



**KING COUNTY**

1200 King County Courthouse  
516 Third Avenue  
Seattle, WA 98104

**Signature Report**

**August 11, 2011**

**Ordinance 16557**

**Proposed No.** 2009-0347.2

**Sponsors** Patterson, Phillips and Constantine

1           AN ORDINANCE related to conducting elections entirely  
2           by mail; amending Ordinance 15523, Section 2, adding a  
3           new chapter to K.C.C. Title 1 and repealing Ordinance  
4           9391, Section 1, as amended, and K.C.C. 1.08.020 and  
5           Ordinance 918, Section 3, as amended, and K.C.C.  
6           1.08.030.

7           **STATEMENT OF FACTS:**

8           1. On June 19, 2006, the King County council approved Ordinance 15523  
9           directing that all future county elections will be conducted entirely by mail  
10          on a date established by the director of elections, only after certain  
11          conditions had been met.

12          2. The conditions established by the council included: the appointment  
13          and confirmation of a director of elections and a superintendent of  
14          elections; completion of a cultural change and management training;  
15          council approval of a plan for regional voting centers and ballot drop  
16          boxes; the implementation of an Internet-based ballot tracking system.

17          3. These conditions were established largely to ensure that the elections  
18          office had highly trained leadership, management and staff that could  
19          successfully manage a transition to vote-by-mail.

20 4. All the conditions of Ordinance 15523 have been met except for the  
21 appointment and confirmation of a superintendent of elections.

22 5. Since 2004, King County elections has made significant improvement  
23 to its policies and procedures and the training of staff and has conducted  
24 twenty-two successful elections. During this time, the county has not had  
25 a superintendent of elections and yet operations continue to improve.

26 6. Given the history of operational improvements since 2004, there is  
27 reason to believe that King County elections can make a successful  
28 transition to conducting all future elections by mail without a  
29 superintendent of elections.

30 7. K.C.C. 1.08.020 and 1.08.030, which is about rental for polling places,  
31 inspectors and judges which are no longer necessary when elections are  
32 done by mail.

33 BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF KING COUNTY:

34 SECTION 1. Ordinance 15523, Section 2, as amended by section 2 of this  
35 ordinance, should constitute a new chapter in K.C.C. Title 1.

36 SECTION 2. Ordinance 15523, Section 2, is hereby amended to read as follows:

37 The director of ~~((the records,))~~ elections ~~((and licensing services division))~~ is  
38 directed to conduct all King County elections entirely by mail ballot in accordance with  
39 state law ~~((beginning on a date in 2007 or in 2008 determined by the director only after~~  
40 ~~the following conditions have been met:~~

41           ~~A. A new director of records, elections and licensing services and a~~  
42 ~~superintendent of elections have been appointed by the executive and confirmed by the~~  
43 ~~council;~~

44           ~~B. The director and elections section staff have completed the cultural change~~  
45 ~~and management training recommended by the citizens' election oversight committee and~~  
46 ~~the independent task force on elections; and~~

47           ~~C. The executive has transmitted and the council has approved by motion a plan~~  
48 ~~with cost estimates for regional voting centers and ballot drop boxes. The plan shall be~~  
49 ~~filed in the form of an original and ten copies with the clerk of the council, who will~~  
50 ~~retain the original and will forward copies to each councilmember and to the lead staff of~~  
51 ~~the committee of the whole.))~~

52           SECTION 3. The position of superintendent of elections is still important to  
53 conducting elections in King County. Therefore, the council strongly encourages the  
54 appointment of a highly qualified superintendent of elections as soon as practicable.

55

56            SECTION 4. Ordinance 9391, Section 1, as amended, and K.C.C. 1.08.020 and  
57 Ordinance 918, Section 3, as amended, and K.C.C. 1.08.030 are hereby repealed.  
58

Ordinance 16557 was introduced on 6/1/2009 and passed by the Metropolitan King County Council on 6/15/2009, by the following vote:

Yes: 5 - Mr. Phillips, Mr. Gossett, Ms. Patterson, Ms. Lambert and Mr. Constantine  
No: 2 - Ms. Hague and Mr. Ferguson  
Excused: 2 - Mr. von Reichbauer and Mr. Dunn

KING COUNTY COUNCIL  
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON

---

Larry Gossett, Chair

ATTEST:

---

Anne Noris, Clerk of the Council

APPROVED this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_.

---

Dow Constantine, County Executive

**Attachments:** None