



# KING COUNTY

1200 King County Courthouse  
516 Third Avenue  
Seattle, WA 98104

## Signature Report

### Ordinance 19616

**Proposed No.** 2023-0152.2

**Sponsors** Upthegrove and Dembowski

1           AN ORDINANCE relating to translated voting materials;  
 2           and amending Ordinance 18086, Section 2, and K.C.C.  
 3           2.16.136.

4           **STATEMENT OF FACTS:**

- 5           1. All citizens, including those for whom English is a second language,  
 6           should be able to access their right to vote.
- 7           2. Research shows that targeted minority language voting materials and  
 8           related outreach can improve voter turnout. According to a report by the  
 9           Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund, after coverage  
 10          provided under Section 203 of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 was  
 11          expanded in 1992, the number of Asian Americans registered to vote  
 12          increased dramatically. As cited in the journal Legislation and Public  
 13          Policy vol. 10:195 2006, "in covered areas where the Department of  
 14          Justice brought section 203 enforcement actions, participation not only in  
 15          voting but in running for political office increased dramatically."
- 16          3. The King County department of elections began its language access  
 17          program in 2002 with the addition of Chinese under Section 203 of the  
 18          Voting Rights Act of 1965. Vietnamese was added under Section 203 in  
 19          2012.

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- 20           4. King County's True North is "Making King County a welcoming  
21           community where every person can thrive." A welcoming community is  
22           an engaged and open community, one that values every voice.
- 23           5. In 2015, the King County council adopted Ordinance 18086, which  
24           requires that the department of elections examine changes in the use of  
25           languages in the King County population at least every five years and  
26           provide a report to the King County council, and requires the department  
27           of elections to provide services in any language identified in this report as  
28           being spoken by ten thousand or more limited-English-proficient  
29           residents. That created a standard for in-language service even more  
30           inclusive than the one created by Section 203 of the Voting Rights Act of  
31           1965, and includes languages not covered by Section 203 such as African  
32           and European languages.
- 33           6. Ordinance 18086 also required the department of elections to provide  
34           services and materials to voters in Spanish and Korean. Since the  
35           introduction of added services in Spanish and Korean, requests for  
36           translated materials to the department of elections have increased by more  
37           than one hundred twelve percent.
- 38           7. In the latest report submitted to the King County council in 2022 by the  
39           department of elections under Ordinance 18086, Report 2022-RPT0025,  
40           the department of elections recommended adding Russian and Somali to  
41           the list of languages in which they provide services and materials based on

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42 both available statistical data and conversations with community service  
43 providers.

44 8. In 2017, the King County council adopted Ordinance 18665, which  
45 requires all King County agencies to develop plans to provide  
46 communications and vital documents in the top six non-English languages  
47 used in King County as identified by the office of equity and social justice  
48 and the county demographer. The top six languages currently identified  
49 are Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, Somali, Russian, and Korean.

50 9. The department of elections currently provides services and materials  
51 in four of the six top non-English languages identified by the office of  
52 equity and social justice and the county demographer under Ordinance  
53 18665, but not Somali or Russian.

54 10. According to American Community Survey estimates, the population  
55 of Russian speaking limited-English-proficient residents in King County  
56 has grown over the last five years. Russian is the most common language  
57 spoken at home by limited-English-proficient residents in King County in  
58 which the department of elections does not already provide services and  
59 materials.

60 11. Somali is one of the most requested languages for interpretation or  
61 translation by King County residents utilizing government services.

62 Somali is the second most requested language in King County for  
63 interpretation at public health clinics, behind only Spanish, according to  
64 public health – Seattle & King County, as well as the fifth most requested

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65 language for interpretation at court according to the King County district  
66 court. Somali is also the fourth most common language spoken at home  
67 by limited-English-proficient students in King County according to data  
68 from the Office of Financial Management and the Office of the  
69 Superintendent of Public Instruction, behind only Spanish, Chinese, and  
70 Vietnamese.

71 12. One of the department of elections's core values is the belief that  
72 democracy works best when all voices are heard and that election officials  
73 must proactively work to remove barriers to ensure all voters can  
74 meaningfully participate in our elections.

75 BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF KING COUNTY:

76 SECTION 1. Ordinance 18086, Section 2, and K.C.C. 2.16.136 are hereby  
77 amended to read as follows:

78 A.1. For all elections administered by the department of elections, the director of  
79 elections shall prepare voting materials, to the extent not already provided by the  
80 ~~((e))~~Office of the Washington state Secretary of State, in the languages ~~((determined~~  
81 ~~through the process described in))~~ required by subsection ~~((B-))~~ C. of this section, in  
82 addition to those languages required by Section 203 of the Voting Rights Act of 1965,  
83 P.L. 94-73, 42 U.S.C. 1973aa-1a. The director of elections shall make the voting  
84 materials available to any resident of King County upon request of that person, and in  
85 addition shall make the voter registration materials required by this section broadly  
86 available, including to King County offices required to make them available under  
87 K.C.C. 2.16.137. The director of elections shall record the numbers of ballot and voter

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88 pamphlet requests in each language other than English, and include this information in  
89 the report required in subsection ~~((C.))~~ B. of this section.

90           2. For the purposes of this section, "voting materials" include, but are not  
91 limited to:

92           a. voter registration notices, voter registration forms, and voter registration  
93 instructions, to the extent not already provided by the ~~((O))~~ Office of the Washington state  
94 Secretary of State;

95           b. ballots and ballot instructions; and

96           c. local voters' pamphlets, in conformity with K.C.C. chapter 1.10 and chapter  
97 29A.32 RCW.

98           B. In 2016 and at least every five years thereafter, the director of elections shall  
99 review data on limited-English-proficient populations in King County and shall  
100 determine, in consultation with community leaders of limited-English-proficient  
101 populations and the office of performance, strategy and budget, each single language that  
102 has ten thousand or more limited-English-proficient King County residents. The director  
103 of elections shall make this determination by referring to the best available data from the  
104 United States Census Bureau or other source the director considers relevant and reliable.  
105 The director of elections shall file a report of this determination, including a list of all  
106 languages that meet the threshold of ten thousand or more limited-English-proficient  
107 residents, and the supporting analysis by January 30, 2017, and at least every five years  
108 after the first report is filed. The director of elections shall electronically file the report  
109 ~~((in the form of a paper original and an electronic copy))~~ with the clerk of the council,  
110 who shall retain ~~((the original))~~ a copy and provide an electronic copy to all

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111 councilmembers, the council chief of staff, the council chief policy ~~((director))~~ office,  
112 and the director of elections.

113 C.~~((1. Beginning for the first general election after the director files a report~~  
114 ~~required by subsection B. of this section, the director shall provide translated voting~~  
115 ~~materials, in addition to the languages required under section 203 of the Voting Rights~~  
116 ~~Act of 1965, P.L. 94 73, 42 U.S.C. 1973aa 1a, in all languages determined by the director~~  
117 ~~under subsection B. of this section, unless within forty five days of the filing of the~~  
118 ~~determination report, an ordinance is enacted that adopts a different list. If a different list~~  
119 ~~is enacted by ordinance, the director shall provide materials in all languages included in~~  
120 ~~that list.~~

121 ~~2. Until forty five days have elapsed from the filing of the first report required~~  
122 ~~by subsection B. of this section, the director of elections shall prepare and make available~~  
123 ~~to the public at the same time as voting materials in English at least Spanish and Korean~~  
124 ~~language voting materials)) The director of elections shall prepare and make available to~~  
125 ~~the public translated voting materials in the following languages:~~

126 1. Spanish;

127 2. Chinese;

128 3. Vietnamese;

129 4. Korean;

130 5. Russian;

131 6. Somali;

132 7. Any languages identified by the director in a report required by subsection B.  
133 of this section as having ten thousand or more limited-English-proficient King County

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134 residents, unless an ordinance is enacted within forty-five days of the filing of that report  
135 requiring otherwise, beginning with the first general election after that report is filed with  
136 the clerk of the council; and

137 8. Any other languages required under Section 203 of the Voting Rights Act of  
138 1965, P.L. 94-73, 42 U.S.C. 1973aa-1a.

139 D. The director of elections shall also ensure the provision of targeted outreach to  
140 all language communities identified under subsection ~~((s B. and))~~ C. of this section to  
141 promote awareness of and requests for translated voting materials. The outreach may  
142 include, but not be limited to, engagement of community leaders from and outreach to  
143 community organizations serving limited-English-proficient populations, minority  
144 language media purchases, such as advertising, attendance, and materials distribution at  
145 large limited-English-proficient community events, and recruitment of bilingual election  
146 workers. The director of elections shall maintain and make available to the public at least  
147 one hundred twenty days before each primary and general election a list of the languages  
148 other than English in which the department will provide translated material and  
149 assistance, and the specific form of that assistance.

150 E. The cost of providing the materials and services described in subsections A.,

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151 C., and D. of this section shall be considered a cost of elections, of which a pro rata share  
152 shall be recovered from constituent jurisdictions and the state.

Ordinance 19616 was introduced on 4/4/2023 and passed by the Metropolitan King County Council on 5/23/2023, by the following vote:

Yes: 9 - Balducci, Dembowski, Dunn, Kohl-Welles, Perry, McDermott, Upthegrove, von Reichbauer and Zahilay

KING COUNTY COUNCIL  
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON

DocuSigned by:  
  
E76CE01F07B14EF...  
Dave Upthegrove, Chair

ATTEST:

DocuSigned by:  
  
8DE1BB375AD3422...  
Melani Pedroza, Clerk of the Council

APPROVED this \_\_\_\_\_ day of 6/1/2023, \_\_\_\_\_.

DocuSigned by:  
  
4FBCAB8196AE4C6...  
Dow Constantine, County Executive

**Attachments:** None

**Certificate Of Completion**

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Certificate Pages: 5	Initials: 0
AutoNav: Enabled	Envelope Originator:
Envelopeld Stamping: Enabled	Cherie Camp
Time Zone: (UTC-08:00) Pacific Time (US & Canada)	401 5TH AVE
	SEATTLE, WA 98104
	Cherie.Camp@kingcounty.gov
	IP Address: 198.49.222.20

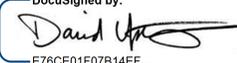
**Record Tracking**

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Security Appliance Status: Connected	Pool: FedRamp	
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**Signer Events**

Dave Upthegrove  
dave.upthegrove@kingcounty.gov  
Chair  
Security Level: Email, Account Authentication (None)

**Signature**

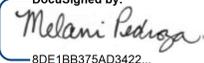
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Signed: 5/25/2023 9:00:47 AM

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ID: decb78a7-eef4-4367-ae30-c8f5b28a347d

Melani Pedroza  
melani.pedroza@kingcounty.gov  
Clerk of the Council  
King County Council  
Security Level: Email, Account Authentication (None)

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Signature Adoption: Uploaded Signature Image  
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Dow Constantine  
Dow.Constantine@kingcounty.gov  
King County Executive  
Security Level: Email, Account Authentication (None)

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Editor Delivery Events	Status	Timestamp
Agent Delivery Events	Status	Timestamp
Intermediary Delivery Events	Status	Timestamp

Certified Delivery Events	Status	Timestamp
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Carbon Copy Events	Status	Timestamp
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Kaitlyn Wiggins kwwiggins@kingcounty.gov Executive Legislative Coordinator King County Executive Office Security Level: Email, Account Authentication (None) <b>Electronic Record and Signature Disclosure:</b> Not Offered via DocuSign	<div style="border: 2px solid blue; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"><b>COPIED</b></div>	Sent: 5/25/2023 9:11:25 AM Viewed: 5/25/2023 10:03:01 AM
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Notary Events	Signature	Timestamp
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Completed	Security Checked	6/1/2023 5:08:45 PM

Payment Events	Status	Timestamps
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Electronic Record and Signature Disclosure
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You may contact us to let us know of your changes as to how we may contact you electronically, to request paper copies of certain information from us, and to withdraw your prior consent to receive notices and disclosures electronically as follows:

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- Until or unless you notify King County-Department of 02 as described above, you consent to receive exclusively through electronic means all notices, disclosures, authorizations, acknowledgements, and other documents that are required to be provided or made available to you by King County-Department of 02 during the course of your relationship with King County-Department of 02.