

Department of Adult and Juvenile Detention
Report on the Analysis of Racial Disparities in Response to Infractions

June 2025



King County

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II. Proviso Text

Ordinance 19861, Section 54, Department of Adult and Juvenile Detention P1¹:

Of this appropriation, \$50,000 shall not be expended or encumbered until the executive transmits a report on the results of an analysis of racial disparities in response to infractions in adult detention and a motion that should acknowledge receipt of the report, and a motion acknowledging receipt of that report is passed by the council. The motion should reference the subject matter, the proviso's ordinance, ordinance section, and proviso number in both the title and body of the motion.

The report shall include, but not be limited to:

A. Disaggregated data on all infractions and responses to infractions, including, but not limited to, restrictive housing placements, in adult detention in 2024;

B. An analysis of those infractions and responses to infractions by race;

C. Discussion of any racial disparities found in the analysis of infractions and responses to infractions by race, and identification of actions or planned actions that will be taken in an effort to reduce any racial disparities found in the analysis; and

D. A discussion of whether and how frequently the department of adult and juvenile detention intends to conduct future analyses of racial disparities in response to infractions in adult detention.

The executive should electronically file the report and a motion required by this proviso by June 30, 2025, with the clerk of the council, who shall retain an electronic copy and provide an electronic copy to all councilmembers, the council chief of staff, and the lead staff for the law and justice committee or its successor.

¹Ordinance 19861, Section 54, p26 [LINK](#)

III. Executive Summary

One of the primary ways that the Department of Adult and Juvenile Detention manages the safety of its adult facilities is through the behavior management system that is detailed in the Resident Information Handbook. The behavior management system includes rules designed to ensure safety and security, and related sanctions for violating those rules. Sanctions for rule violating behavior range from written warnings to disciplinary housing and are constrained in use by a sanctions matrix that is also documented in the Resident Information Handbook. The report that follows details the violative and sanction behavior observed in the adult divisions over the previous year.

Both the infraction and sanction behavior that is analyzed below are as expected by the Department and are consistent with previous reports detailing infraction and sanction outcomes. Some disparity in volume is observed, particularly in gender and race. Gender disparities are to be expected. While some race disparity is observed, it is small. The outcome measures are examined for disparity, such as whether there are meaningful differences in the number of days of disciplinary housing by gender or race. The differences in disciplinary housing length, which is the most serious sanction, are not meaningful, which is an indication that the sanction matrix is working well to control disparities.

Finally, DAJD is midway through a major data warehouse build, which will enhance the Department's ability to analyze and report on performance measures that encompass adult and juvenile operations and community corrections. The Department will continue to build out analytics and reporting capability and be responsive and responsible for reporting key performance measures. The data warehouse project is currently expected to be completed in Q1 2026.

IV. Background

Department Overview: The Department of Adult and Juvenile Detention (DAJD) operates three secure detention facilities and a number of community supervision programs for pre- and post-trial defendants throughout King County. The two adult secure detention divisions are the Seattle Division and the Kent Division. The Seattle Division operates the King County Correctional Facility (KCCF), and the Kent Division operates the secure detention portion of the Maleng Regional Justice Center (MRJC). In 2024, the combined average daily population of both adult detention facilities was 1,407.

The mission of DAJD is to provide in-custody and community-based services that are data-informed, advance safety, lead system change, and promote equitable outcomes for the people served. The Department's priorities include ensuring the safety and security of staff and residents, managing operational risks, strengthening community connections, promoting opportunities to humanize the people in the facilities and programs, and recruiting, developing, supporting, and retaining staff.

Context: DAJD issues a Resident Information Handbook to each resident of its adult facilities.² The handbook contains useful information and includes a chapter regarding the rules of behavior for all adult residents housed at KCCF and MRJC. In addition, the rules are posted in all housing locations.

Violation of any of the rules of behavior is disruptive to the safe and secure operation of the facilities and may result in discipline. The rules of behavior are classified into three levels of seriousness: general, serious, and major. *General infractions* are considered the least critical of rule violations, ranging in behavior from refusing orders, tampering with equipment, and interfering with headcounts and/or security checks. General infractions are subject to penalties such as loss of commissary, loss of visitation, or loss of good time credits. *Serious infractions* include behaviors such as fighting and flooding of housing units. Adjudication of serious infractions can result in sanctions of between three and seven days of disciplinary segregation, as well as loss of good time,³ loss of privileges related to the violation, and potential classification to a higher security level. *Major infractions*, the most critical violations of behavior standards, include assaulting⁴ a staff member or other resident, arson, or possession of weapons. Major violations can result in a sanction of up to 10 days in disciplinary housing.

Infractions are adjudicated in two ways. For lower-level infractions, officers adjudicate the rule-breaking behavior. Officers can resolve general infractions through written warnings and onsite sanctions. This tool allows officers to address negative behaviors quickly which can keep issues from escalating and helps to ensure that officers can manage their housing units or other posts. For serious and major infractions, officers provide documentation of the violation to DAJD's classification staff through the Jail Management System (JMS). Classification staff then hold a hearing, involving the resident, officer or other staff members, as well as potential witnesses, to adjudicate the infraction. Findings regarding responsibility are assessed at that time, but the resident still retains an opportunity to appeal. Finally, outcomes from disciplinary hearings are reviewed by classification supervisors for completeness and

² The handbook is available in English, Spanish, Somali, Vietnamese, Russian, Chinese, and Korean. It is also available as an ASL (American Sign Language) video on the resident tablets.

³ Good time is a reduction in time served in jail given to residents who maintain good behavior while in custody. It can also be referred to as good conduct time, or time off for good behavior.

⁴ In a legal context, fighting differs from assault in intent and threat. A fight can involve mutual physical contact, while assaults are targeted, with intent to cause harm to another individual.

accuracy. All portions of this process are documented in JMS. The data and analysis provided below follows those two operational tracks.

In April 2021, the King County Auditor completed an extensive audit of the adult jail facilities that focused on safety and equity.⁵ As part of that audit, it was recommended that DAJD annually review certain metrics related to the racial breakdown of security classifications and disciplinary sanctions. DAJD implemented a new JMS in August 2021 and continues to develop capacity to better monitor many aspects of operations, including more efficient analysis of security classifications and disciplinary sanctions. DAJD reported on that progress to the King County Auditor in August 2022 and again in April 2024.

Report Methodology: Data underlying this report was gathered from DAJD’s JMS. It was analyzed and compiled by DAJD staff. Infractions and resulting sanctions were evaluated using univariate analysis to determine the impact on different racial and gender groups. The data and analysis in this report includes all infractions that were reported and adjudicated between January 1 and December 31, 2024.

V. Report

A. Disaggregated data on all infractions

The analysis that follows is based on the totality of infraction data in 2024. No data was trimmed from the total. Given that all data is available to DAJD for this analysis, no sampling is needed, which can simplify the analysis. In addition, it allows for investigation of the data by breaking it down (disaggregating) by gender, age and race.

DAJD issued, investigated, and completed 5,005 infraction reports in 2024, which is the entirety of all infraction reports for the year. Infractions are not evenly distributed between the two adult secure facilities, which is due to the unequal distribution of security classifications between KCCF and MRJC. While DAJD’s adult population was relatively evenly split between KCCF and MRJC in 2024 (2024 KCCF Average Daily Population = 56 percent), the MRJC houses the majority of the minimum and medium security residents, while KCCF houses all of DAJD’s maximum-security residents. KCCF also houses residents who consistently exhibit serious negative behaviors, such as fighting, or other assaultive behavior.

After residents are found to have committed serious and major infractions, it is DAJD’s practice to increase their security classification in response. Because of this, data shows a higher proportion of major infractions at KCCF and a much higher proportion of general infractions at the MRJC given the population housed in that facility. The distribution of infractions by facility is displayed in Table 1.

Table 1: Infractions by Facility (2024)

Facility	General	Serious	Major
King County Correctional Facility	1,492	362	5
Maleng Regional Justice Center	2,708	437	1

⁵ [Jail Safety Audit](#)

The following tables examine the gender, age and race distribution of DAJD’s population which helps to determine whether the department’s infraction numbers, and demographic distributions, are in line with existing scholarship (see below). For example, if DAJD were to find wildly incongruous distributions of gender in the population compared to the infraction data, further analysis would need to be completed. Likewise with age and race distributions.

Longstanding criminological research finds that females offend less frequently, generally engage in less serious and violent behavior, and engage in that behavior for very different reasons than males.^{6, 7}

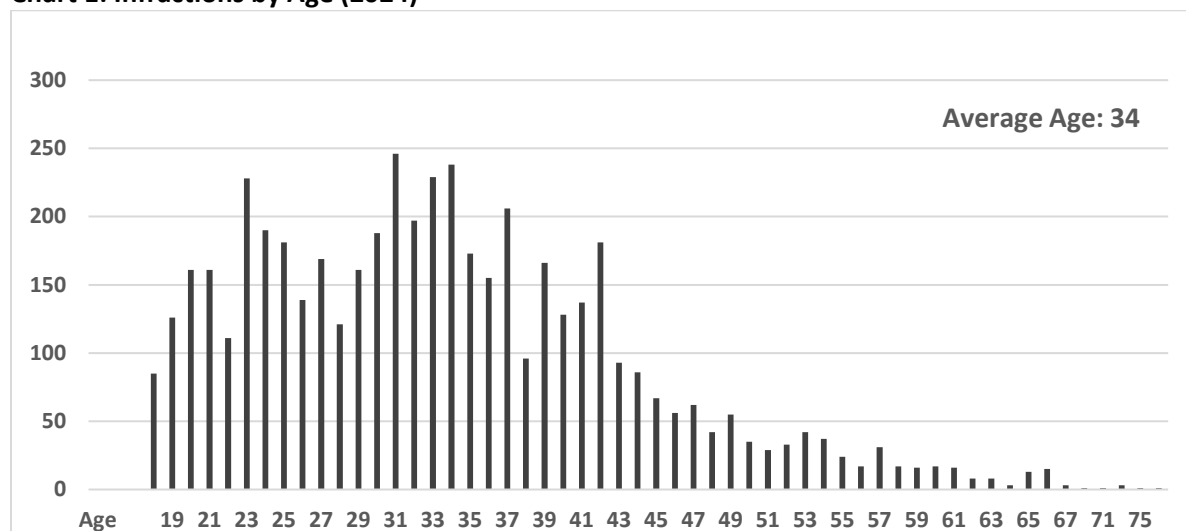
Table 2 displays the distribution of the number and seriousness of 2024 infractions by gender. The smaller number and less serious classification of infractions by female residents is consistent with what would be expected.

Table 2: Infractions by Gender (2024)

Gender	General	Serious	Major
Female	997	105	
Male	3,203	694	6

Chart 1 illustrates the age distribution of infractions in 2024. The age-crime curve is a fundamental concept in criminology that describes the pattern of criminal offending that increases through the 20s and into the early 30s, peaks, and then starts to taper off quickly.⁸ This pattern is sometimes referred to as desistance or ‘aging out’.⁹ The distribution displayed in Chart 1 matches the theoretical age-crime curve closely, with an average age at infraction of 34 years.

Chart 1: Infractions by Age (2024)



⁶ Chesney-Lind, M. and Pasko, L. (2004). *The Female Offender: Girls, Women and Crime* (2nd Ed.). Sage Publications. <https://sk.sagepub.com/book/mono/the-female-offender-2e/toc>

⁷ Gelsthorpe, L. and Morris, A. (2002). *The Role of Gender in Understanding Offending Behavior: An Overview*. Journal of Gender Studies, 11(3), 349-360.

⁸ Farrington, D.P. (1986). Age and Crime. *Crime and Justice*, 7, 189-250. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1147518>

⁹ Sampson, R.J. and Laub, J.H. (1993). *Crime in the Making: Pathways and Turning Points Through Life*.

In Table 3, the racial distribution of infractions is displayed. The Department anticipates that the race distribution of infractions should closely follow the race distribution of the average daily population (ADP) but will not match perfectly.

Table 3: Infractions by Race (2024)

Race	General	Serious	Major
American Indian	99	16	
Asian	244	38	1
Black	1,681	407	2
Hispanic	382	50	
Other/Unknown	170	34	
White	1,624	254	3

B. Analysis of infractions and responses by race

Table 4 indicates that the infraction percentage for Black residents is slightly above their ADP, and Hispanic residents are slightly below, while all other racial categories are nearly identical to their ADP distribution.

Table 4: Average Daily Population and Infraction Distribution by Race (2024)

Race	ADP	Infractions	Delta
American Indian	2.2%	2.3%	(0.10)
Asian	6.3%	5.6%	0.70
Black	37.7%	41.3%	(3.60)
Hispanic	12.1%	8.5%	3.60
Other/Unknown	4.0%	4.0%	0.00
White	37.8%	37.2%	0.60

C. Analysis of infractions and responses

Table 5 shows sanctions issued for infractions issued and adjudicated in 2024. The majority (80 percent) of infractions result in an onsite sanction. Onsite sanction is a term that the Department uses to indicate sanctions issued nearly immediately and can be carried out within the resident's housing unit.

Table 6 provides further details regarding onsite sanctions. The majority of onsite sanctions, and in fact, the majority of all sanctions issued in 2024, are two-hour placements into a resident's cell (commonly referred to as rack backs), and loss of dayroom access. In-cell placements apply to residents that are in general population housing, who would normally have access to the dayrooms. When given a two-hour in-cell sanction, those residents remain in their cells, while other people assigned to the housing unit would remain in the dayroom. Loss of dayroom access applies to residents housed in areas where they received dayroom access by themselves. When given a loss of dayroom sanction, they lose their access for the remainder of the day.

Table 5: Sanction by Violation Severity (2024)

Sanction Type	General	Serious	Major
Onsite Sanction	4,055	771	6
Written Warning	145	28	

Table 6: Specific Onsite Sanction (2024)

Specific Onsite Sanction	General	Serious	Major
2 Hour Rack-Back	2,346	274	1
Cool Down Period	20	18	
Loss of Dayroom Access	1,391	381	5
Other (see Behavior Modification/Corrective Action)	298	98	

Disciplinary Hearings and Sanctions: More serious infractions, because they are subject to more restrictive sanctions, are handled in a more considered manner. Rule violations are written and forwarded to DAJD’s classification unit where a hearing is held, and the resident can present evidence and witnesses. Classification staff consider the written record, and testimony from officers and residents before determining sanctions. The vast majority of disciplinary hearings are held at the KCCF, consistent with the more serious nature of the infractions. Table 7 indicates that 79 percent of the hearings resulting from rule violations in 2024 were held at KCCF.

Table 7: Disciplinary Hearings by Facility (2024)

Facility	Number of Hearings
King County Correctional Facility	2,943
Maleng Regional Justice Center	798

Classification staff review the record of the rule violations and consider all evidence before holding a hearing and considering sanctions. Occasionally, hearings do not occur. The most common reason that hearings are cancelled is due to the resident being released from custody, but classification staff may also determine that the resident is not competent to participate in a hearing or be sanctioned for the behavior. Details on the completion or cancellation of disciplinary hearings are detailed in Table 8.

Table 8: Hearing Status (2024)

Status	Number of Hearings
Cancelled	632
Competency	172
Complete	2,720
Decision Overruled	5
Decision Upheld	212

In a disciplinary hearing, if allegations are founded, residents can be sanctioned to one or more restrictions, ranging from written and verbal warnings, loss of commissary, through disciplinary segregation. Hearings can result in the issuance of a sanction, however, due to the fluid nature of a jail,

those sanctions can often not be imposed, primarily due to release. The tables below are inclusive only of sanctions that were imposed.

As demonstrated in Table 9, the majority of serious and major violations are sanctioned with some number of days in disciplinary segregation.

Table 9: Count of Sanctions by Seriousness Level (2024)

Sanction	Unknown	Serious	Major
Behavior Modification		7	
Disciplinary Segregation	3	1,878	246
Loss of Commissary		9	1
Loss of Earned Good Time Credit		75	85
Loss of Program Privileges	1	59	4
Loss of Visitation		6	
Other		44	5
Program Removal		3	
Restitution		34	3
Verbal Warning		124	9
Written Warning		83	13

As noted previously, the DAJD Resident Information Handbook constrains the number of days of disciplinary segregation that a resident can be sanctioned to for a serious infraction versus a major infraction. In addition, DAJD practices progressive discipline, meaning that the sanction for a first serious infraction may result in three days of disciplinary segregation, where a second infraction may result in five days and so on. Likewise for major infractions. In addition, residents can be sanctioned to a number of days in disciplinary segregation and then some number of those days can be suspended, and therefore not initially applied, but held as a disincentive to further negative behavior. What follows in Tables 10 and 11 are the average days of disciplinary segregation actually imposed for rule violations by race in 2024.

Table 10: Average Days of Disciplinary Segregation for *Serious* Violations, by Race (2024)

Race	Average Days
American Indian	4.4
Asian	4.5
Black	5.0
Hispanic	4.7
Other/Unknown	5.0
White	4.8

Table 10 indicates that the differences in disciplinary segregation days resulting from serious infractions are minimal, with the largest disparity between Black and American Indian residents of just over one-half of a day.

Table 11: Average Days of Disciplinary Segregation for Major Violations, by Race (2024)

Race	Average Days
American Indian	9.4
Asian	8.3
Black	8.7
Hispanic	9.3
Other/Unknown	9.3
White	8.7

The largest difference in disciplinary segregation days for major violations are between American Indian and Asian residents, with a difference of just over one day, as evidenced in Table 11.

Consistent with analysis that was conducted as part of the Jail Safety Audit in 2021, and a follow-up in 2022, DAJD finds no significant racial disparity in either the number of infractions, or the number of days of disciplinary segregation issued. DAJD actively monitors performance and operational metrics, and reports them to the Executive, on a monthly and quarterly basis, however much of this work requires manual compilation, and is therefore impacted by limited resources. The Department is mid-way through a data warehouse project, which will improve its ability to store and manage data. Concurrently, DAJD is continuing to modify procedures and the use of JMS to expand data collection and is building data dashboards to more effectively report and analyze data in near real time. The Department strives to apply an equity lens to all its work, including the performance and operational data that it monitors.

D. Discussion of Future Analysis

DAJD implemented a new JMS in 2021, which laid the foundation to continuously improve the Department's access to data. The Department is now in the middle of a multi-year project with support from the Department of King County Information Technology to implement a data warehouse which will enhance DAJD's ability to analyze and report out data. As part of that effort, the Department will be developing data visualization dashboards to more effectively and efficiently provide access to the Departments most commonly requested metrics, including population demographics, staffing and overtime data, safety metrics such as use of force, access to programming, restrictive housing, and infractions. Upon development and execution of those dashboards, DAJD will be able to monitor infraction data in near real time. The data warehouse project is currently expected to be completed in Q1 2026.