatality is multiplied by the cost-to-charge ratio and weighted by the percentage of fatal shootings in which the victim did not die on scene based on national data. This amounts to **\$16,147** in medical costs for a fatal shooting. For nonfatal shootings, hospital charges are weighted according to the frequency of three levels of injury severity indicated by the Public Health Firearm Dashboard: low, moderate, and severe. Severity for each case is categorized by EMS.

DATA SOURCES CONTINUED

King County
Washington

Medical

Hospital Care Continued

Low severity injuries include Emergency Department visit charges, which are drawn from the Harborview Medical Center Charge Estimator. These are weighted by the frequency of low severity injuries and the cost-to-charge ratio. Moderate severity is calculated using average charges from CHARS data for discharge statuses not indicating significant rehabilitation needs (discharge to home, discharge against medical advice, etc.). These are weighted by the frequency of moderate injuries and the cost-to-charge ratio. Finally, severe injuries are calculated using the average charge from CHARS data for discharge statuses with significant rehabilitation needs (long term care hospital, skilled nursing facility, etc.) plus the average charge for a stay in the Harborview Medical Center Rehabilitation Unit (for any condition/injury) according to hospital census data.

This sum is weighted by the frequency of severe injuries and the cost-to-charge ratio. The cost of each of these weighted categories is combined, for an average nonfatal shooting medical cost of **\$80,442**.

Medical Examiner's Office

Sources: [Medical Examiner: Reports and data](#), [King County 2023–2024 Biennial Budget](#)

Notes: Average cost of a medical examiner case is calculated by dividing the 2023 King County Medical Examiner's budget by the number of cases handled by the Office according to the Medical Examiner Data Dashboard. This was **\$4,800**. Only fatal shooting cases require medical examiner services.

Police Investigation

Sources: [King County 2023–2024 Biennial Budget](#), Seattle Police Department internal data, [City of Seattle 2023 Adopted and 2024 Endorsed budgets](#), [Allocation of Personnel: Investigations](#)

Notes: The cost of police investigation is calculated by multiplying the average amount of time spent investigating a fatal or nonfatal shooting based upon national data by the average salary and benefits for detectives in the Seattle Police Department and King County Sheriff's Office. This was **\$12,176** for fatal shootings and **\$2,083** for nonfatal shootings.

Prosecuting Attorney's Office and Department of Public Defense

Sources: [King County 2023–2024 Biennial Budget](#), King County Department of Public Defense interview, [King County Current Pay Rates Report](#) (obtained March 2024), [NCSC Workload Assessment Study: North Carolina](#), [NCSC Workload Assessment Study: New Mexico](#)

Notes: The cost of prosecution and defense is calculated by multiplying the average salary and benefits by the average amount of time spent by attorneys, investigators, and support staff working on a fatal or nonfatal shooting case. For each King County position, including prosecuting attorneys, public defense attorneys, paralegals, legal secretaries, mitigation specialists, investigators, and forensic interviewers, salaries for each compensation step are averaged to estimate the average position hourly rate from publicly available salary data. For each position, hourly salary and benefits are combined and multiplied by the national average of time spent per homicide and violent felony case. These costs are weighted by arrest and charging rates for homicides and aggravated assaults. This results in a total of **\$32,949** for fatal shooting cases and **\$4,471** for nonfatal shooting cases.

Forensic Analysis

Sources: [Washington State Patrol: Agency Activity Inventory](#), [2023 Washington State Patrol Annual Report](#)

Notes: Average cost per case is calculated by dividing the 2023 Washington State Crime Laboratory budget by the number of cases processed, according to the Washington State Patrol Annual Report. This cost is **\$3,681**.

Expert Witness Consultation

Sources: [2021 Survey of Expert Witness Fees](#), King County Department of Public Defense interview, [Data Dashboard - Prosecuting Attorney's Office](#)

Notes: Expert witness costs are calculated by multiplying national average expert witness fees (for specific specialties and services) by the typical number and type of witnesses contracted for a case as specified by the Department of Public Defense. This most often includes a forensic science expert and firearms and ballistics expert. For each of these experts, the cost of trial testimony was multiplied by the frequency with which homicide and violent felony cases go to trial according to the Prosecuting Attorney Office's data dashboard. This weighted trial rate is then added to the cost of case review and depositions, for a total of **\$444** for fatal shooting cases and **\$252** for nonfatal shooting cases.

Criminal Justice

DATA SOURCES CONTINUED

Court Process

Sources: [King County Current Pay Rates Report](#) (obtained March 2024), [King County 2023–2024 Biennial Budget](#), [NCSC Workload Assessment Study: Missouri Court Clerk](#), [NCSC Workload Assessment Study: Missouri Judicial](#), [NCSC Workload Assessment Study: Minnesota](#), [Judicial Council of California Workload Assessment Study](#)

Notes: The cost to the court system is calculated by multiplying King County hourly salaries including benefits by the average time spent by judges and court staff working on a fatal or nonfatal shooting case according to national judicial workload assessments. This is weighted by arrest and charging rate, for a total of **\$1,488** for fatal shooting cases and **\$376** for nonfatal shooting cases.

Pretrial Incarceration

Sources: [2023 Washington State Jail Statistics](#), [King County Department of Adult and Juvenile Detention: Detention and Alternatives Reports](#), [King County Superior Court Criminal Department Statistical Report](#)

Notes: The cost of pretrial incarceration is calculated using the daily cost of incarceration in King County jails according to 2023 Washington State Jail Statistics. This cost is then weighted by the arrest rate for fatal and nonfatal shootings. The 2023 King County Superior Court statistical report includes the average length of a case from filing to disposition. For fatal shootings, it is assumed a suspect will remain incarcerated until sentencing. For nonfatal shootings, suspects are assumed to be released, and the average length of stay in King County jails from the King County Detention and Alternatives report is used as an estimate of detention time. This results in a total of **\$32,036** for fatal shooting cases and **\$1,488** for nonfatal shooting cases, for incidents with an adult suspect

Pretrial Release Supervision

Sources: [City of Seattle contract search portal: Executed contract with Sentinel Offender Services LLC](#), [King County Superior Court Criminal Department Statistical Report](#)

Notes: Daily cost of pretrial supervision is calculated using city contracts with Sentinel Offender Services, which indicate the City's cost responsibility. Not included in the calculated costs are the fees the supervised individual is responsible for, which range from \$3–\$20 daily. The length of supervision is calculated using the average time from case filing to disposition minus time spent in pretrial incarceration. This cost is then weighted by the arrest rate for nonfatal shootings. Individuals arrested in fatal shooting incidents are assumed to remain in pretrial detention through case resolution and therefore do not incur pretrial release supervision costs. For nonfatal shootings with an adult suspect, the calculated cost is **\$89**.

Incarceration: State Prison

Sources: [FY2022 Cost per Incarcerated Individual per Day -- All Institution Costs](#), [Statistical Summary of Adult Felony Sentencing](#)

Notes: The cost of state incarceration is calculated using the daily cost of incarceration according to the Washington Department of Corrections for the most recent year (2022) and the average sentence for a fatal or nonfatal shooting in the state per Washington State adult felony sentencing statistics. Time spent in pretrial incarceration and 10% of the average sentence are subtracted from the average sentence to account for time served and earned time reductions. This cost is then weighted by the arrest rate, charging rate, and conviction rate for fatal and nonfatal shooting, respectively. This results in a total of **\$483,671** for fatal shooting cases and **\$31,016** for nonfatal shooting cases, for incidents with an adult suspect. These costs account for the total anticipated time the individual will remain incarcerated; they do not account for inflation or increased costs of incarceration.

Parole Supervision

Sources: [Adult Community Supervision: Data](#), [RCW 9.94A.030](#), King County Department of Public Defense interview, [US Health Map](#), [Washington State Budget: Senate Bill 5187](#)

Notes: The State of Washington does not utilize discretionary parole for charges after 1984. Individuals may be sentenced to a period of incarceration followed by a period of parole depending on the charge. Average daily costs are calculated by dividing the total community corrections budget by the total community corrections average daily population (ADP). For fatal shootings, which typically result in parole supervision for life following incarceration, the length of supervision is calculated using the national average age of arrest for shooting incidents (according to previous NICJR Gun Violence Assessment reports), average prison sentence, and average life expectancy. For nonfatal shootings, statutory mandates are used to estimate parole time. As with incarceration costs, parole costs are weighted by arrest, charge, and conviction rates. This results in a total of **\$98,935** for fatal shooting cases and **\$8,095** for nonfatal shooting cases, for incidents with an adult suspect.

Pre-Adjudication Detention

Sources: [King County Department of Adult and Juvenile Detention: Detention and Alternatives Reports](#), Public Records Request: 2023 CCFJC budget, [King County Superior Court Statistical Report on Juvenile Offenses](#)

Notes: The daily cost of juvenile pre-adjudication detention is calculated by dividing the 2023 Clark Children and Family Justice Center (CCFJC) budget by the ADP. For fatal shootings, this cost is multiplied by the average length of a homicide case for juveniles according to the King County Report on Juvenile Offenses. For nonfatal shootings, the average daily cost is multiplied by the average length of stay for the King County juvenile facility per the King County Detention and Alternatives Reports. This cost is then multiplied by arrest rates, for a total of **\$98,644** for fatal shooting cases and **\$10,844** for nonfatal shooting cases, for incidents with one juvenile suspect.

Pre-Adjudication Release

Sources: [City of Seattle contract search portal: Executed contract with Sentinel Offender Services LLC](#), [King County Superior Court Statistical Report on Juvenile Offenders](#)

Notes: The daily cost of pre-adjudication supervision is calculated using city contracts, which indicate the City's cost responsibility. Not included in these costs are the fees the supervised individual is responsible for, which range from \$3-\$20 daily. The length of supervision is calculated using the average time from case filing to disposition. This cost is then weighted by the arrest rate for fatal and nonfatal shootings to account for incidents in which an arrest is not made. This results in a total of **\$61** for nonfatal shooting cases, for incidents with one juvenile suspect.

Post-Adjudication Placement: State Juvenile Facility

Sources: [Sticker Shock 2020: The Cost of Youth Incarceration](#), [Juvenile Disposition Summary Fiscal Year 2023](#)

Notes: The daily cost to house a juvenile in the state juvenile facility is estimated using a 2020 report from the Justice Policy Institute, as this information was not available for 2023 from the State of Washington. The average sentences for fatal and nonfatal shootings are sourced from the Juvenile Disposition Summary. Time spent in pretrial incarceration and 10% of the sentence is subtracted from the average sentence to account for time served and earned time. These costs were then multiplied by arrest, charging, and conviction rates for juveniles. This results in a total of **\$10,684** for fatal shooting cases and **\$3,131** for nonfatal shooting cases, for incidents with one juvenile suspect.

Juvenile Rehabilitation: Functional Family Parole

Sources: [Functional Family Probation and Parole \(FFP\) for court-involved/post-release youth](#)

Notes: Current data for cost per day or average daily population are not available. Total program cost is sourced from the most recent program cost-benefit analysis. This program cost is weighted by arrest, charging, and conviction rates. This results in a total of **\$528** for fatal shooting cases and **\$496** for nonfatal shooting cases, for cases with one juvenile suspect.



Victims Compensation

Sources: [FY 2023 Victim Compensation Formula Grant Program Annual Performance Measures Report](#), [FY 2022 Victim Compensation Formula Grant Program Annual Performance Measures Report](#), [Crime in Washington 2022 Annual Report](#), [NCSC Workload Assessment Study: North Carolina](#), [NCSC Workload Assessment Study: New Mexico](#)

Notes: Victim compensation costs are calculated by dividing the total amount of victim compensation paid out by the State for homicides by the total number of homicides in the state that same year. The same calculation is carried out for assaults. This produces an average payout amount for all incidents, including incidents that do not result in victim compensation payment due to ineligibilities unrelated to costs. Most recent available complete annual data were for 2022.

This is combined with costs associated with victim/witness assistance services housed within the Prosecuting Attorney's Office, which are calculated using salary and benefits multiplied by the average hours spent on a case by victim advocates. This results in a total of **\$9,268** for fatal shooting cases and **\$500** for nonfatal shooting cases.

Social Service Assistance

Sources: [US Department of Agriculture Fiscal Year 2024 Cost-of-Living Adjustments](#), [Temporary Assistance for Needy Families](#), [How Much in Disability Benefits Can You Get From Social Security?](#), [The Welfare Rules Database](#), [FY2024 Fair Market Rents Documentation System](#), [Fair Market Rents](#), [Income Limits](#), [Medicaid Spending per Enrollee](#), [Medicaid Eligibility for Washington Parents and Caretakers](#), [King County gun violence data: 2017-2023 Q4 reports](#)

Notes: Estimated household incomes prior to the shooting incident are based on median income for Black families in King County using US Census Bureau data. The Black household median income is used to reflect individuals most at risk for gun violence as shown in King County Gun Violence Data. Estimated household incomes following the shooting incident are based on income limits for social services. We intentionally use an income estimate at the top end of these guidelines to remain consistent with our conservative estimate approach. Support services are calculated for a three-year period, consistent with the average time families receive support. Included social services are: Washington Basic Food (SNAP), Washington Workfirst (TANF), HUD, Medicaid, SSDI, and Social Security Survivor benefits. All program costs were calculated using mathematical formulas documented by each program, and using figures specific to Washington State and King County whenever applicable. Support services for adult suspects' families are weighted by arrest rates.

These calculations resulted in a total of **\$494,328** for fatal shooting cases and **\$281,631** for nonfatal shooting cases, for incidents with an adult suspect. Costs to support suspect families are not added to cases involving juvenile suspects. For incidents with one juvenile suspect, the social service assistance cost for a fatal shooting is **\$451,488**, and the cost for a nonfatal shooting is **\$241,413**.

Lost Tax Revenue

Sources: [Local sales & use tax rates and changes](#), [Federal income tax rates and brackets](#), [IRS provides tax inflation adjustments for tax year 2024](#), [What Happens When States Ditch Income Tax for Sales Tax?](#), [All about the FICA tax](#), [US Census Bureau: King County Median Income](#)

Notes: When an individual is incarcerated, deceased, or disabled following a shooting, their family income often changes significantly. This means their family pays less in local sales, federal income, and FICA taxes. Estimated household incomes prior to the shooting incident are based on median income for Black families using US Census Bureau data. The Black household median income is used to reflect individuals most at risk for gun violence. Estimated household incomes following the shooting incident are based upon income limits for social services. We intentionally use an income estimate at the top end of these guidelines to remain consistent with our conservative estimate approach. The percentage of income used to calculate contribution to local taxes is based upon National Conference of State Legislatures data. This percentage is higher for lower-income families, which is reflected in this calculation. Federal income taxes are calculated using the standard deduction to determine taxable income and 2024 marginal tax brackets.

The total tax revenue loss for a case with an adult suspect is **\$725,228** for fatal shootings; for nonfatal shootings it is **\$56,096**.

In cases involving a juvenile suspect, only loss of tax revenue for victims is included since youth generally do not pay taxes and spend less time incarcerated. For juvenile cases, lost revenue is **\$135,116** for a fatal shooting and **\$8,273** for a nonfatal shooting.