



AGENDA
YAKIMA CITY COUNCIL
October 14, 2025
City Hall - Council Chambers - 129 N 2nd Street, Yakima, WA
City Council Study Session

5:00 p.m. Study Session --- This meeting will be conducted in person, live streamed at www.yakimawa.gov/council/agendas-and-minutes/ and telecast live on YPAC, Spectrum Cable Channel 194. You may also participate via Zoom: <https://cityofyakima.zoom.us/j/99749430268> or call in by dialing 1 (253) 215-8782 | Webinar ID: 997 4943 0268 | Passcode: 723124

Individuals who wish to provide public comment remotely may submit a Public Comment Request Form online at: www.yakimawa.gov/council/public-comment no later than two hours prior to the start of the meeting. If you wish to provide public comment in-person, fill out a "Request for Appearance" form and hand it to the City Clerk before you address City Council.

1. **Roll Call**
2. **Public Comment (allow 15 minutes)**
State law prohibits electioneering at City facilities. During Public Comment, speakers cannot campaign for or against candidates or support or oppose any ballot measure in any upcoming election.
3. **Study Session Items**
 - A. [Review of the 2026 Preliminary Mid-Biennial Budget](#)
 - B. [Update on Indigent Defense Caseload Standards](#)
4. **Adjournment**
The next meeting is a City Council regular meeting on October 21, 2025, at 5:30 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers.

Any invocation that may be offered before the official start of the Council meeting shall be the voluntary offering of a private citizen, to and for the benefit of the Council. The views or beliefs expressed by the invocation speaker have not been previously reviewed or approved by the Council, and the Council does not endorse the religious beliefs or views of this, or any other speaker.

The City provides special accommodations, such as hearing devices, wheelchair space or language interpreters, for City meetings. Anyone needing special assistance please contact the City Clerk's office at (509) 575-6037 at least two business days prior to the meeting. A Council packet is available for review at the City Clerk's Office and on-line at www.yakimawa.gov/council/agendas-and-minutes/



**BUSINESS OF THE CITY COUNCIL
YAKIMA, WASHINGTON
AGENDA STATEMENT**

Item No. 3.A.
For Meeting of: October 14, 2025

ITEM TITLE: Review of the 2026 Preliminary Mid-Biennial Budget

SUBMITTED BY: Vicki Baker, City Manager
*Craig Warner, Director of Finance & Budget

SUMMARY EXPLANATION:

The City Council adopted the 2025–2026 Biennial Budget on December 17, 2024. According to RCW 35.34.130, the City must review and amend the budget between September 1 and December 31 of the first year of the biennium. This study session will facilitate the review of proposed budget modifications, providing an opportunity for Council discussion regarding current budget performance, suggested amendments, and any necessary adjustments. This process ensures that appropriations and funding levels align with the City's priorities and operational needs.

ITEM BUDGETED: N/A

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 24-25: A Resilient Yakima

RECOMMENDATION: Conduct the study session

ATTACHMENTS:
[Proposed Mid Biennial Budget Modification-Craig.pptx](#)



City of Yakima 2026 Proposed Mid-Biennial Budget Modifications

Presented by:

Craig Warner, Director of
Finance & Budget

October 14, 2025

Budget Overview

State law (RCW 35.34.120) requires a balanced budget.

“The expenditures as classified and itemized in the final adopted biennial budget... shall not exceed the total of the estimated revenues and the fund balance for each fund.”

The City of Yakima has already adopted a 2025-2026 Biennial Budget. These changes are amendments to the adopted budget for 2026.

Financial Goals

- Achieve a balanced budget in every fund
- Prioritize citywide service levels
- 12% minimum reserve level in the General Fund
- Integrate City of Yakima Strategic Priorities
 - ✓ A Safe and Healthy Yakima
 - ✓ A Resilient Yakima
 - ✓ A Thriving Yakima
 - ✓ An Engaged Yakima

Budget Challenges

- Sales Tax revenue collections not meeting 2025-2026 Budget
- 2026 Budget had an Adopted \$8.1 million deficit
- Structural challenges for discussing the budget consistently
- Changes in the Budget and Finance Director position

Structural Changes

- New Funds
 - Aquatic Facilities (133)
 - Opioid Lawsuit (155)
 - Lodging Tax (184)
 - Affordable Housing (185)
- Police Relief & Pension moved to Fund 613
- All Property Taxes deposited into the General Fund for increased transparency.

2026 General Fund Budget Adjustments

	2026 Adopted Budget	Amendments	2026 Proposed Budget
Beginning Fund Balance	\$13,485,373	(\$1,475,778)	\$12,009,595
Revenues	\$76,779,080	\$16,204,268	\$95,983,348
Expenditures	<u>(\$84,903,677)</u>	<u>(\$11,520,077)</u>	<u>(\$96,423,754)</u>
Ending Fund Balance	\$5,360,776	\$6,208,413	\$11,569,189
12% Reserve	<u>\$10,188,441</u>		<u>\$11,570,850</u>
Reserve Surplus/(Deficit)	(\$4,827,665)		(\$1,661)

General Fund Revenue Changes

\$16,204,268

Highlights:

2026
Adopted
Budget:
\$76,779,080



Property Tax: The 2026 levy is projected at \$28.3 million, up **\$19.2 million** from \$9.1 million in the adopted budget.

Why: Previously, \$13.2 million in Property Tax and Criminal Justice Sales Taxes was allocated directly to departments. Also, a proposed additional revenue of **\$6.0 million** is also included.



Utility Tax: An increase of **\$1.4 million** is included in the 2026 Amended budget

Why: Revenues are strong due to increased rates charged by providers.



Sales Tax: 2026 collection projected at \$29.4 million a **\$2.2 million** decrease (down from \$31.6 million in the Adopted Budget).

Why: Revenues are trending down since the second half of 2024 and most of 2025.



Accumulated changes in other revenues, including interest now accounted for in the General Fund, have increased approximately **\$800,000**.

2026
Amended
Budget:
\$95,983,348

General Fund Expenditures Changes

\$11,520,077

2026
Adopted
Budget:
\$84,903,677

Highlights:



Transfers: \$13.2 million

Why: A change in accounting practice has increased General Fund revenue and expenditures. Previously, Property Tax was allocated directly to departments.



Salaries and Benefits: \$345,000

Why: Reduced State retirement rates; Overtime adjustments for Police and Fire



Services & Charges: \$1.89 million

Why: Contract adjustments, inflation; Utility increases

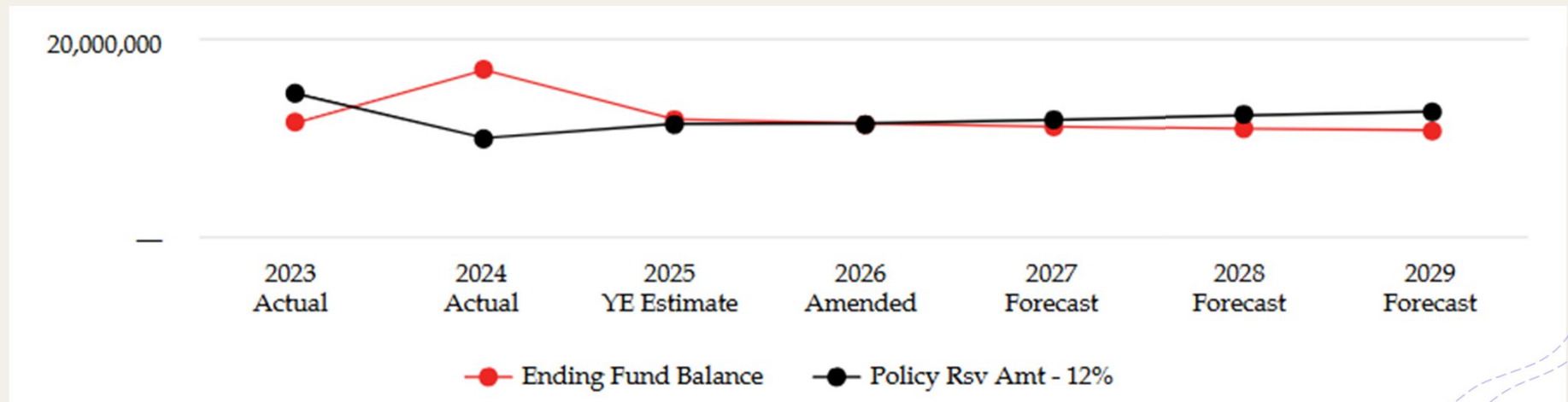


Targeted Budget Reductions: (\$3.0 million)

Why: Reduction package approved by Council

2026
Amended
Budget:
\$96,423,754

General Fund Fund Balance vs. Policy Reserve



2026 Unbudgeted Needs

• Police Equipment Replacement (\$200K)	\$ 750,000
• Fire Equipment Replacement (\$250K)	\$ 600,000
• Snow & Ice Removal Reserve	\$ 250,000
• Bond Payment for Facility Upgrades	\$ 750,000
• Police Training Increase	\$ 100,000
• IT Firewall Upgrade	\$ 75,000
• IT Server Replacement	<u>\$ 275,000</u>
	\$ 2,800,000

Note: Some of these could use one-time funds such as reserves if available

Proposed Expense Reductions

- Police: \$3,000,000
- Fire: \$1,750,000
- Parks: \$1,400,000

Proposed Reductions

➤ **Police: \$3,000,000**

- 12 Police Officer position
- 1 Police Sergeant
- 4 Community Service Officers
- 1 Analyst Supervisor
- 1 Analyst
- Reduce radio purchase funding to accommodate transferring 1 CSO to the 3/10 budget
- Reduction of \$50 K to Humane Society Contract

Proposed Reductions

➤ **Fire: \$1,750,000**

- Close Station 92, utilizing filled staff positions at other stations to reduce overtime expense
- Prioritizing retention of employees

Proposed Reductions

➤ Parks: \$1,400,000

- Washington Fruit Community Center
- Lions Pool
- Harman Center
- 16% Reduction in Parks Maintenance

Note: Removes the General Fund contributions for these programs

2026 City-Wide Budget Adjustments

	2026 Adopted Budget	Amendments	2026 Proposed Budget
Beginning Fund Balance	\$124,049,379	\$12,693,431	\$136,742,810
Revenues	\$274,977,299	\$37,406,595	\$312,383,894
Expenditures	<u>(\$286,376,546)</u>	<u>(\$40,340,882)</u>	<u>(\$326,717,428)</u>
Ending Fund Balance	\$112,650,132	\$9,759,144	\$122,409,276

Note: Includes the General Fund

City-Wide Revenue Budget Changes

\$37,406,595

Highlights:

2026 Adopted
Budget:
\$274,977,299



General Fund: Already reviewed **\$16.2 million** increase



Grants: An additional **\$15 million** in expected grants for 2026
Why: Most of the grants are for capital improvements



Transfers: An increase of **\$1.8 M** included in the 2026 Amended budget
Why: Change in accounting practice for Lodging Tax Funds



Licenses, Permits and Charges for Services: An increase of **\$1.3 M** included in the 2026 Amended budget
Why: Increase in permit activity and miscellaneous fee adjustments

2026 Amended
Budget:
\$312,383,894

City Wide Expenditures Budget Changes

\$40,340,882

Highlights:

2026 Adopted
Budget:
\$286,376,546



General Fund: Already reviewed **\$11.5 million** increase



New Fund: Lodging Tax **\$1.8 million** increase

Why: Moving Lodging Tax funds to a new fund before distribution



Capital Outlays: Construction Projects **\$22.4 million** increase

Why: Approved capital projects and grant opportunities



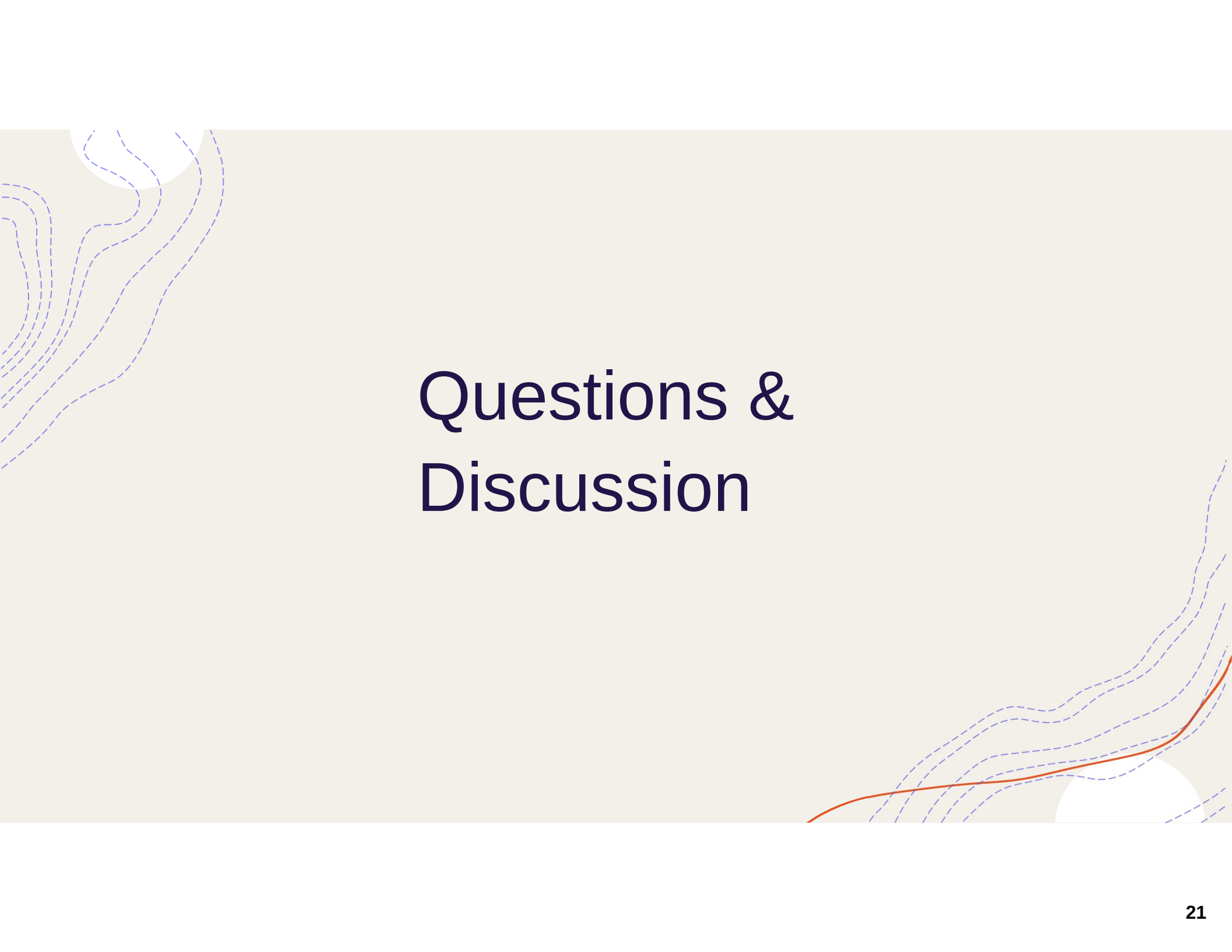
Services & Charges: **\$1.8 million** increase

Why: Adjustments for inflation and other negotiated contracts greater than originally estimated

2026 Amended
Budget:
\$326,717,428

Next Steps

- **Public Hearings scheduled for November 12th and 18th**
- **Ad Valorem Tax (Property Tax) Public Hearing November 12th**
- **2026 Mid-Biennial Budget Adoption December 2nd**

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Questions & Discussion



**BUSINESS OF THE CITY COUNCIL
YAKIMA, WASHINGTON
AGENDA STATEMENT**

Item No. 3.B.
For Meeting of: October 14, 2025

ITEM TITLE: Update on Indigent Defense Caseload Standards

SUBMITTED BY: Cynthia Martinez, Senior Assistant City Attorney

SUMMARY EXPLANATION:

The City of Yakima Legal department will give an update on the Washington State Supreme Court's recently adopted indigent defense counsel caseload limits and the consequences for the City.

ITEM BUDGETED: N/A

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 24-25: A Safe and Healthy Yakima

RECOMMENDATION:

ATTACHMENTS:

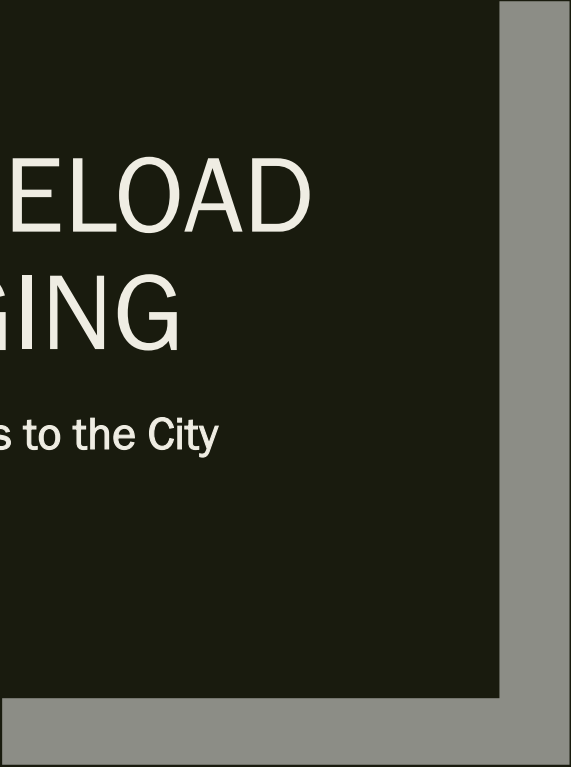
[Public Defense Caseload Limits & Charging.pptx](#)



PUBLIC DEFENSE CASELOAD LIMITS AND CHARGING

Recent Developments and the Potential Impacts to the City

C. Martinez, Senior Assistant City Attorney



History: Caseload Limits, Standard 3.4

- Standards for Indigent Defense, Standard 3.4
 - *January 1, 2015 new caseload limits for misdemeanor cases were implemented across the state. Under the 2015 standards - public defenders are limited to 400 cases per attorney per year in jurisdictions that do not use case weighting.*
- Standard 3.4 as adopted in 2015 required the City to make changes in order to comply with the 400 case limit. The response from the City was a mix of additional public defense resources and modified charging standards.

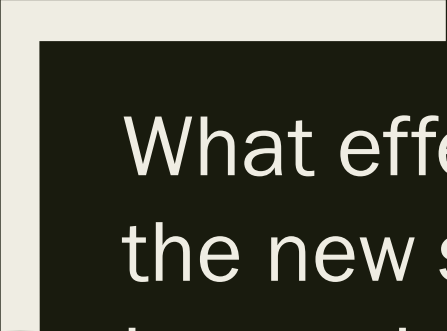
New Standards adopted by the WSBA

On March 8, 2024, the Washington State Bar Association (WSBA) adopted new misdemeanor indigent defense case load limits and recommended the Washington State Supreme Court adopt the standards as well. The Supreme Court drafted a rule incorporating the WSBA newly adopted indigent defense standards and asked for comment. *The City of Yakima submitted a comment.*

The proposed rule phased in a caseload reduction over a two-year period, taking effect in 2027, reducing the caseload limit for each public defense attorney from the current 400 cases a year to 120 case credits. The rule also included mandatory social worker and paralegal staffing levels, and a complicated case counting method.

Washington Supreme Court adopts indigent defense caseload limits

- After receiving a substantial number of [public comments](#), and testimony at two public hearings, the Court issued an [Interim Order](#) amending Supreme Court Rule CrRlj 3.1 (Court Standards) and establishing new caseload limits for indigent defense starting on January 1, 2026.
 - ***The number of misdemeanor case credits a public defender can handle in a single year shall be 120 case credits.*** For felonies, it's 47 case credits. This standard will be implemented in phases beginning on January 1, 2026.
 - ***Local government has 10 years to implement the caseload limits.*** Each year, 10% of the difference between 400 and 120 must be reduced. In 2026 the caseload per indigent attorney will be 372 cases, in 2027, 344 cases etc.
 - *The mandatory social worker and paralegal staffing, and the case counting method was not included in the new rule.*



What effect will
the new standards
have other the
next couple of
years?

The anticipated indigent defense
funding level for 9.35 attorneys will
result in reductions as illustrated in
the as follows:

– Year	Total #	Reduction
– 2025	3740	n/a
– 2026	3478	262
– 2027	3216	523

2023 case type breakdown



To maintain our current charging ability

- The City of Yakima will have to add 22 new defense attorneys over the course of 10 years. This increase in staffing may triple our current public defense budget.

QUESTIONS

