



KING COUNTY AUDITOR'S OFFICE




APRIL 1, 2021

Follow-up on Noise Code: Changes Untested on Difficult Cases; Training and Guidance Could Help

King County Sheriff's Office (KCSO) staff developed a policy providing direction to deputies on where to find guidance for enforcing the noise code. In response to our recommendations, KCSO developed training that provided guidance to deputies on how to enforce the noise code in April 2019. In January 2021, staff drafted a policy summarizing KCSO's approach to public nuisance noise with references to direct deputies to the noise code and the office's training for more detailed information. As of March 2021, the policy was undergoing final review for publication in KCSO's General Orders Manual.

Having the policy incorporated into the General Orders Manual will provide KCSO staff with easy access to information that will help them handle difficult noise situations.

Of the two audit recommendations:

	2 DONE		0 PROGRESS		0 OPEN
Fully implemented Auditor will no longer monitor.		Partially implemented Auditor will continue to monitor.		Remain unresolved Auditor will continue to monitor.	

Please see below for details on the implementation status of these recommendations.

Recommendation 1

On August 2, 2019

DONE



Recommendation 2

DONE



The King County Sheriff's Office (KCSO) should consult with the Prosecuting Attorney's Office on how KCSO should handle noise enforcement, develop policies to clarify its approach, and communicate these policies to deputies.

STATUS UPDATE: The Prosecuting Attorney's Office provided KCSO relevant case law and suggestions to clarify noise enforcement procedure in September 2018. KCSO used this information to develop training for deputies in April 2019, as per Recommendation 1. The training specifically addresses the challenges to enforcement we identified in our report and provides contextual information and options for deputies faced with difficult noise situations.

KCSO staff drafted a policy addendum to the General Orders Manual in January 2021 that provides general guidance on noise enforcement as well as links to the noise code and the training. In addition, senior staff confirmed that it plans to require commissioned staff to take the noise training annually instead of just one time so deputies would be more likely to remember the material if called to respond to a noise complaint.

IMPACT: Providing guidance and training to deputies on how to enforce the noise code reduces ambiguity in complex or challenging noise situations. This may enable KCSO to take action under the noise code to mitigate instances of ongoing noise problems.

Luc Poon conducted this review. If you have any questions or would like more information, please contact the King County Auditor's Office at KCAO@KingCounty.gov or 206-477-1033.