

# Mayors and Business Leaders for **Public Safety**

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## 15 Snohomish County Mayors Launch Coalition to Address Public Safety Concerns

*Coalition reflects a collaborative approach to solving public safety challenges*

**EVERETT — Oct. 4, 2022** — Mayors from 15 Snohomish County cities today launched a new coalition to develop and implement policies that address ongoing community concerns about public safety in the county.

***Mayors and Business Leaders for Public Safety*** was created in response to increased incidents of property and violent crime all across Snohomish County, and to address mental health and homelessness challenges that are primary drivers of the increase. The coalition will also address legislative actions that have contributed to the problem and constrained local efforts to stem criminal activity.

“My fellow Snohomish County mayors and I share a deep and growing concern for the safety of our communities. We must find a balanced approach where we can enforce our laws and ensure everyone’s safety,” said Everett Mayor Cassie Franklin, co-chair of the coalition. “Unfortunately, there is not currently balance in our ability to respond. As someone who has worked extensively within the world of social services, I can tell you this will require enacting criminal justice reforms that allow our officers to use their training, experience and judgement in the field if we are going to actually make progress in enforcing the law, and administering justice.”

While the group currently includes only local government leaders, Franklin said the coalition plans to add business and community leaders who share a vision of improving public safety. It will also require help from the Legislature to address policy changes that have had negative impacts on crime in local communities.

In the coming legislative session, Franklin said the coalition will pursue a coordinated agenda that includes:

- Legislation addressing the *Blake* decision, which decriminalized nearly all drug possession in Washington state.
- Criminal justice policies that will allow officers to more effectively use their training, experience and judgement in the field.
- Increased funding for both law enforcement and social services.

“Homelessness, mental health and public safety are all interrelated problems demanding comprehensive solutions. We cannot expect our dedicated law enforcement professionals or social service agencies to solve these issues independent of one another. We have to look holistically at the challenges confronting our cities, and work collaboratively to solve these problems,” said Marysville Mayor Jon Nehring, coalition co-chair.

“We believe that our coalition is the first in the state to pull together the public and private sector leadership countywide to address these problems. As such, we have an opportunity to serve as a model for other communities,” he said. “Public safety is the most important part of what we do as elected officials, and all of the mayors involved agree that it’s time for a new approach in order to get a better handle on crime and help restore balance to our communities.”

To learn more about the coalition, including a full list of member cities, visit [keepourcitysafe.com](http://keepourcitysafe.com).