



## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 2017-0098, **Version:** 1

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Clerk 03/07/2017

A MOTION approving a new policy for accessible voting centers.

WHEREAS, RCW 29A.40.160 requires that each county auditor open a voting center each primary, special election and general election, and may provide election services at additional locations at the discretion of the county auditor, and

WHEREAS, the King County council passed Motion 12820 in July 2008 approving a plan for regional voting centers and ballot drop boxes that was never fully implemented, and

WHEREAS, the King County council passed Motion 14491 in December 2015 requesting that the director of elections transmit a plan to improve access to and convenience of ballot drop-off locations in King County, and

WHEREAS, Motion 14634 approving the ballot drop-off location plan and increasing the number of King County drop boxes by thirty-three was approved by the King County council in May 2016 and fully implemented in advance of the 2016 general election, and

WHEREAS, one of the three priorities of the department of elections is working to remove barriers to voting at both the individual and community level, and

WHEREAS, one of the guiding principles for King County is financial sustainability, and

WHEREAS, accessible voting centers have seen diminishing use since the county's transition to vote-by-mail in 2009, and

WHEREAS, for some recent special elections the cost of operating three accessible voting centers regardless of which jurisdictions are participating has risen to more than one thousand dollars per voter, and

WHEREAS, since 2008 there have been significant improvements to technology to support individuals with disabilities and many prefer to use the county's online ballot marking program, and

WHEREAS, the implementation of a new tabulation system will provide more flexibility and convenience to be able to provide service to voters where they are, and

WHEREAS, a new approach to accessible voting centers will allow the county to utilize staff and resources currently dedicated to fixed, underused locations in a manner that more effectively meets voters' needs;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT MOVED by the Council of King County:

A. For special elections, the director of elections shall open accessible voting centers at:

1. The elections department headquarters;
2. Additional locations as deemed necessary by the director of elections and in consultation with the jurisdictions participating in the special election.

B. The accessible voting center at the elections department headquarters shall be open at least eighteen days before election day. If additional locations are opened, their hours and days of operation will be determined by the director of elections.

C. For primary and general elections, the director of elections shall open accessible voting centers at:

1. The elections department headquarters;
2. Additional locations throughout the county, to potentially include both permanent and mobile options, to be distributed in a manner that maximizes resources and most effectively serves county residents.

3. The director of elections will regularly consult with the county's disability advisory committee, the citizens' election oversight committee, and participating jurisdictions regarding accessible voting needs and deployment of accessible voting options.

D. The accessible voting center at the elections department headquarters shall be

open at least eighteen days before election day. The hours and days of operation of additional locations will be determined by the director of elections.