



**Pierce County
Washington**

2019 Accomplishments

Assessor-Treasurer

The Assessor-Treasurer's Office successfully revalued over 330,000 residential and commercial properties in 2019, plus 11,000 personal property accounts. Residential properties increased in value from the previous year by a countywide average of 7.5%. Commercial property values increased by an average of 16.2%.

In keeping with the department motto, "Better Every Day," the Office continues to implement new technology and improved processes. Four major software upgrades were underway in 2019: the online Assessor-Treasurer's Information Portal, RealWare version 5 for mass appraisal, DCS Mobile for data entry in the field, and Open Text document management for many processes and records within our office.

Appraisers working in the field conducted Physical Inspection of properties in approximately one-sixth of Pierce County, completing residential property in Northeast Tacoma, Fife, Milton, Edgewood, Puyallup and Bonney Lake. Appraisers also investigated and responded to over 1,000 appeals of valuation filed with the Pierce County Board of Equalization.

An increased level of new construction, with a total taxable value of just over two billion dollars, was inspected and added to the total assessed value of Pierce County, which has now grown to the \$126 billion mark. Hundreds of property segregations were completed by our cartography team, resulting in new tax parcels for future development.

During 2019, the Assessor-Treasurer's Office billed and collected \$1,351,625,000 in property taxes, a slight reduction from the previous year. These taxes were distributed to School, Fire, Flood, Library and Park Districts, as well as Cities and Towns, Port of Tacoma, State of Washington, Sound Transit and Pierce County's General Fund and Road Fund.

Assigned Counsel

The Department of Assigned Counsel (DAC) attorneys continue to effectively represent indigent clients in multiple contexts.

Assigned Counsel's **Felony Unit** leadership and involvement in all phases of the planning and execution of the legal financial obligations remission day significantly contributed to the success of the event which served over 700 individuals and resulted in over \$2.1 million dollars in debt relief to those in our community rebuilding their lives. DAC staff continue this work and have established a uniform procedure to provide ongoing assistance to those seeking similar relief.

The **Civil Commitment/Involuntary Treatment Act Unit** handled an increase in case numbers over the prior year. Resources were provided to staff two higher level positions, and those attorneys subsequently represented significantly more clients in cases originating in felony level offenses dismissed in lieu of involuntary civil commitment.

Juvenile and Dependency Unit attorneys actively participated in stakeholder work groups implementing statutory changes affecting "status offenses," such as truancy, at-risk youth (ARY), and children in need of services (CHINS). Dependency attorneys created and implemented a contested shelter care policy that significantly reduces unnecessary delay. Proudly, former DAC juvenile lead attorney, Clarence Henderson, was appointed to the Superior Court bench as a Commissioner.

In addition to handling thousands of cases and hearings, the Assigned Counsel is committed to ongoing attorney legal education, training, and wellness. Monthly training includes Washington State Bar Association approved legal education offerings on legal issues, ethics, trauma, wellness, and personal safety. More than 450 staff and local defense attorneys attended 20 continuing education courses in 2019.

Individual attorneys and staff volunteer their time and talents to act in leadership roles in professional and charitable organizations addressing a myriad of subjects in our community including opioid use, mental health, hunger, homelessness, child wellness, school outreach, and mentoring. Assigned Counsel attorneys and support staff also continue to conduct a well-attended monthly volunteer legal clinic helping Pierce County citizens with landlord/tenant issues, wills, and other necessary medical and end of life documents. These efforts were recognized by Tacoma Pro Bono with Assigned Counsel staff and attorneys receiving five of the six annual awards presented.

Auditor

Elections

A new Statewide voter registration and election management system was launched in June 2018. Known as VoteWA, the system replaces the bottom-up system with a new top-down state system. VoteWA is used by all 39 counties, and is used to conduct voter registration, election management and ballot processing functions. Pierce County was heavily involved in the development, testing, data conversion, training, and implementation of this new software program.

A number of major legislative changes were implemented in 2019: Same day registration, automatic voter registration, and pre-registration of 16- and 17-year olds.

The Elections Division also executed several significant initiatives in 2019 to enhance and expand voter access and options.

- Points of Assistance - Pilot program with 27 libraries to provide help and assistance to voters on election day.
- Language translation of election materials for Spanish, Vietnamese and Korean.
- Mobile Voting pilot for Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act voters, to provide an alternative method of e-Ballot returns.

Ballot Drop boxes were rebranded and upgraded, and larger drop boxes in high volume areas were added. Currently, Pierce County has 45 boxes installed.

With the implementation of same day voter legislation in 2019, the volume of registered voters is now growing at a rate of about 18% a year. It is expected to be at 585,000 by year end 2019.

Recording

The Recording Division was honored as the 2019 Jurisdiction of the Year by Thomson Reuters for their work with Restrictive Covenant Modifications. The same project earned the Pierce County Standing Ovation Award, as well. With the passage of the 2018 legislation, homeowners can now record a Restrictive Covenant Modification (RCM).

The Division implemented new state established recording fees. This was a seamless transition with little delay to recordings. The fee change was communicated with all recording customers through social media, online, and mailed correspondence to the County's recording partners.

The Recorded Documents portion (3,872,139 images) was scanned for the "Backfile" project to image and index old records and upload them to the public access recording system. The remaining work to crop, deked, enhance, and index these images will begin in 2020. This includes daily recordings from 1969 to 1983, Deeds from books or film, and Mortgage and Miscellaneous Real Estate books.

The Recording Division made two significant system enhancements: 1) Customers are now able to order online certified copies; and 2) Customers who eRecord can now submit conveyance documents electronically that are exempt from the Real Estate Excise tax, which means that now all conveyance documents can be electronically processed.

Licensing

The Licensing Division executed a new contract with the Washington State Department of Licensing (DOL), which takes effect January 2020. The new agreement will dramatically change the audit requirements of our office, as DOL shifts its subagent compliance responsibilities entirely to County Auditors.

The Division worked closely with the Pierce County Sheriff's Department (PCSD) on improved business license compliance. Visits were made to all licensed secondhand dealers and pawnshops to ensure full reporting of all required purchases and sales of all qualifying merchandise using the PCSD reporting tool. The required background check process was also improved, streamlining the internal process for staff in both departments.

The Division continues to expand pet license agents. Three new agents were added, and this business model will continue to grow in the next year.

Clerk of the Superior Court

Pretrial Services has been chosen of one of five jurisdictions nationwide to participate as a Research Action Site as a part of Arnold Ventures' most comprehensive pretrial reform initiative: Advancing Pretrial Policy and Research (APPR) project. The project will span the next five years, include technical assistance and an independent research team assigned to Pierce County which will validate a pretrial screening for our local felony population, and evaluate evidence-based implementation changes to ensure social justice and community safety.

Pierce County's ***Trueblood* Diversion Program** has applied for and received an additional 18 months of funding through *Trueblood* contempt fines. The funding supports positions in the Pierce County Prosecutor's Office, the Clerk's Office, the Department of Assigned Counsel, and a case management team with Greater Lakes Mental Healthcare (which includes a clinical team lead, a mental health professional, a case manager, a certified peer, and a housing navigator) to screen persons with a history of or presenting with mental health issues as candidates for prosecutorial diversion and re-entry into the community with necessary services. The program is funded through February 28, 2021.

Communications

The Office of Communications strives to bring awareness and understanding to Pierce County residents. By providing important context, perspective and information, the Office engages, informs and involves members of the community in their government.

The County's main social media channels saw significant improvement in 2019. Facebook content reached 1.5 million people and generated nearly 64,000 clicks to digital content. The number of "likes" grew 36% over the last 10 months. Likewise, the number of Twitter followers grew 4% and generated 1.9 million impressions.

The County's main website continues to benefit from the upgrade to a mobile-responsive site. Mobile usage grew to 53% of all visits, up 2.5% since last year. Likewise, total visits to the site totaled more than 3.8 million over the last 10 months, a 2% increase from the same period in 2018.

Accomplishments for the year included the launch of and ongoing support for the County's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion initiative, the creation and development of a new Executive video blog series Inside Pierce County, the redesign of the Council's webpages, and support for the Strategic Alliance community work.

The Office developed and managed many vehicles for improving accessibility to elected officials, including the Executive's State of the County address, the Executive's blog, and Councilmember blogs. The Executive's blog had more than 51,470 views in the first 10 months of 2019, a 3% increase from the prior year. A series of videos hosted by County Councilmembers reached more than 75,000 people.

Integrated marketing campaigns supported the community outreach and groundbreaking of the Crisis Recovery Center, the Class and Compensation information campaign, the Public Employees' Benefits Board healthcare plan rollout, the 2020 Census, the Adult Family Caregivers marketing program, and a campaign to raise awareness of human trafficking.

PCTV (Pierce County Television) continues its video development and production focus on storytelling. The channel was nominated for 28 awards from the National Association of Telecommunications Officers (NATOA) in 2019 with notable awards including 2nd place for Overall Station Excellence (national Station of the Year) and first place in the Public Affairs category for the County Executive's Year in Review video.

The team also swept the Public Education category with video awards: 1st for the Courthouse Murals project at the County-City Building, 2nd for the Homeless Count Volunteers campaign, and 3rd for the Mobile Community Intervention Response Team (MCIRT) profile, along with several other awards and honorable mentions.

District Court

In March 2018, the Pierce County District **Court Resource Center (CRC)** opened its doors through a collaborative effort between the District Court, County departments, and service providers within the community. The CRC provides linkages to jail transition services, chemical dependency treatment, mental health services, Medicaid enrollment, public assistance eligibility determinations, the Just Threads Clothing Bank, housing navigation, relicensing, employment training and education, and homeless prevention. From March 2018 through October 15, 2019, 2,648 citizens have visited the Court Resource Center a total of 4,582 times, of which, 5,034 services have been provided.

The District Court opened the **Veterans Treatment Court**. Veterans Treatment Court provides regular court appearances, mandatory attendance at treatment sessions, and frequent and random testing for drug and alcohol use. The District Court's adult drug court program Drug Abuse Reduction Team (DART), where selected low-level felony cases in the Superior Court are refiled as misdemeanors in District Court, is another collaboration between the Courts, the Prosecutor, and the Department of Assigned Counsel. As of October 2019, there have been 25 DART graduates, of which none have had a new charge.

The District Court continued to increase Access to Justice through the implementation of its technology initiatives. Citizens can file a petition, schedule a hearing, pay their fines, or access many other court services online through the court website. Citizens can also speak to a court clerk online through the live chat feature. Through October 2019, the Customer Service Unit served 33,316 citizens at the counter. An additional 44,647 citizens were served through technology, including 6,419 live chat conversations and 38,228 phone services.

Economic Development

The Economic Development Department (EDD) continued its work to help businesses throughout Pierce County grow and thrive. Businesses received assistance on a variety of issues including financing, zoning, available properties, tax incentives, permitting, importing/exporting, transportation, business expansion, and workforce needs. In addition, the EDD helped businesses navigate the many resources available to them in the County, offering connections with area organizations, local governments, and state agencies. The Department made contact or met with over 350 businesses through our **Business Retention and Expansion** program and held two educational forums attended by nearly 150 business owners and managers.

The Department received four new **Executive Priority Projects** in 2019 and completed two projects from 2018 that retained 160 existing jobs, created 50 new jobs, and increased property valuation by \$644,100. An Executive Priority Project was also completed for the design and installation of new roads and associated sewer and water lines to help improve 200 acres of vacant industrial land in Frederickson.

To assist businesses with site selection in Pierce County, the EDD, in partnership with the Economic Development Board for Tacoma-Pierce County, launched **InvestPierceCounty.com**. This powerful, new tool was showcased to 26 groups or individuals, and multiple improvements were implemented based on user feedback. The EDD continues to market Pierce County as a great place to do business and work to recruit new businesses to the County.

With funding from the Pierce County Lodging Tax and Tourism Promotion Area, the department contracted with 13 tourism organizations utilizing a new Strategic Plan. Funding categories included marketing, event and asset development, sporting events, and a new staff position within the department to work with stakeholders, recipients, hoteliers, and tourism board members. The Pierce County Arts Commission approved 11 art grants to community art organizations providing art to underserved areas of Pierce County.

Facilities Management

The Facilities Management Department implemented regular meetings to communicate with building tenants and build stronger inter-departmental partnerships. The meetings resulted in a shared understanding of building challenges and alignment of priorities across each site.

The **Construction Division**, in partnership with its customers, accomplished many projects this year that helped the County deliver on its program needs. The larger projects include the Annex remodel at the East end of the building and preparing a Master Plan for the rest of the building. In addition, six electric vehicle charging stations were installed at the Annex. Several other projects were bid and are currently underway. These include: The District Court Projects, the Crisis Stabilization Center, the Medical Examiner's HVAC Project, the 950 Building HVAC and 2nd Floor Fire Sprinkler Project, the 950 Building Restroom Remodel, and the County-City Building Fallen Officer's Memorial Project.

At the County-City Building, the metal detectors and X-ray machines were replaced resulting in a decrease in wait time by 30 seconds per person. In 2019, over 650,000 individuals were screened, and of those screenings Security prevented 17,123 items – ranging from drugs to firearms – from entering the building.

The **Maintenance and Operations Division** installed a new boiler system at Sprinker Recreation Center; made improvements at the Main Jail and Remann Hall; painted the Medical Examiner's building, Sheriff's Range, and Fleet Garage; installed new roofs at the Sheriff's Range; completed landscape improvement projects at Soundview, Remann Hall, and the Medical Examiners; and, set up four new electric vehicle charging stations for employees in the Yakima Garage.

Finance and Performance Management

The **Finance and Performance Management Division** received the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for the 2018 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) and the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award for the 2019 budget from the Government Finance Officers Association.

The Division provided planning, decision support, and analysis to create the County's 2020-21 budget – the first biennial budget for Pierce County pursuant to a Charter Amendment approved by Pierce County voters in the 2018 general election. The County Council approved the new two-year budget in November 2019.

The Division continued to expand the **Open Pierce County** platform, a website that includes publicly accessible community indicators and performance measures. Department-level dashboards were implemented in early 2019. These dashboards are reviewed quarterly with the Executive and his leadership team, and are used to inform decisions on strategy, budget, and operations. Open Project was launched in 2019 to provide budget, spending, and schedule information for the County's capital projects. Open Checkbook, a tool to provide information on the goods and services purchased by Pierce County, will launch in early 2020.

In close coordination with the Risk Management Division, Finance and Performance Management provided analytic and implementation support to transition over 1,300 County employees and their dependents to health and other employee benefits provided by the Washington State's Public Employee Benefits Board.

Fleet Rental continued purchasing the most fuel-efficient vehicles available for each application. In 2019 the first-ever pursuit-rated hybrid police vehicle was introduced into the Fleet.

General Services processed over 5,300 record requests; managed physical records inventory exceeding 40,000 boxes; processed 1,100 print orders resulting in nearly 3.2 million print pieces; processed over 2.2 million pieces of mail with postage programs savings of over \$102,000; and, processed over 626,000 pieces for folding and inserting regarding various mailings.

The **Information Technology (IT) Division** continued to improve many technology-dependent public services, to enhance cyber security and reliability, to advance the use of innovative and modern technologies, and to support County business-process efficiencies. Completed projects include:

- Implementation of new applications to expand or improve citizen services such as Open Pierce County, Public Records Request Portal, Public Nuisance Portal, Animal Control and Pet Licensing Portals, ParkFinder, and the Sheriff's LiveScan.
- Support for the Cascadia Wastewater Treatment Plant at Tehaleh.
- Greater interoperability with the Tacoma Pierce County Health Department.
- Modernization and enhancement of technology platforms supporting key County applications including LINX, PALS+, PublicGIS, and CountyView Web.
- Integration of new orthophoto and related data into County GIS applications.

- New standardized Countywide Computer Lifecycle Program for more predictable budgeting and a more consistent business technology environment.
- Establishment of a Countywide Remote Piloted Aerial Vehicle (RPAS) program.
- Support for the Local Update of Census Address Operation (LUCA) in advance of the upcoming United States census.
- Support for the implementation of address changes for Key Peninsula.

Progress continues towards the goal to rebuild the Auditor's M&O Fund balance. Information Technology scanned the Recorded Documents portion (3,872,139 images) of the "Backfile" project to image and index old records and upload them to the public access recording system. The remaining work to crop, de-skew, enhance, and index these images will begin in 2020. This includes daily recordings from 1969 to 1983, deeds from books or film, and mortgage and miscellaneous real estate books.

Risk Management will collect over \$706,000 in subrogation and recovery payments in 2019.

The **Benefits** team completed a transition to the Public Employee Benefits Board (PEBB) for all non-represented employees. This change allows the county to forecast future benefit expenditures more easily, will lower costs, and will benefit members. Working with Lockton, the third-party administrator, Risk Management collected prescription drug rebates from Regence totaling over \$500,000.

A transition to a new third-party administrator (TPA) for **Industrial Insurance** streamlined the claims submitted process and detailed reporting capabilities. Risk Management executed a pilot process with Tactical Athlete, an outside vendor which creates a network for providers and concierge service for Sheriff's Department employees that suffer a musculoskeletal injury on the job.

Family Justice Center

The Family Justice Center (FJC) expanded the **Survivor Well-Being Program** with the introduction of THRIVE (our support group), VOICES, and the Artist in Residence Program, moving beyond mental health to include overall well-being. The VOICES Program focuses on raising the voices of survivors who have accessed care by incorporating their feedback and insight into the Center's work. The Artist in Residence Program has been showcasing art at the FJC and at its events. This program is also creating a coffee table book showcasing survivor stories, including photographing everyday items which represent a part of the survivors' journey. The photos will be accompanied by a brief story of what each item represents to the survivor. The book will be used to encourage other survivors, educate the community, and show the often-untold stories of power and control.

The Family Justice Center also expanded its **Outreach Program** by arranging to receive the Tacoma Police Department's domestic violence reports in addition to those from the Pierce County Sheriff, Lakewood, Bonney Lake, Fircrest, and University Place Police Departments. In 2018, FJC advocates called out on 800 police reports. Through October 2019, advocates have called out on over 1,800 reports.

Human Resources

The Human Resources Department expanded to include a Training and Development Manager and a Recruitment Manager. With these additions, the Department focused on process improvement and improved employee and candidate experience. Ultimately, finding creative and innovative ways to compete in the labor market and reshape the way Human Resources delivers services is a critical component of the County's talent management strategy.

In July 2018, Human Resources introduced the **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Initiative**, a County initiative to create a culture where diversity can organically grow because the environment is receptive and designed for success. In 2019, designated workgroups began to assess and change how we do business as an employer to ensure the County's vision, values, and strategic goals are reflected. This work will continue into 2020.

Human Resources received the results of a **Total Classification and Compensation Study**. The results are being reviewed and an implementation plan is scheduled to be completed in early 2020.

The **Organizational Development and Training Section** analyzed the County's training program and recommended improvements, including the alignment of curriculum content and learning objectives with Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion principles, the launch of LinkedIn Learning, and development of the Pierce County Leadership Certification Program.

The County's **Internship program** continued in 2019 with seven interns representing a wide range of universities and colleges, including University of Washington-Tacoma, Washington State University, University of Puget Sound, and Pacific Lutheran University. The 12-week program included numerous tours and visits with County staff, professional development training, and an opportunity for each intern to present his or her work at the end of the internship.

Human Resources staff conducted 296 recruitments, attended over 20 job fairs and outreach events, filled 290 positions, and reviewed more than 18,000 applications.

Human Services

The **Affordable Housing Fund Program** awarded funds for the acquisition and construction of 66 new affordable rental housing units, and the operation and maintenance of 27 existing affordable rental housing units. In 2019, the program also rehabilitated and preserved 66 existing units of affordable rental housing.

Aging & Disability Resources (ADR) provided case management and nursing services to more than 6,810 seniors and individuals with disabilities participating in Medicaid-funded, in-home care programs. ADR also funded 85,638 congregate meals and 75,940 home-delivered meals to seniors and disabled individuals, and provided farmers market vouchers to 2,194 seniors.

The **Aging and Disability Resource Center** responded to over 8,790 calls to the helpline and participated in 139 community events that reached an estimated 5,958 individuals.

Through the **Beyond the Borders Program**, the Special Needs Transportation Program provided more than 12,543 trips to people who are seniors, have a disability, are low income, or are youth ages 12 to 17 who live or travel in east and south Pierce County, which is an increase of 13% in the number of trips provided in 2018.

The **Community Development Program** distributed and administered over \$5 million in federal Community Development Block Grant funds for capital projects benefiting homeless individuals, low-income residents with severe disabilities, and low-income homeowners.

Developmental Disabilities Employment and Community Inclusion Services provided Job Coaching and Retention support for 470 participants who worked in community-based employment settings earning minimum wage or higher; 95 of these individuals started new jobs during the year. In addition, the department provided 350 individuals with Discovery, Assessment, Job Preparation and Job Development support as part of their pathway to employment, and 130 individuals received Community Inclusion services. The School-to-Work Program supported 78% of participating transition students to obtain a job.

Developmental Disabilities Early Intervention responded to 1,500 new referrals and provided developmental therapy and educational services to 2,000 infants and toddlers in their homes, child care, or community-based settings. Through the Promoting First Relationships training program, early intervention providers in Pierce County received support in infant mental health-informed practices.

The **Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP)** focused on all aspects of healthy development, including physical, cognitive, social, and emotional development by serving 347 three- and four-year-old children and their families during the 2018-19 school year.

The **Energy Assistance Program** helped 5,589 households consisting of 13,413 individuals stay warm in their homes through winter heating and lighting assistance. Of those receiving assistance, 1,464 were elderly, 3,499 were individuals with disabilities, 30 were veterans, and 1,485 were children under the age of five.

The **Family Caregiver Support Program** provided services for 201 unpaid family caregivers, including 23,329 hours of respite services, to help them continue providing care at home.

The **Homeless Program** administered contracts for \$14 million in federal, state, and local funding to 17 provider agencies that provide outreach, diversion, emergency shelter, transitional housing, rapid rehousing, and permanent supportive housing to over 5,300 households in the county.

The **Veterans Assistance Program** registered 75 new clients for assistance and managed a total of 3,050 active client files. The program provided \$396,149 in relief assistance and \$31,455 for the Incarcerated Veterans Program. The Incarcerated Veterans Program continued to provide counseling to 84 veterans through the Alternatives to Violence Program, which is offered inside the jail. Through this program, the recidivism rate has remained under 10% and was 6.9% at the end of 2019.

The **Violence Prevention Program** awarded over \$1.1 million to 37 agencies to prevent, reduce, or eliminate violence among youth and families, serving over 10,000 youth.

The **Weatherization Program** helped 71 families reduce their energy burden by providing a home assessment that determined their need for air sealing, insulation, and furnace repairs and replacement.

The Washington State University **SNAP-Ed Program** delivered nutrition education focused on incorporating healthy foods and physical activity into everyday life to 8,900 Pierce County youth and adults in a variety of settings, including schools, affordable housing sites, food banks, and Boys and Girls Clubs.

The Washington State University **4-H Youth Development Program** had over 700 active members in traditional 4-H clubs and 2,806 youth in after-school 4-H programs. These youth were led by 647 youth and adult leaders.

The Washington State University **Master Gardener Program**, which trains 469 volunteers as community educators to empower citizens to incorporate sustainable horticultural practices, served 24,000 county residents through community gardens, schools, Washington State Fair, Spring Fair, farmers' markets, street fairs, demonstration gardens, workshops, and a speaker's bureau.

The Washington State University **Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP)** reached 385 families, involving 1,636 family members. Of the EFNEP graduates, 99% made positive changes in their diet and 97% learned to stretch their food dollars.

Juvenile Court

The **Dependency Division** was recognized for the Best for Babies Court program, which received the *Champions for Children Award* from Project Child. Through 2019, Best for Babies Court reunified 11 children with their parents, one guardianship with grandparents, and five children were adopted by relatives or fictive kin.

The **BECCA Truancy and At-Risk Youth** team continued to emphasize elementary school attendance and reduced the number of absences and referrals for elementary youth. In 2019, the One Girl Many Systems project was launched. The goal of this project is to use the voice of girls to support community stakeholders in developing solutions that prevent girls with status offenses from falling deeper into the juvenile justice system and to solve persistent school and health challenges that impact girls.

The **Diversion/Early Intervention Division** continued to provide more services at the “front end” of the system to prevent young people from going to the deeper end of the system. The Division was awarded a grant from the Annie E. Casey Foundation to increase Diversion opportunities for young people. One of our many Positive Youth Development programs, the Tacoma Boat Builders, received the Pierce County Volunteer group of the year.

The **Probation Division** was recognized with a 2019 Standing Ovation Award from Pierce County in the Vibrant Communities category for the Pierce Outdoor Leadership Instruction and Field Experiences (LIFE) Program. The Pierce Outdoor LIFE Program, launched in 2018, provides court-connected youth living in unincorporated Pierce County with access to nature-based and recreation-based outdoor adventure experiences. Staff from the Probation Division continued to demonstrate leadership by participating in the Annie E. Casey Foundation Inter-site Conference and leading various workshops.

Detention continued to expand youth programs, including the expansion of *Yoga Behind Bars* by adding mindfulness practices to be more intentional with giving youth the ability to participate in strenuous physical activity each day. In March 2019, detention youth participated in the *Louder than a Bomb* teen poetry slam held at Tacoma Community College.

Pierce County Law Library

In 2019, the Pierce County Law Library generated excitement when it opened a new location inside the Lakewood public library. The branch opened with a ribbon-cutting on May 21, but it was a King 5 TV news story that ignited local interest. Located on the second floor of the public library, this branch opened with a collection of legal materials selected for the Lakewood community, including 335 volumes, a Westlaw research database and self-help materials. The branch's reference librarian offered on-site reference assistance every Thursday afternoon, oftentimes arriving to a line of patrons awaiting help.

The Law Library's popular Gig Harbor branch was removed from trial status to become a permanent fixture in the Gig Harbor Public Library.

In 2019 the Law Library also began legal workshops and CLE programs customized for the Lakewood and Gig Harbor communities. In Lakewood, where much of the housing is rental, the Library offered workshops to educate landlords and tenants on the recent changes to the Residential Landlord & Tenant Act. In Gig Harbor, estate planning and family law workshops were featured.

The main Pierce County Law Library was as busy as ever, once welcoming 560 patrons in a single day. Most Library patrons are unfamiliar with the law or legal materials. In 2019 approximately 92% of all users were non-attorneys with no legal experience. Each patron was given the full attention of a reference.

With the success of the Gig Harbor and Lakewood branch libraries, the Pierce County Law Library received inquiries about opening a branch in Sumner or Puyallup. To gauge interest, the Library developed a workshop on drafting wills that was requested by the people of Sumner. That workshop is scheduled for the Sumner Public Library in January 2020.

Medical Examiner

The Medical Examiner's Office continued to provide timely, accurate, and professional forensic pathology and medicolegal death investigation services to the citizens of Pierce County. After our annual accreditation verification by the National Association of Medical Examiners, full accreditation was recommended.

The Medical Examiner's partnership with tissue recovery agencies includes use of our autopsy suite for recoveries and leased office space for three agencies. These partnerships result in more efficient use of the building and enables more Pierce County families to benefit from the opportunity to donate life.

The Medical Examiner's Office made technology improvements with the purchase of teleconferencing equipment. This equipment supports participation in team meetings with all medicolegal death investigators. Investigators who are on days off or working a different shift than the scheduled meeting can now attend remotely, and this supports our 24-hour death investigation coverage.

Parks and Recreation

More than 800 participants each month tried out the new ice bumper cars at Sprinker Recreation Center. In Spanaway Park, the Water Lantern Festival attracted over 4,500 participants. More than 9,000 community members sampled food at the Mobile Food Fest at Sprinker Recreation Center featuring 23 food truck vendors.

In partnership with Pierce County Juvenile Court and Washington State University – Cooperative Extension, Parks offered a new program, Pierce Outdoor LIFE (Leadership Instruction & Field Experience), which provides outdoor adventure experiences to court assisted youth promoting positive risk-taking behaviors and building a healthy connection between youth, nature, and their community.

A new 7-acre event lawn was constructed at Chambers Creek Regional Park for recreational programming and athletic events. Construction began on the new community center, parking areas, and playground at Stan & Joan Cross Park located in the Frederickson area and will be completed in the Spring of 2020. Design for the Pipeline Trail, which starts in Tacoma and will terminate in South Hill, began for the trail section from 72nd Street East to Heritage Recreation Center. Design work also began for the Parkland Community Trail which will connect Pacific Lutheran University to Sprinker Recreation Center.

Planning and Public Works

Planning and Public Works (PPW) accomplished many improvements department wide, as well as within individual divisions. Best Public Agency (BPA) continues to be a focus of the Department. The core of this initiative is improving customer service, streamlining department processes, and providing timely and reliable service. The Department received a Standing Ovation Award for Executive Priority Projects. This program relies on collaboration and increased communication to multiple County departments as well as customers and partners in the industry.

The **Airport and Ferry Division** completed the dry docking of the Steilacoom II and the second ferry landing slip that began in 2018. Failure of critical components of the Steilacoom and Anderson Island docks impacted service. An in-depth inspection of the docks and its components was completed by maintenance and engineering staff and a comprehensive list of necessary repairs were made. Based on the findings, a major repair of the Steilacoom dock is underway and will be completed in 2020. A minor repair at the Anderson Island Dock made a major improvement in the ability of the ferry to land during lower tides, cutting down on disruption of service.

The Thun Filed Master Plan continues to progress towards completion. A Landside Planning Study for Tacoma Narrows Airport has begun. The study will support landside development at the airport and look at future development opportunities on the west side of the airport. In addition, a water system evaluation was completed in support of future development at Tacoma Narrows. The study confirmed the water supply is sufficient to meet all future demands once infrastructure improvements are made.

The **Building and Code Enforcement Division** continues to move forward with the newly blended operational duties of plan review, permit inspection, and code enforcement. Pierce County has experienced several years of increased development activity with the trend continuing through most of 2019. Building plan review and inspections has been instrumental with several Executive priority projects to include inspection work for the City of Ruston on the Point Ruston project, multiple new schools, the James Hardie commercial project, the Best Buy warehouse, Tilt 84, and Carlson Paving. The Division completed approximately 40,000 inspections and issued over 1,540 new home permits.

Code Enforcement is working to improve response time on priority violations (solid waste, derelict structures, and junk vehicles). The Section also began boarding chronic nuisance structures (structures with criminal activity), in cooperation with the Sheriff's Department. Staff gained compliance from property owners to resolve 950 violations, abated 30 sites, boarded up 45 properties, demolished 17 buildings, removed 900 junk vehicles, and issued 215 litter credits.

The **Office of the County Engineer** project managers led work on over 85 active transportation projects. In addition, the first draft of the ADA Transition Plan and the Safe Routes to School prioritization analysis plan were completed.

The Traffic Section deployed driver feedback speed signs over 225 times at more than 100 locations, installed new flashing yellow arrow signal displays at 5 intersections, installed 13 audible pedestrian pushbuttons, and replaced or repaired 60 countdown pedestrian signals. The Traffic Section also reinstalled over 1,650 downed or missing traffic signs and converted 700 more sign

posts from wood to steel. Using the new sign plotter, they were able to fabricate over 650 signs.

The **Development Center Division** furthered our customer service efforts by providing electronic submittal standards, implemented the "Front Loaded Single-Family review" process, helped over 6,200 customers through our online services and more than 13,200 customers in the lobby, and accepted more than 17,000 applications.

The **Development Engineering Division** streamlined and increased efficiencies of the sewer review process, including consolidating sewer easement and land use reviews and phasing out time and materials billing. In addition, changes were made to the sewer code, making the sewer permit process more efficient and less costly for applicants, including allowing two residences to tie into one sewer stub. The Division reviewed approximately 2,490 development engineering applications and 1,950 sewer applications, and completed 17,250 development engineering inspections and 3,100 sewer inspections.

The **Division of Innovation and Technology** implemented and adopted DocuSign, monitored and facilitated the migration of the Virtual Vault to Open Text, and created a Shellfish application to leverage GIS to document and investigate shellfish pollution issues. The Division received a NACO award for the newly created Public Facing Enforcement Portal. This portal provides Pierce County citizens the ability to submit complaints electronically and track the resolution process. The Division focused on the regionalization of the award-winning PALS+ permitting system. To date, they successfully reached an agreement with the City of Lakewood to begin converting their current permitting system to PALS+.

The **Maintenance and Operations (M&O) Division** responded to over 5,000 citizen requests for services, repairs, and maintenance. Crews maintained roadways and stormwater systems including cleaning 53,306 feet of ditches, 48,489 feet of pipe, and sweeping 9,489 lane miles of roadway. M&O administered "owner will maintain" agreements, supported Adopt-A-Road organizations, and maintained 704 vehicles and pieces of equipment at 96% availability. The Division used 45,904 gallons of B20 Bio-diesel as part of an alternative fuel pilot program. The Division responded to 15 homeless trespass sites on public right-of-way's and properties.

The Current Planning Section of the **Planning Division** processed more than 1,250 land use applications, presented 120 cases to the Hearing Examiner, and conducted and/or attended 39 meetings before the various Land Use Advisory Commissions. Additionally, the Section successfully drafted and received final adoption of the Tehaleh Phase 2 Development Agreement and Project Master Plan and continues to create a web presence for high profile cases.

The Long Range Planning Section was very busy with both regional and local planning efforts. In addition to providing support for various commissions and regional boards, staff attended over 130 public meetings and continued efforts on updates to several Community plans, including the issuance of a draft Environmental Impact Statement. The Section also successfully implemented 2018 Comprehensive Plan Amendments, drafted improvements to Pierce County's Affordable Housing-Fee Waiver Incentive Program, continued discussions and outreach efforts for annexation with Gig Harbor, Tacoma, and Puyallup, and adopted the Nisqually Watershed Plan Addendum.

The **Resource Management Division** oversees the implementation of the County's critical area

regulations for wetlands, fish, and wildlife and manage programs such as Historic Preservation and the Agricultural Initiative. This Division approved over 300 wetland applications, closed 150 wetland/logging violations and 16 planning violations, assisted over 2,000 customers in the Development Center, and supported the Landmarks Commission which issued 15 local Preservation Grants.

The Division rebooted the agricultural program in 2019 and has already created an agriculture permitting team to improve the handling of applications from farmers, created a 'beta' version of a drainage decision support tool for the Drainage Task Force, and facilitated the clean-up of a County-owned parcel along Muck Creek to alleviate citizen/farmer concerns for flood risks. The Division also started working with the Maintenance and Operations Division to develop Level of Service criteria for drainage infrastructure in agricultural areas.

The **Sewer Division** continues to complete the final close out of the Chambers Creek Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant expansion project. The Division also completed several projects including the Brown's Point generator replacement, the Philips/Alard pump station rehabilitation, the FMF digester gas delivery, and digester cleaning and rehabilitation. In addition, the Sewer Division took ownership of the new developer- built Cascadia wastewater treatment plant at Tehaleh.

The Division completed the Failing Water Systems study and a third-party analysis and report of risks, vulnerabilities, and safety issues at the Chambers Creek Regional WWTP associated with power failures. The Alternative Commercial Connection Charge Program, Commercial Connection Charge Amortization, county participation in Latecomer Agreements, and Sewer Dry Line Loan programs were all approved by County Council for program implementation in 2020.

The **Surface Water Management Division** constructed three water quality treatment facilities within the Clark's Creek watershed as part of addressing the County's TMDL water quality obligations. Construction also started on a significant channel migration control project along the upper Puyallup River. In 2019, the capital program received over \$13 million in grants. This significantly increased the funding available to complete the 6-year Capital Facilities Plan. The Division published the 2018 Watershed Health Assessment (report card) which showed improved water quality grades in 33 (62%) monitored streams. Staff also investigated 33 reports of polluted discharges and 31 were fully resolved.

Sustainable Resources was able, in partnership with LRI, to remove "Out of System" compost from the burden of the ratepayer. A lower interest rate on transfer station projects was also negotiated, saving the rate payers over \$1 million. Environmental Educators facilitated over 27,000 hours of education to youth and adults. The team received the Pierce County Standing Ovation award for a successful partnership with Juvenile Court and Parks and Recreation.

Seventeen document shredding events served 3,200 people and securely diverted almost 50 tons of paper to recycling. There were 6 community clean-up events with 3,000 households participating. Staff conducted over 90 field visits to assist just under 10,000 households and 70 apartment complexes to provide recycling for the first time and promoted recycling and environmental education messages at 11 community events.

Prosecuting Attorney

The Prosecutor's Office reorganized the Criminal Division, consolidating some felony trial teams and creating the **General Crimes Charging Unit (GCCU)**. The GCCU focuses on charging most class B and C felonies through a single unit, making it easier to ensure consistency in charging as well as earlier and consistent pre-trial disposition of cases. Consolidating the charging responsibilities has helped nearly eliminate the roughly 800 case backlog of class B and C felony referrals pending charging decisions at the beginning of 2019. As of October 28, only 87 of these referrals are pending review for a charging decision.

Our **High Priority Offender Unit** continues to have an impact on felony crimes and send high risk, high rate, and persistent offenders to prison for long sentences. The innovative data-driven approach to prosecution focuses resources on the small percentage of criminals who cause a large percentage of crimes, the career criminals, and other prolific offenders who drive up the crime rate in the county. More than 90% of High Priority Offenders are sentenced to prison for an average of about 61 months versus the statewide average of just under 17 months.

The **Trueblood Diversion Program** screened and referred 426 cases involving offenders with mental health or substance use disorders from traditional criminal prosecution to diversion, alternative courts, or other resolutions incorporating behavioral health treatment. The Prosecutor's Office is a vital partner in the \$2.1 million grant program. The pre-charge diversion program saw its first seven graduates in 2019, which directs eligible participants away from the criminal justice system and into treatment to address the participant's behavioral health problems, stabilize them in the community, and reduce their likelihood of recidivism.

Abatement of chronic nuisance properties became a priority for the County Council in 2018 when they added a new deputy prosecutor to our **Civil Division** to address this issue. In 2019, the Civil Division received 67 referrals for cases with nuisance properties needing legal action. Work by civil deputies resulted in 33 orders of abatement and judgments of over \$360,000, and were able to work property owners to settle or secure voluntarily abatement in 17 of those cases.

The **Family Support Division** collected over \$1 million in unpaid child support and continues to receive more case referrals than any other county in the state. In addition to these results from the Contempt Unit, every day the Parentage (paternity), Modification, and DCS Representation teams enter orders that result in even more support being paid for children, reducing the tax payer burden of public assistance costs.

The Prosecutor's Office has focused on recruiting and retaining a high-quality work force. The Office established proactive vacancy planning and recruitment to reduce the turnaround time of vacant positions and conduct recruitment outreach to the law schools and organizations that support diversity and inclusion. The performance feedback process was improved and increased training opportunities available to staff, adding both in-house training programs and the use of more external training. Training opportunities are helping to ensure staff continue their professional development, improve skills, and stay up-to-date on developments in the law in their respective practice areas.

Sheriff

In 2019, the **Administrative Services Bureau** held five workshops at the Pierce County Jail with more than 200 attendees. The Sheriff's Department attended 50 other hiring events, including the Washington State Fair, JBLM hiring events, military job fairs at Kitsap Naval Base and Lacey, college job fairs at Green River, Tacoma Community College, Pierce College, Bates Technical College, Pacific Lutheran University, and University of Washington Tacoma, and high school events. A bounce back text message system was implemented for general recruiting information and to register for workshops.

These events resulted in 2,806 direct contacts with individuals and 649 strong potential candidates for Sheriff's Department Law Enforcement and Corrections positions.

The Bureau processed 196 Law Enforcement candidates with 25 hires, 185 Corrections Deputy candidates with 15 hires, and 175 professional staff position candidates with 10 hires.

The **Training Unit** coordinated the training of 700 department personnel in the following areas of instruction: Firearms, Active Shooter, Defensive Tactics, Emergency Vehicle Operations/Defensive Driving, Legal Updates, Domestic Violence Investigations, Peer Support, and Crisis Intervention.

Twenty-five new recruits graduated from the Basic Law Enforcement Academy in 2019. All recruits also completed four weeks of rigorous department orientation training, prior to attending the academy.

All Sheriff's Department Field Training Officers (FTO) were certified by the Criminal Justice Training Commission. An additional 10 Field Training Officers were added in 2019, for a total of 42 FTOs.

Facilities Management and the Sheriff's Department joined forces to provide site specific training to Pierce County teams on active shooter and workplace violence prevention. The training is focused on procedures for optimal safety, survival tips to best protect yourself and those around you from becoming greater targets, and on educational tactics to prepare staff to be better prepared for a criminal act.

While the **Co-responder program** started in 2018, significant modifications were made to the program in 2019, allowing the Department to better serve the citizens of Pierce County. Six Designated Crisis Responders (DCRs,) contracted through MultiCare, form the Co-responder Team (Master's level designated clinicians). The Co-responders, based within the Sheriff's Department, are dispatched and respond to in-progress situations in the field and conduct follow-up as needed. They work in communities alongside deputies, ensuring early intervention and identification of persons in mental health or substance abuse crisis. The program's goals are to divert those in crisis from incarceration or hospital emergency departments, and to lower related patrol calls while, at the same time, ensuring they receive safe, timely, and appropriate care. In 2019, the County received a grant through the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs to expand the program by two Co-responders, increasing coverage to a 24/7 response.

Highway and roadway safety are critical components in the public safety Pierce County provides to the region. Impaired driving increasingly means impaired by alcohol and other drugs, to include prescribed pharmaceutical drugs, cannabis, and all illicit drugs, including opioids. Law enforcement is adapting, and the **Regional Pierce County Phlebotomy Program** has taken the lead by training officers to safely draw blood to test for drugs, making the tests timely and more accurate, and allowing officers to get back on the road sooner instead of waiting for medical personnel in a busy health care facility. This approach has been



extremely effective and is now being adopted by other law enforcement agencies in Washington. This program has been fully funded with grants from the Washington Traffic Safety Commission.

There has been a significant increase in attempts to introduce contraband into the jail over the last year. The **Corrections Bureau** currently has a three-pronged approach to prevention: the VeroVision Mail Screener, K9 Rebel, and the Securus Phone System. In order to further enhance the health and safety of the inmates and staff, the Bureau secured funding for a Full Body Scanner to more effectively combat the introduction of contraband.

The **Proactive Property Crime Unit** is tasked with addressing reported property crimes such as burglaries, vehicle prowls, and other such thefts. This 5-person unit focuses their efforts on patterns of similar crimes and on identified repeat offenders. Through October 2019, the Unit worked 158 cases, arrested 39 suspects, and recovered and returned to the victims stolen property valued at over \$153,000. This is sending a message to those who would commit these types of crimes that it is not profitable to do so in Pierce County.

The **Sex/Kidnap Offender Registration Unit** is responsible for registering all sex and kidnap offenders in Pierce County. All new and full registrations are done in person at the County City Building. Through October 2019, 553 full or new registrations were completed, which requires fingerprinting, taking photographs, and data entry into two separate required databases. The Unit also completed 2,563 registration updates which are required for a change of address, work, or school. In addition, there have been 6,345 transient updates. More than 64 community notifications for Level 3 offenders were completed, which include notice to the media (newspaper), citizens, and schools and daycares within the vicinity of the offender. Pierce County deputies completed 1,306 in-person physical address verifications and arrested 73 offenders for failure to register.

Superior Court

Superior Court **Felony Mental Health Court (FMHC)** works with the Prosecutor's Office, Department of Assigned Counsel, Mental Health Coordinator (Corrections Bureau), and OptumHealth. This therapeutic court helps reduce the number of chronic and acute individuals in jail by providing an alternative to incarceration. Through September 2019, FMHC was operating at capacity, with 67 participants, 51 graduates, and 21 defendants awaiting eligibility screening.

Felony Drug Court continued operation of the third year of a federal grant. As of September 2019, there were 158 active in-treatment participants and 82 individuals graduated. Drug Court expanded the veterans' track with 23 active participants and fully integrated co-occurring treatments (mental health and chemical dependency).

The **Family Law Case Technician** assisted self-represented litigants with completing documentation in family law cases. In 2019, the FLCT saw 703 people, helping judicial officers resolve 204 cases as of September 2019.

The **Interpreter Coordinator Unit** translated plea forms into Spanish, and arranged for 3,634 hearings in both civil and criminal hearings for Superior, Juvenile, Prosecuting Attorney Office, Department of Assigned Council, and District Courts through September 2019.

The Court continues working with the Clerk's Office and the Information Technology Division of the Finance Department to increase the number of Electronic Court Order documents saving paper costs and time filing documents. Fourteen American with Disabilities Act evaluations were conducted resulting in the appointment of legal representation and other accommodations for severely disabled individuals. Twenty initial screening meetings were held in addition to the evaluations that resulted in legal counsel.

The two in-house RCW 26.09 staff guardians ad litem conducted investigations and produced reports for 24 high conflict family law cases through September 2019, closing 18 cases during that same time period.

Family Recovery Court provides a means for rehabilitating parents of juveniles involved in dependency cases. Through September, there were 47 active participants.

Tacoma Pierce County Health Department

The **Communicable Disease Control Division** provides a 24/7 comprehensive system to detect, respond to, and prevent cases of communicable disease. The Division investigated more than 7,000 cases of communicable diseases such as norovirus, hepatitis C, HIV, gonorrhea, and tuberculosis to prevent their spread in the community.

The **Food & Community Safety Program** conducted more than 8,000 inspections of food service establishments (restaurants, cafés, food trucks, grocery stores), responded to 860 public food safety complaints, and trained 40,000 food service workers in the county.

The **Family Support Partnership (FSP) Program** is a community effort that works with families, partners, and local leaders to strengthen families. The program conducted 1,450 home visits and made 70,000 resource connections to Pierce County residents. The program coordinates six family support centers in Pierce County, which help connect people to community resources and the Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP) food assistance benefits.

The **Health Equity Initiative** worked on policies and actions to promote equitable opportunities for health in Pierce County. The initiative collaborated with others to improve the social, economic, and environmental conditions for health. Partners included Pierce County Juvenile Court, Metro Parks Tacoma, City of Tacoma, Tacoma Public Schools, and the Auditor's Office. The Health Department continued to support sustained health improvements in Pierce County through six Communities of Focus where data and community members tell us how we can make a difference.

The **Immunization Program** increased access to immunizations through more than 44 school-based immunization clinics and supported medical providers to administer more than 310,000 free or low-cost immunizations to Pierce County children.

The **Nurse Home Visiting** conducted 2,200 home visits. Nurses work with families and expectant mothers to provide care coordination and health and education services and offer training to help achieve family economic self-sufficiency.

Staff played a major role in the **Pierce County Opioid Task Force**, which brings together more than 250 stakeholders to end the opioid epidemic. As one of four executive sponsors of the Task Force, the Health Department implemented several initiatives such as MedsFirst, a novel low-barrier buprenorphine service to people with opioid use disorder who want immediate treatment.

The **Oral Health Program** coordinated work with dental providers and schools to conduct 18,000 dental screenings, 8,900 fluoride varnish treatments, and 4,300 dental sealant applications. Countywide oral health efforts also coordinate the Access to Baby and Child Dentistry (ABCD) Program. ABCD connects low-income families with dentists who know how to care for young kids. The county has 185 ABCD certified dentists.

The **Physical Activity and Nutrition and Tobacco Prevention Program** worked with partners and small community-based organizations to implement 12 policy, systems, and environment (PSE) strategies. These evidence-based strategies improve access to healthy food, increase opportunities for safe active living, and provide tobacco-free environments.

The **School Health Collaboration Program** worked with all 15 Pierce County school districts to implement programs to improve student health. Between 2013 and 2017, school districts showed significant improvement in policies and systems to improve student health, including social and emotional health and prevention of alcohol use and addiction.

The **Treatment Services Program** helped 1,100 patients struggling with addiction on the path to recovery. In a safe and controlled environment, clients received 321,400 methadone doses and 12,100 counseling sessions. Substance abuse treatment provides a combination of medication and effective counseling to overcome opioid addiction. The Department disposed of more than 2.5 million used needles through a partnership with Tacoma Needle Exchange.

The **Youth Prevention Initiatives** programs provided a marijuana prevention resource guide for parents and educators, youth summit, social marketing campaign, and seminar presentations on substance misuse prevention.

The **Vital Records Office** issued approximately 81,400 birth and death certificates and reviewed, processed, and filed 7,000 death records.

The **Drinking Water Program** monitors approximately 1,500 water systems for bacteria and nitrates to ensure safe and reliable drinking water. The program leverages partnerships with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to increase outreach, and a partnership with Department of Health to carry out state-wide goals in the County.

The **Healthy Homes Program** helped 60 apartment communities become smoke-free. The program helped landlords reduce maintenance costs and receive discounts on insurance. These properties join thousands of others on the Health Department Smoke-Free Housing Registry. The registry now has more than 30,000 smoke-free apartment units and 698 apartment communities in Pierce County.

The **Emergency Preparedness Program** plans and prepares for an effective response to biological, technical, and natural hazards to protect the health of all Pierce County residents. The Health Department activated our response plan and Emergency Operations Center nine times to respond to disease outbreaks and environmental issues. The team also conducted mass-dispensing and continuity of operations exercises.

The **Onsite Program** reviewed and approved approximately 1,200 applications for new septic systems, remodels, and repairs. Program staff conducted approximately 5,000 Report of System Status inspections for property sales. A healthy septic system reduces the risk of people and pets getting sick from untreated sewage, prevents ground and surface water contamination, and saves homeowners money.

The Health Department recommended investment in Eastside Tacoma for the \$1.75 million Economic Security for All grant, which uses funds from the governor's Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act discretionary U.S. Department of Labor budget. Health Department health equity data supported the request. WorkForce Central will lead a group of community partners that will serve 400 people in the 98404 ZIP code to move them into career pathways over the course 33 months.

The **Surface Water Program** conducted 946 water quality samples to identify sources of pollution

along Key Peninsula shorelines and Pierce County lakes. Program staff partners with all agencies working towards clean surface water in Pierce County. Staff monitored 9 saltwater beaches for bacterial contamination, 14 lakes for toxic algae, held quarterly water quality meetings in 4 watersheds.

The **Waste Management Program** permitted and inspected more than 850 solid waste and infectious waste facilities (landfills, transfer stations, recycling centers, medical waste facilities, etc.). The program regulated more than 220 businesses in the South Tacoma Groundwater Protection District that store hazardous substances such as used oil and antifreeze. To improve environmental stewardship, the program connects business owners across Pierce County with resources and encourages participation in the EnviroStars Program, which recognizes efforts to reduce waste and use green practices.