



**PalAmerican**  
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**SECURITY**

**Guide:**

## Managing Public Safety Without Police Support – A Security Strategy for the Puget Sound Region

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What to Do When Officer Response Time Is Hours—or Doesn't Come at All

## Introduction & The Growing Crisis in Public Safety

The Puget Sound region is facing an unprecedented public safety challenge. Law enforcement agencies across King, Pierce, and Snohomish counties are experiencing record staffing shortages, a situation that has only intensified since 2020. As officer headcounts dwindle and call volumes rise, many residents and business owners are left wondering: What happens when police no longer show up?

### Key Statistics:

- Seattle Police Department has seen a loss of over 600 officers since 2020.
- 911 call response times for priority 2 calls in Seattle now average over 45 minutes.
- Tacoma has over 70 officer vacancies and has suspended responses to certain property crimes.

The impact is tangible: longer response times, fewer patrols, and entire categories of crime going uninvestigated. This decline in police support is leaving a critical gap in public safety coverage—a gap that businesses, property managers, transit authorities, and even healthcare providers must now navigate. This guide explores the emerging safety landscape in the Puget Sound region and offers actionable solutions for restoring order and confidence.

## Legislative Efforts and Local Responses

Public safety in Washington State has become increasingly politicized in recent years, resulting in legislation that, while well-intentioned, has had unintended consequences. The most notable is House Bill 1310, passed in 2021, which redefined when law enforcement officers may use force. While designed to reduce unnecessary violence, many officers report that the bill has introduced confusion and hesitation into day-to-day policing.

At the local level, cities like Seattle and Tacoma have tried to adapt:

- **Seattle** allocated additional funding for mental health crisis teams and community-based safety programs.
- **Tacoma** launched initiatives to recruit and retain officers but continues to fall short of hiring goals.
- **Pierce County** explored the creation of a regional crisis response unit to reduce pressure on traditional law enforcement.

Unfortunately, these measures have not stemmed the tide. The vacuum left by traditional policing has given rise to community-based and private security solutions that serve as a stopgap—and in many cases, a long-term alternative.

## Notable News Stories

### 1. “Seattle Businesses Hire Private Security Amid Soaring Crime and Slow Police Response” – KOMO News, Oct 2024

In the wake of increased theft and street disorder, businesses across Seattle’s Capitol Hill and Belltown neighborhoods have started contracting with private security firms like PalAmerican to maintain a visible deterrent and offer peace of mind to customers and staff.

### 2. “Tacoma Police Staffing Crisis Worsens” – Tacoma News Tribune, Sept 2024

Tacoma’s Police Department reported a 30% increase in officer attrition compared to the previous year, prompting the city council to revise its 911 triage policy and redirect non-emergency calls to civilian crisis responders.

### 3. “Transit Crime on the Rise in Puget Sound Region” – KING 5 News, Aug 2024

From graffiti and drug use to passenger assaults, crime on public transit has reached alarming levels. Many transit authorities are deploying private security patrols and surveillance systems as a supplement to reduced police presence.





## Impact on the Transit Industry

Public transportation has become a flashpoint in the public safety crisis. With fewer transit police officers and an increase in rider complaints, operators and passengers face heightened risks.

### Challenges:

- Increased fare evasion and vandalism
- Drug use, assaults, and public disorder
- Operator intimidation and safety concerns

**PalAmerican's Approach:** PalAmerican supports regional transit systems with:

- Transit-specialized security officers trained in de-escalation, fare enforcement, and public interaction
- Visible foot and mobile patrols across platforms and on board vehicles
- Surveillance, incident reporting, and collaboration with law enforcement when escalation is necessary

Our presence reinforces the rules of ridership and ensures a safer, more welcoming environment for all commuters.

## Impact on High-Rises & Commercial Properties

Urban high-rises and office buildings are frequent targets for opportunistic crime. The exodus of corporate tenants during the pandemic, combined with inadequate police response, has made these properties vulnerable.

### **Challenges:**

- Trespassing, break-ins, and elevator loitering
- Vandalism and property damage
- Unhoused individuals seeking shelter in entryways or garages

**PalAmerican's Approach:** We deploy concierge-style officers who provide both customer service and security. Our layered security strategy includes:

- 24/7 lobby coverage and access control
- Remote SOC (Security Operations Center) monitoring
- Rapid response protocols and coordinated emergency drills

With PalAmerican, tenants feel safer, landlords regain control, and occupancy retention improves.

## Impact on Retail & Shopping Centers

Retail environments are increasingly under siege by theft rings, disorderly conduct, and repeat offenders emboldened by minimal consequences.

### **Challenges:**

- Organized retail theft and shoplifting
- Vehicle break-ins in parking lots
- Threats against staff and customers

**PalAmerican's Approach:** Our retail protection model is proactive and deterrent-based. Services include:

- Uniformed officers with customer service training
- Internal loss prevention professionals and CCTV monitoring
- Support for post-incident reporting and police engagement

Our presence restores shopper confidence and employee morale, even in areas where law enforcement support is limited.



## A Partner in Protection: Why PalAmerican?

When police support becomes unpredictable, you need a dependable partner with experience, professionalism, and integrity. PalAmerican Security is that partner.

We are more than guards. We are trained professionals with the tools and protocols to meet your site-specific needs. Whether it's preventing vandalism at a transit station, managing access to a commercial high-rise, or de-escalating conflict in a retail setting, we act with purpose and accountability.

What Sets Us Apart:

- **People First:** Industry-leading training, wages, and culture
- **Tailored Programs:** Each client receives a custom solution
- **Proven Response:** Decades of experience across industries
- **Local Teams:** Based in the community we serve, with national resources to scale

When public safety is compromised, we restore it—with confidence, compassion, and control.



### Contact Us to Learn More

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