



BUSINESS OF THE CITY COUNCIL CITY OF MERCER ISLAND

AB 6984
September 1, 2026
Consent Agenda

AGENDA BILL INFORMATION

TITLE:	AB 6984: Amendment to ILA – Rate Increase for 2027 for Jail Services with South Correctional Entity (SCORE)	☐ Discussion Only ☒ Action Needed: ☒ Motion ☐ Ordinance ☐ Resolution
RECOMMENDED ACTION:	Authorize the City Manager to execute the amendment to the interlocal agreement with SCORE.	

DEPARTMENT:	Police
STAFF:	Jeff Magnan, Acting Chief of Police
COUNCIL LIAISON:	n/a
EXHIBITS:	1. Amendment to Interlocal Agreement for Inmate Housing with South Correctional Entity (SCORE) 2. Interlocal Agreement with SCORE
CITY COUNCIL PRIORITY:	n/a

AMOUNT OF EXPENDITURE	\$ 169,400
AMOUNT BUDGETED (2027)	\$ 169,400
APPROPRIATION REQUIRED	\$ n/a

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this agenda item is to authorize an amendment to the interlocal agreement with the South Correctional Entity (SCORE) for jail services (see Exhibit 1).

- Under State law, the City of Mercer Island is responsible for paying all jail costs associated with housing individuals for violations of misdemeanor level crimes occurring within the City.
- The City maintains contracts with the Issaquah City Jail, SCORE, and King County Jails. The Issaquah City Jail and SCORE are used for misdemeanor bookings, while the King County Jail is used primarily for felony bookings.
- The City utilizes the Issaquah City Jail as the primary jail service for cost efficiency and accessibility.
- Since 2011, the City has also maintained an Interlocal Agreement (ILA) with SCORE (see Exhibit 2), which provides backup jail services when the Issaquah Jail is at capacity and accepts individuals whose medical or behavioral health needs exceed the admission capabilities of the Issaquah Jail.
- From 2022–2024, the City's annual cost for use of SCORE facilities averaged approximately \$54,000. Since 2024, the City's use of SCORE jail services has increased significantly, driven in part by individuals requiring medical or behavioral health services beyond the care capabilities of the Issaquah City Jail.

- In 2024, the City spent \$49,400 on SCORE jail services. By 2025, expenditures increased to \$159,200. This trend continued into 2026, with \$140,100 in SCORE expenditures as of mid-August. The increase reflects both greater utilization of SCORE and higher costs associated with incarceration. One significant factor is the increasing number of individuals requiring medical or behavioral health services beyond what can be accommodated at the Issaquah City Jail.
- Effective January 1, 2027, SCORE's Administrative Board adopted increases in their daily housing rates, daily rate surcharges, and booking fees. The rate adjustment requires an amendment to the ILA.
- The cost of the rate adjustment in 2027 is included in the 2027-2028 Biennial Budget, with future year funding contingent on City Council budget approval.

BACKGROUND

Under State law, the City of Mercer Island is responsible for jail costs associated with housing individuals for misdemeanor-level offenses occurring within the City, while the State is generally responsible for incarceration costs associated with felony offenses. The City maintains contracts with the Issaquah City Jail, SCORE, and King County Jails. The Issaquah City Jail and SCORE are used primarily for misdemeanor bookings, while King County Jail is used primarily for felony bookings.

Since 2011, the City has maintained an Interlocal Agreement (ILA) with SCORE (see Exhibit 2), which provides backup jail services when the Issaquah City Jail is at capacity and accepts individuals whose medical or behavioral health needs exceed the care capabilities of the Issaquah City Jail.

From 2022–2024, the City's annual cost for use of SCORE facilities averaged approximately \$54,000. In 2024, the City spent \$49,400 on SCORE jail services. By 2025, expenditures increased to \$159,200. This trend continued into 2026, with \$140,100 in SCORE expenditures as of mid-August.

The increase reflects both greater utilization of SCORE and higher costs associated with incarceration. One significant factor is the increasing number of individuals requiring medical or behavioral health services beyond what can be accommodated at the Issaquah City Jail. When an individual cannot be medically cleared or safely housed at Issaquah, SCORE provides the City with an alternative facility capable of accommodating more complex medical and behavioral health needs. Increased jail utilization in recent years, together with SCORE's adopted rate increases, has further contributed to higher overall expenditures.

The Mercer Island Police Department and Municipal Court employ several operational strategies to limit unnecessary incarceration while maintaining public safety, accountability, and appropriate judicial oversight. These include off-court-day Zoom arraignments, expanded use of Electronic Home Monitoring (EHM) for eligible pre-trial and post-conviction defendants, weekend releases on personal recognizance when appropriate. Additionally, the court quashes eligible warrants and resetting hearings when individuals voluntarily contact the court, and a medical furlough process for inmates who cannot be medically cleared for jail housing.

These practices reduce unnecessary bookings, transportation, and jail housing days and help contain costs that the City would otherwise incur. Despite these efforts, the City's jail costs are increasingly driven by external factors beyond local control, including medical and behavioral health needs, regional capacity constraints, placement limitations, and rising facility rates.

ISSUE/DISCUSSION

Effective January 1, 2027, SCORE's Administrative Board adopted increases in their daily housing rates, daily rate surcharges, and booking fees outlined in Table 1. SCORE also created a Virtual Court Admin Fee to recover costs associated with court hearing integration (see Exhibit 1).

Table 1 – SCORE Rates				
Rate Structure	2026	2027	YOY Chg.	
			%	\$
Daily Housing Rates				
General Population – Guaranteed Beds	\$ 155.69	\$ 171.26	10.0%	\$ 15.57
General Population – non-Guaranteed Beds	223.83	235.02	5.0%	11.19
Daily Rate Surcharges				
Mental Health – Residential Beds	178.84	187.78	5.0%	8.94
Medical Acute Beds	244.07	256.28	5.0%	12.21
Mental Health – Acute Beds	312.68	328.31	5.0%	15.63
Booking Fee	95.00	99.75	5.0%	4.75
Virtual Court Admin Fee	75.00	78.75	5.0%	3.75

The Police Department and Municipal Court remain committed to cost-effective alternatives to incarceration, wherever appropriate. Access to SCORE is vital when placement at other regional jail facilities is not feasible or appropriate. Approving the proposed ILA amendment accounts for SCORE's adopted rates while ensuring the City retains the bed space required to meet its jail obligations.

These updated rates and year-over year cost increases will be incorporated into the City's 2027–2028 Biennial Budget, with future year funding contingent on City Council budget approval.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Authorize the City Manager to execute the amendment to the interlocal agreement with SCORE for jail services as substantially shown in Exhibit 1 to AB 6984.