



KING COUNTY

1200 King County Courthouse
516 Third Avenue
Seattle, WA 98104

Signature Report

July 21, 2015

Ordinance 18085

Proposed No. 2015-0229.3

Sponsors Gossett, Dembowski, Hague and
McDermott

1 AN ORDINANCE relating to a task force to make
2 recommendations on the creation of a King County
3 immigrant and refugee commission.

4 PREAMBLE:

5 With a population of two million residents, King County grows more
6 diverse every year. Since 2000, the county has grown by more than two
7 hundred twenty thousand residents, with most of the increase attributable
8 to people of color. Only half of that growth is from births. Most of the
9 rest is from immigrants and refugees - from all parts of Asia, Latin
10 America, Eastern Europe and Africa.

11 Foreign-born residents, including immigrants and refugees, face particular
12 challenges upon arrival in the United States. One quarter of King County
13 residents speak a language other than English at home, and close to half of
14 them report that no one in their households speak English well or at all. In
15 total, King County residents speak over one hundred twenty different
16 languages, or over one hundred seventy languages including dialects
17 spoken.

18 Whether it is public health, public safety, public defense, elections or other
19 county governmental services, accessing county services presents a special

20 challenge to those unfamiliar with this country and with our government
21 settings in particular. Many agencies work to address equity and social
22 justice in delivering services, whether it is providing interpreter services
23 for health screening for a refugee at a public health clinic or public
24 defense legal services for an immigrant youth in dependency proceedings,
25 obtaining a court order that allows the youth to successfully apply for
26 special immigrant juvenile visa status and thereby obtaining the stability to
27 remain in this country and move forward with the youth's life. It is vital
28 that the county keep determinants of equity and barriers to opportunity in
29 the forefront of decision-making that will impact residents of our county
30 and help them to become thriving involved members of the community.
31 King County is also committed to being a leader in building regional
32 partnerships and promoting a coordinated, regional approach to address
33 the needs of this county's immigrant and refugee residents, consistent with
34 the county's vision for a strategic plan for equity and social justice.
35 Community partners such as individuals, faith- and community-based
36 organizations, local government agencies and the private sector have
37 various touchpoints with immigrants and refugees. Working collectively,
38 these groups can use each other's expertise to identify how to build a
39 community that strengthens and empowers immigrants and refugees to
40 become fully contributing, participating members of King County.
41 Understanding the needs, demographics, and geographic distribution of
42 the immigrant and refugee populations is important to the effective

43 provision of services to these populations. The thoughtful creation of a
44 commission serving immigrants and refugees with a representative
45 membership that will encourage all voices to be heard regardless of the
46 language spoken, can be an important means to achieving fair and
47 equitable access to county services and opportunities for all.

48 BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF KING COUNTY:

49 SECTION 1. A.1. The King County executive is directed to convene a task force
50 to develop a final report with recommendations on the creation of an immigrant and
51 refugee commission.

52 2. The report shall include recommendations on the commission's membership,
53 mission and scope of duties.

54 3. The report may consider recommendations on the commission's alignment
55 with other regional and local efforts, and relationship with the county's office of equity
56 and social justice. This may include consideration of regional and local resources
57 available to immigrants and refugees, including, but not limited to, services by
58 community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, local governments and other
59 government entities such as consulates.

60 4. The report may consider an evaluation of how the county's current provision
61 of services addresses immigrant and refugee resident needs and helps to move low-
62 income immigrant and refugee populations towards economic success, what gaps
63 currently exist in the provision of county services for immigrants and refugees that create
64 barriers to success, and a commission's potential role in addressing gaps.

65 5. The task force should consult with county agencies to learn how different
66 agencies address equity and social justice in the delivery of their services to immigrants
67 and refugees.

68 6. The report may consider how needs of immigrant and refugee populations
69 differ in high density urban area, lower density suburban areas, and lowest density rural
70 unincorporated areas and develop recommendations for how a commission can address
71 those differences within the commission's mission and scope of duties.

72 7. The report should also consider the contents of the 2014 Budget Proviso
73 Report: Limited English Proficiency Proviso Response Report (2014-RPT0092)
74 submitted by the office of performance, strategy and budget and make recommendations
75 on the role of the commission in implementing the recommendations of the proviso
76 report.

77 B. The task force shall conduct outreach activities to obtain community input and
78 shall use that input to inform the report. Outreach activities shall include, but not be
79 limited to, holding open public forums and actively soliciting written, electronic or oral
80 community comments.

81 SECTION 2. A. The task force shall consist of at least eight and no more than
82 twelve members.

83 B. The task force shall include representation from at least two organizations
84 representing immigrant issues and two organizations representing refugee issues. Of
85 these, at least one of the immigrant organizations and one of the refugee organizations
86 shall be small, local, community-based organizations.

87 C. At least one member of the task force shall live in, or represent an
88 organization situated within, unincorporated King County.

89 D. At least one member of the task force shall represent a faith-based
90 organization.

91 E. At least one member of the task force shall represent the minority business
92 sector, such as a minority chamber of commerce or minority bar association
93 representative.

94 F. At least one member of the task force shall be knowledgeable about King
95 County government operations in general and may possess expertise about service
96 delivery of one or more agencies to immigrants and refugees. This member should be
97 able to serve as a resource to other task force members to identify opportunities and
98 challenges within local government in the delivery of county services for immigrant and
99 refugee populations and help bring together the governmental knowledge of staff with the
100 community understanding of the task force.

101 G. Task force members shall be leaders within the immigrant and refugee
102 communities. Members must possess expertise in immigrant or refugee issues and the
103 ability to engage relevant communities in identifying desirable characteristics of the
104 commission's membership, mission and scope of duties.

105 H. The task force shall be appointed by the executive no later than September 1,
106 2015. At least thirty days before the appointment, the executive shall notify all
107 councilmembers by letter of the persons the executive intends to appoint. The executive
108 shall also, by electronic mail or letter, notify all councilmembers of the final persons who
109 will be appointed by at least seven days before the appointment. Upon appointment of

110 the task force, the executive shall notify all councilmembers by letter of the appointments
111 and file a paper and electronic copy with the clerk of the council. The task force shall
112 hold its first meeting no later than October 1, 2015.

113 I. The executive shall reimburse task force members for mileage at the standard
114 county reimbursement rate for travel to and from scheduled task force meetings and for
115 parking at meetings outside of county facilities. Task force members attending meetings
116 at county facilities shall have parking in the county garage paid by the executive while
117 members attend meetings or conduct business related to the task force.

118 J. The executive and council shall jointly provide staffing and resources to
119 effectively support the work of the task force and its outreach activities.

120 SECTION 3. A. By February 1, 2016, the task force shall provide a progress
121 report to the council. The progress report shall be filed in the form of a paper original
122 and an electronic copy with the clerk of the council, who shall retain the original and
123 provide an electronic copy to all councilmembers and the lead staff of the committee of
124 the whole, or its successor.

125 B. By May 31, 2016, the task force shall file its final report in the form of a paper

126 original and an electronic copy with the clerk of the council, who shall retain the original
127 and provide an electronic copy to all councilmembers and the executive.
128

Ordinance 18085 was introduced on 6/15/2015 and passed as amended by the Metropolitan King County Council on 7/20/2015, by the following vote:

Yes: 9 - Mr. Phillips, Mr. von Reichbauer, Mr. Gossett, Ms. Hague,
Ms. Lambert, Mr. Dunn, Mr. McDermott, Mr. Dembowski and Mr.
Upthegrove
No: 0
Excused: 0

KING COUNTY COUNCIL
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON



Larry Phillips, Chair

ATTEST:



Anne Noris, Clerk of the Council

APPROVED this 30 day of JULY, 2015.



Dow Constantine, County Executive

Attachments: None

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KING COUNTY COUNCIL CLERK